

**From policy to practice:
Preparing Namibian teachers to teach mother tongue literacy**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Faculty of Education

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

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SEPTEMBER 2017

Declaration

I declare that the dissertation/thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree of Philosophy Doctor in Education at the University of Pretoria, is my work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution

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CLEARANCE NUMBER: **EM 15/09/03**

DEGREE AND PROJECT

PhD

From policy to practice: preparing Namibian teachers to teach mother tongue literacy

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24 November 2014

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Ethics Statement

“The author, whose name appears on the title page of this thesis, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval. The author declares that he/she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria’s Code of ethics for researchers and the Policy guidelines for responsible research”

Abstract

The responsibility of teacher education in Namibia after independence was shared between the Colleges of Education and the University of Namibia (UNAM), with the Colleges of Education focusing on junior primary and junior secondary teachers, and UNAM on senior secondary teachers. In 2010, the Colleges of Education merged with UNAM, which meant that UNAM had to adapt its methodologies in order to prepare teachers for all the school phases. In 2011, UNAM introduced a teacher education programme (pre-primary and lower primary) to prepare teachers to teach in a Namibian language as the medium of instruction and thus successfully effect the transition from instruction in a Namibian language to instruction in English, in line with the goals of the Language Policy for Schools (1992). Therefore, for learners to acquire basic literacy skills, teachers should be skilled and competent in teaching in the mother tongue.

Few studies have been conducted on teacher preparation for mother tongue literacy in developing countries such as Namibia. This study examines how the initial teacher education programme prepares student teachers to teach all four mother tongue language skills in Namibia. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. The main findings include that the preparation of teachers was constrained by the lack of an institutional policy on African languages as a medium of instruction; the lack of prescribed books in African languages; and the limited use of a sociocultural approach in learning literacy. This study responds to the gap in mother tongue literacy teacher preparation by researching all the language skills teachers require. Moreover, it contributes to knowledge on how student teachers are prepared to teach mother tongue literacy in Namibia from a sociocultural approach. The study argues that teachers should have sufficient knowledge of the language used as a medium in schools and gives insight on the way student teachers practise mother tongue literacy in schools.

Keywords: mother tongue teacher education in Namibia

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



Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my late grandmother Laina Nuugwanga Amutenya who was my first teacher, mentor and aspiration. She instilled in me the value of hard work and self-dependent.

Acknowledgements

There are number of people who contributed to making this study a reality. Firstly, my sincere thanks and appreciation to my lovely and always supportive husband Andeas Shipandeni Niipare and the children Tshishiweni, Simeon, Thomas, Alina and Andreas Junior for their patience and support throughout my studies.

A special thanks to Professor Everard Weber for his academic guidance and advice throughout the process. I would particularly like to thank him for his quality supervision and his critical insights to the completion of this thesis.

Dr Pomuti deserves recognition for her assistance to me. She instilled confidence and provided guidance throughout this whole endeavour.

A word of gratitude goes to Alexa Kirsten Barnby for the language editing of my dissertation.

I would also like to thank the many participants in the study from the host campuses who, as lecturers or student teachers, contributed tremendously to this work. I appreciated the openness, knowledge and friendship they offered.

I do not want to forget my colleague, Beatrice, who provided encouragement and lively discussions at various points along the way. My NIED colleagues also supported my work and a particular thanks to data typists who assisted with the transcribing and typing of the data.

I also wish to thank the University of Namibia for allowing me to conduct my studies on their campus. I would also like to thank the Ministry of Veteran Affairs for their funding of my studies as well as the various funders of my study such as the University of Pretoria.

All credits go to my parents my mother Hilma Tutala Negumbo and my late father Nikolae Kandowa Amukushu for laying a solid foundation in my life.

List of abbreviations and acronyms

BEd	Bachelor of Education
BETD	Basic Education Teacher Diploma
CCN	Council of Churches in Namibia
EFA	Education for All
ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme
HDE	Higher Diploma in Education
HOD	Head of department
JPH	Junior primary phase
LCE	Learner-centred education
MBESC	Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEAC	Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture
NBTL	New Breakthrough to Literacy
NEC	National Education Certificate
NHEC	National Higher Education Certificate
NIED	National Institute for Educational Development
NTC	Primary Teacher Certificate
PRAESA	Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SBS	School-based studies
SEO	Senior Education Officer
UNAM	University of Namibia
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of the study

Based on the argument that children who receive schooling in their mother tongue language in the early grades acquire better literacy levels, the use of the mother tongue language in the early grades has been strongly advocated. However obvious this may sound, the one central question that remains unanswered in the Namibian context is the extent to which Namibian teachers are equipped to teach literacy in the mother tongue language as a medium of learning.

The following main research question that triggered this study, namely, how are student teachers prepared to teach literacy using mother tongue language as a medium of learning in the first three grades of the Namibian schooling system? And, more specifically, how does the University of Namibia (UNAM) prepare student teachers to implement the language policy for schools? Accordingly, the study assessed the extent to which student teachers: (1) are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue language as a medium of learning in the first three grades and; (2) implement the Namibian language policy for schools.

Thus, the main purpose of the study was to assess the extent to which the initial teacher education programme in Namibia prepares student teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue language as a medium of learning in the first three grades of the Namibian schooling system

The research objectives of the study included the following:

- to examine the extent to which higher education institutional policies support mother tongue literacy teaching
- to assess the perceptions and views of lecturers and student teachers of the mother tongue teaching policy

- to examine how student teachers were prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue
- to examine how student teachers teach literacy in the mother tongue in primary schools.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the study attempted to address the following sub- questions:

- How do higher education institutional policies support mother tongue literacy teaching?
- What are the lecturers and student teachers' perceptions and understandings of the mother tongue teaching policy?
- How are student teachers prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue?
- How do student teachers teach mother tongue literacy in the primary schools?

1.2 Rationale for the study

Three critical issues underpinned the rationale for this study. Firstly, research studies on the preparation of student teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue language have been carried out in developed contexts which is not relevant to a developing context such as Namibia. For example, although Kosnik and Beck (2008) and Loudon and Rohl (2006) investigated the preparation of foundation level teachers they, did little to investigate how teachers are prepared to teach literacy in either the mother tongue or in the local languages.

Secondly, existing research studies carried out in Namibia (Murray, 2007; Töttemeyer, 2010) have examined the implementation of the language policy and the challenges subsequently encountered at the systemic level but say very little about mother tongue literacy teacher preparation. On the other hand, the study conducted by Benson (2010) at the Solwezi College of Education in Zambia assessed the extent to

which teachers are prepared to handle initial literacy in local languages. However, Benson's study focused on a specific literacy teaching approach and used both the qualitative and the quantitative methods while this study assessed the extent to which student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue without focusing on a specific literacy approach but paying particular emphasis on all the skills involved in language development.

Thirdly, given the above, it becomes reasonable to explore the relationship between preparing teachers to teach mother tongue literacy and the actual student teachers' practice of it. Thus, the aim was to establish whether the teacher preparation programme was contributing to improving the student teachers' performance through the findings of a critical study on how teachers are prepared to teach using the vernacular in accordance with the official policies that have been enacted. At the time of the study there was an on-going debate on the reasons for the failure of learners to read. There appears to be little empirical evidence on how student teachers are prepared to implement the Namibian language policy for schools in Namibia.

It was anticipated that the study would contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of literacy teaching in the mother tongue in the following ways:

- Provide insight into and an understanding of the content and organisation of the Namibian pre-service teacher education programme, highlighting its successes and limitations in respect of equipping student teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue.
- Provide insight into the methods and strategies used to prepare student teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue.
- Contribute to an understanding of the teaching of the mother tongue in teacher education in Namibia and in the field of literacy.

International literature advocates mother tongue instruction. However, despite the fact that this is the policy of the Namibian government, it does not appear to be successful, given the Namibian students' academic results. There seems to be certain other contributing factors that merit investigation. This study aimed to contribute to mother tongue teaching in the field of initial literacy by exploring the way in which community cultural and social experiences influence both the teaching and learning of literacy in developing contexts such as Namibia.

1.3 Methodology

The researcher used the case study method and utilised various methods to collect the requisite data. Accordingly, the researcher used semi-structured interviews, which were conducted with four lecturers teaching Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga on the two selected UNAM campuses. The researcher also used focus group discussions, which were conducted with a group of 20 fourth-year student teachers. Classroom observations were also used in the case of the four lecturers in order to understand how they were preparing future teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue. Observation was also used in the case of ten (10) student teachers to ascertain whether they were practising what they had learnt during their teacher training. Finally, the researcher also made use of documents such as the language policy, UNAM Prospectus, 2016 and the National Professional Standard for Teachers to establish whether these documents supported the language policy in schools. The case study methodology was chosen to enable the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of how junior primary student teachers were being prepared to teach literacy through mother tongue instruction. The study collected the data on two of the six University of Namibia (UNAM) campuses that are responsible for pre-service teacher education, the two schools in Khomas and three schools in the Oshana region. These two campuses were purposefully selected because they offered the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects of Oshiwambo that are used as

medium of instructions in the relevant schools and the researcher could speak and understand these dialects.

The data analysis for the study was conducted in accordance with Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2014) method of analysing qualitative data and Creswell's (2014) spiral data analysis. The qualitative data analysis involved assigning codes to the data collected from the field notes, interview transcripts and documents analysis. Coding was used to analyse the data in the following ways: sorting and shifting the coded materials to identify similar phrases, patterns, themes and categories (Creswell, 2013; Miles et al. 2014) and noting reflections and labels against the chunks of the data obtained from the field notes of the lesson observations and interview transcripts from the interviews and classroom observation conducted with the junior primary lecturers and the fourth year student teachers (Matthew & Miles, 2014). The researcher then condensed the data through selecting, simplifying, summarising, looking for categories, connecting these categories and creating themes (Creswell, 2013).

1.4 The background and context of the study

Namibia attained its independence in 1990 after many years as a German colony and then under illegal occupation by South Africa. It is a small country that shares borders with Angola and Zambia to the north and north east, Botswana and South Africa to the east and south, the Atlantic Ocean to the west and Zimbabwe to the northeast. Namibia is a multilingual country with a population of approximately 2.2 million people (Namibia, 2011, p. 2). The country covers about 824,469 square kilometres. Like many other African countries, almost half of the population lives in the rural areas. The north and northeast regions receive the highest levels of rainfall. The majority of the population live in these areas and depend on crops production for their livelihood.

There are several indigenous languages and various dialects spoken in Namibia. Thirteen of these languages are written with a standard orthography. The following languages are currently used in the schools as the medium of instruction, namely, Oshiwambo (Oshindonga, Oshikwanyama), Khoekhoegowab, Otjiherero, Silozi, Afrikaans, Rukwangali, Rumanya, Thimbukushu German and Setswana. Of these languages, two only, Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama, were purposefully selected for the purposes of this study because the researcher understood and spoke these two languages and also because Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama are used in most of the regions (seven regions) and in schools. According to the Namibian EMIS statistics of (2012), the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects are among the most widely spoken languages in the country. Learner enrolment in the junior primary phase in 2012 totalled 245,060 of which 41,689 had enrolled to be instructed in Oshindonga and 30,917 to be instructed in Oshikwanyama (EMIS Statistic, 2012). It is for this reason that the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects have been selected to be used in schools as the medium of instruction.

1.4.1 The historical overview of language in education policy in Namibia

Before the German colonial era, the Rhenish and Finnish missionary societies provided education to the black and coloured people in Namibia. These missionaries were scattered all over the country and established schools that taught literacy in order to enable catechumens to read both the catechisms and the Bible (Salia-Bao, 1991). These mission schools did not have either an organised and central administration or some form of a curriculum body and, instead, they followed the general pattern of education that developed. The content of their curricula was based on the basic aims of the missionaries themselves. The focus of the missionaries was to spread Christianity and thus they taught their converts to read and write so that the Africans would be able to read the Bible and sing from hymn books as well as be able to write their names (Salia-Bao, 1991).

In 1909 organised education for the German settlers was introduced and received the full support of the German administration. The German administration did not consider African education to be important as Africans were required only to work for the settlers and, to do this, they did not need education. Accordingly, building schools and educating black children was not a priority as it was for German children (Salia-Bao, 1991, p. 15). Thus, African education remained in the hands of the missionaries until the end of the German rule in 1915 (Amukugo, 1995).

According to Amukugo (1995), the various missionary societies used different languages as the medium of instruction in their schools. For example, the Rhenish missionaries used Cape Dutch as the medium of instruction while the Anglican and Catholic missionaries used English as the language of instruction in their schools. On the other hand, the Finnish missionaries made an effort to learn Oshindonga, which they later adopted as the medium of instruction in their schools. They printed numerous educational and religious books and translated the Bible into Oshindonga. The translation of the Bible and other religious books enabled these missionaries to convey the Christian teachings and convert the Namibian people to Christianity successfully because the people were able to read the Bible in Oshindonga and sing using the hymn books. This sentiment was in line with the Namibian language policy that allows learners in the junior primary phase to be taught in their own language to ensure they understand the subject content concept better.

South Africa occupied Namibia (then South West Africa) in 1915 and was accorded administrative rights to establish a department of education and coordinate all the education services in the country. It is important to note that the South African administration was characterised by apartheid. Apartheid was a system of separate development in terms of which people were grouped according to their race and ethnicity. This system thrived on racial segregation. It is within this context that, when South Africa colonised Namibia, it implemented this same system of racial segregation in Namibia. This segregation affected all aspects of life. In terms of education it meant that it was only the education of white children that came under

the government of the day. This state of affairs meant that missionaries remained in charge of education for all the black pupils in Namibia.

It was within this context that the Commission, headed by Dr van Zyl from the South African Education Department of Education, was appointed to take control of the education of the blacks and coloured in South West Africa (Namibia). This was part of the implementation of apartheid and apartheid education that was done in order to separate the education systems for whites, blacks and coloureds (Pomuti, 2008). The Commission's report incorporated the basic recommendations of the Eiselen Commission. Eiselen was the South African Secretary for Native Affairs at the time. He investigated the conditions of African education in South Africa and made several recommendations, including, among others, the removal of African education from the mission schools and transferring it to the Department of Bantu Affairs. Other recommendations were modified and adapted to suit the Namibian situation. One of the recommendations proposed by the Dr Van Zyl Commission was as follows:

The mother tongue of various groups should be the basic medium of instruction and the production of African literature should be encouraged (Salia-Bao, 1991, p. 17).

Following this recommendation, it was reported that, at the junior primary level, the child's mother tongue was to be offered as a subject, kept as a first language or used as a medium of instruction (Gazette No 1/84 – B3 and B4 cited in Salia-Bao, 1991). This gazette stipulate that languages that could be considered as a school subject, the first language and medium of instruction in junior primary education were to be grouped as follows below:

- A – Germanic language: Afrikaans, English and German
- B – African language: Ndonga, Kwanyama, Kwangali Geiriku, Mbukushu, Lozi, Herero, Tswana and Damara>Nama (Salia-Bao, 1991).

Nevertheless, it is important to note that, although it seemed laudable that the mother tongue was to be used as a medium of instruction, this was, in fact, intended to perpetuate racial segregation in line with the apartheid ideology. This complemented the “homeland” policy and the separation in towns between white areas and black townships. In other words, language and medium of instruction were highly politicised under the apartheid system.

Before the independence of Namibia, the official languages of Afrikaans and English, were compulsory school subjects and were introduced gradually, as stipulated in subsections (20), (3) and (4) of the Namibian Constitution. In schools where one of the two official languages was offered at the beginning of sub-standard A such schools “shall be compelled to offer the remaining one of these two official languages as a second language during the course of the junior primary education” (Salia-Bao, 1991, p. 49). If Afrikaans or English were not offered as first language in sub-standard A, the pupils were compelled to:-

- learn one of these official languages as a second language during junior primary education
- learn, subject to the provisions of instruction C.3 (5), a second language not later than the beginning of standard II (Salia-Bao, 1991).

In view of the fact that language as a medium of instruction was important in the teaching of the school curriculum, it was used as a tool with which to colonise the majority of the Namibian people. The political and ideological role of mother tongue teaching under apartheid was to divide the nation according to race and ethnicity. This complemented the “homeland” policy and the separation in towns between white areas and black. Afrikaans was the predominant language used in schools (Diener & Graefe, 2001). However, this presented challenges to the majority of learners starting primary school because Afrikaans was not their mother tongue. As a result, many of these students did not realise their full academic potential. This

could, in fact, have been the main reason for the 60% drop out rate that was experienced at the primary level (Salia-Bao, 1991).

1.4.2 The legal framework for language policy in Namibia

As in many African countries, education in Namibia is considered to be a basic human right and, hence, it should be made available to all the people. The post-apartheid Namibian constitution stipulates that Namibia is a democratic state. The Constitution of Namibia also states that education is a right for all persons, and it is the responsibility of the government to provide education to all. Article 20 of the constitution states that all persons shall have the right to education and that primary education shall be free and is obligatory for all children up to the age of 16. This is the reason why Article 3 Sub-Article (2) of the Namibian constitution specifically stipulates that whatever is contained in the constitution 'shall not prohibit the use of any other language as a medium of instruction particularly in private schools and subsidised schools' (Ministry of Information and Broad Casting, (1990 p. 6).

In the same vein the Education Act 16 of 2001 forms a basis for the medium of instruction in state schools in Namibia. Sub-sections 2, 3, and 4 of the act (Act 35 of 2001) stipulate that

... every state school must teach English language as a subject from the level of the first grade; the minister must determine the grade level for all schools from which English must be used as a medium of instruction, and may determine different grade levels for different categories of schools; the minister, after consultation with the school board concerned and by notice in the Gazette, may declare a language other than English to be used as a medium of instruction in any state schools (The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia 1998, p. 24).

In an effort to fulfil the constitutional provisions and requirements of the Education Act in Namibia, the government adapted a language policy that allows for the use of

national languages in education. In formulating the language policy, the Ministry of Education was guided by the following fundamental beliefs:

- 1) All national languages are equal regardless of the number of speakers or the level of development of a particular language
- 2) All language policies must be sensitive to this principle
- 3) All language policies must consider the cost implementation
- 4) All language policies must regard language as a medium of cultural transmission
- 5) For pedagogical reasons, it is ideal for children to study through their own language during the early years when the basic skills of reading, writing and concept formation are developed.
- 6) Proficiency in the official language at the end of the 7 years primary cycle should be sufficient to enable all children to be effective participants in society
- 7) Language policy should promote national unity (Angula, 1993, p. 65).

However, the Namibian language policy for schools stipulates that education should promote the language and cultural identity of learners through the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in Grades 1 to 3 and the teaching of the mother tongue throughout formal education (MBESC, 2003).

Another Namibian policy document entitled *Towards Education for All* (Angula, 1993) further elaborates that;

Basic education will promote functional literacy and language development, i.e. to help learners communicate effectively in speech and writing in English and in another language of Namibia, provide instruction as far as possible through the medium of the mother tongue during the first three years of schooling, and provide for further development of proficiency in mother tongue and develop competence in English, the official language (p. 56).

Towards Education for All also states that, ideally, all children should study two languages as subjects from Grade 1 onwards, one of which is English. Other

languages should be selected either from the thirteen Namibian languages as outlined earlier in this chapter or from another language recognised by the Ministry of Education for the same purpose. All these languages will be accorded the same weight for promotion purposes.

The Namibian legislation, as well as legislation in other developing and developed countries, serve as fundamental tools for realising UNESCO's declarations and conventions, which advocate basic education for all by allowing minority language groups to learn through their first language or mother tongue in the early years as a basic human right for every child. For example, The Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All adopted a specific goal, namely, that, "children must be nurtured in a safe and caring environment that allows them to learn and be educated in their mother tongue" (UNESCO (Paris), 2000).

Likewise, *the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights* (1996) includes Article 24, which states that all language communities have the right to decide on the extent to which their language is to be present as a vehicular language and as an object of study at all levels of education within their territory, in preschool, primary, secondary, technical, vocational, university and adult education. Thus, all these conventions and policies provide a framework and recommendations to ensure basic education for all, regardless of language or ethnic origins.

In order to achieve the goal of basic education for all, it is vital that Namibian teachers are helped to improve their mother tongue literacy teaching skills.

1.4.3 Language in education policy post-independence Namibia

After independence in 1990, Namibia, like many other African countries, realised the need for instruction using the mother tongue in early learning. In 1992 the country adopted a new language policy (Namibia, 1993) which aimed to redress the

injustices arising from the focus of German colonial rule and administration by South Africa on the use of the German and Afrikaans languages at the expense of the local languages (Legère, 2003). The emphasis of the new government on introducing English as an official language was intended to unite the nation, something that many of the Western writers who stress the virtues of “diversity” do not appreciate. The main goals of this policy included promoting the young learners’ own language and cultural identity through mother tongue usage, with English as a second language. According to the *Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture Report* (MBESC, 2003), children are to be taught in the mother tongue as the medium of instruction during the first three years of schooling (Grades 1 to 3). Such medium of instruction may refer to the children’s first language or the language that is predominant in the local area in question.

The policy does offer alternatives, especially in cases in which parents want English to be used as the medium of instruction in these grades. However, the school must obtain permission from the Ministry of Education and provided well-articulated and convincing reasons for this. Grade 4 is deemed to be a transition year when the change from using the local mother tongue to English as the medium of instruction is gradually introduced. However, the mother tongue may be used as a supportive tool to ensure the understanding of the new content or concepts (Namibia Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, 2016). This policy was underpinned by the belief that education in the mother tongue is crucial for concept formation as well as the attainment of both literacy and numeracy (MBESC, 2003).

The Namibian language policy aims to promote the following four major goals of education, namely:

- access
- equity
- quality education, and
- democracy.

Language lays the foundation for these attainment of these four goals because 'it is the main source of knowledge, skills and creativity, and enables rich communication, the meaningful participation of students and a stronger sense of identity and confidence among students in the classroom' (Birello, 2012). The development of knowledge, skills and creativity involves an understanding that is acquired only through mother tongue instruction (Amissah, 2001). The Namibian national language policy is fundamental to the realisation of Education for All (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals and the Rights of Children, which advocate education in the mother tongue through the early years of schooling as a basic right for every child in the world.

1.4.4 The basic education in Namibia

The education system in Namibia is organised into the following four school phases, namely:

- Junior Primary (Pre-primary to Grade 3)
- Senior Primary (Grades 4 to 7)
- Junior Secondary (Grades 8 to 9)
- Senior Secondary (Grades 10 to 12).

It is also important to note that education is compulsory in Namibia from the age of six to the age of 16. Generally, the school curriculum for these phases seeks to promote the core skills and learning areas. These core skills include personal skills, social skills, cognitive skills, communicative skills, numeracy and information and communication technology.

The Junior Primary phase lays the foundation for all further learning. In Pre-primary – Grades 1 to 3 – teaching and learning takes place through the medium of the mother tongue.

In the Senior Primary phase, Grade 4 is intended as a transition period to move from the mother tongue as the medium of instruction to the use of English as the medium of instruction. All the subsequent grades use English as a medium of instruction and the mother tongue is taught as a subject.

At the Junior Secondary level, all learners take English and another language as subjects. In Grades 10 to 11, all learners continue to take English and another language for the purposes of the Grade 11 examination. At the Senior Secondary level, learners take four to six subjects on the Higher Level. At the end of Grades 11 and 12, learners should be well prepared for either further study or training or to enter employment.

14.4.1 The Junior Primary curriculum

The focus of the Junior Primary phase is primarily on three areas, namely, literacy, numeracy, and a broad knowledge of the immediate environment of the learner. Effective quality schooling in a text-poor environment such as Namibia in order to ensure that good literacy and numeracy skills are attained usually takes longer than it would otherwise in a different, richer environment. The Junior Primary phase is merely the start of developing these two essential life skills.

1.4.4.2 Language of instruction

Learning is best achieved through the medium of the mother tongue of the learner. The language policy states that the mother tongue should be the medium of instruction throughout the first three years of schooling, with a transition to English as a medium of instruction starting in the fourth year of schooling. In addition, all learners take their mother tongue as a first language subject from Grade 1. In the case of multi-lingual schools the classes should be grouped according to mother tongue as far as possible during the Junior Primary phase to facilitate the use of the

mother tongue as medium of instruction. Where this is not possible at all, the predominant local language should be used as medium of instruction and classes streamed and timetabled according to mother tongue for the language subject at first language level. English is taught as a subject as well as Second Language from Grade 1.

1.4.4.3 Teaching and learning approach

The approach to teaching and learning in the Junior Primary phase is based on the paradigm of learner-centred education (LCE) described in both ministerial policy documents and the LCE conceptual framework. This approach ensures an optimal quality of learning when the principles are put into practice. Furthermore, the thematic/integrated approach remains a focal point of Junior Primary teaching and learning. Thus, the topic title may come from one area of knowledge, for example, Environmental Studies, but will be planned over a period of time so that the work carried out in Mathematics, First Language, Arts and/or Physical Education is also relevant to the topic. However, a topic-based approach may also be used in any single subject. This would involve a sequence of teaching and learning which covers different aspects of the subject-topic concerned. Topic work provides an opportunity for an in-depth exploration of the subject matter in question.

1.4.4.4 Assessment

Assessment comprises a component of the lesson planning and clear assessment criteria must be set. During lessons, and while learners are carrying out normal classroom activities, the teacher conducts both informal and formal continuous assessments for all the various competencies and skills in all the subjects. In the Junior Primary phase, assessment is criterion-referenced. This means that, when marks are awarded, it is essential that these marks reflect the learner's actual level of achievement in relation to the competencies.

1.4.5 Namibian teachers and learners' literacy performance

As a nation Namibia has participated in international learner achievement studies. The results of these studies have indicated that the level of literacy in the country is low. This is primarily a result of a large number of children with reading problems in the schools. For example, in years 2000 and 2007, Namibia participated in the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) to assess the reading and numeracy competencies of both teachers and learners. The results indicated that "in reading, Namibian learners scored relatively poorly and half a standard deviation below the SACMEQ average" (56.6%), as well as "Namibian teachers scored just below the SACMEQ average for reading teachers" (MBESC, 2004, pp. 145, 146). The SACMEQ III, 2007 results indicated that the competence level of functional literacy had risen to 86.4%, meaning that almost a third more of learner's transition to accepted functional literacy (Van der Berg, 2011 p. 3). Although the SACMEQ III results showed some progression, the results were still significantly below the SACMEQ fix scores.

In addition, an independent Namibian researcher has carried out a study in which the results concurred with earlier findings that learners were not able to read with clarity and confidence at the level expected of them. For example, Murray (2007) conducted an analysis of mother tongue instruction and factors that hindered the implementation of the policy of mother tongue instruction in Namibia. The findings of the study revealed that teachers were complaining that, when learners reached Grade 10, "the majority of them have difficulties comprehending and processing reading materials, decoding meaning and identifying important points" (p. 25). In fact, Murray (2007) found that the majority of learners in her study did not have the ability to understand or even interpret, let alone read with confidence.

Furthermore, both the researcher's experience as a teacher, especially as a subject advisor, and the researcher's current position of Senior Education Officer (SEO) at

the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED), have resulted in her acquiring a deep understanding of the literacy problems in most of the Namibian schools. This has shaped the researcher's understanding of teaching pedagogy, in general, and preparing junior primary school teachers to teach in the mother tongue, in particular.

It is not clear whether the on-going literacy problem is a result of the inadequate preparation of foundational phase teachers in the mother tongue or whether teachers in Namibia would attribute the problem to poor classroom instruction in the mother tongue. Nevertheless, whatever the reasons and despite the fact that the majority of existing literature advocates mother tongue literacy, on the basis of the poor learner performance in the assessment tests, a cursory survey of the success of the mother tongue literacy in junior primary schools provides evidence that this policy is not working in Namibia.

This study assessed how the initial teacher education programme equips Namibian teachers to teach literacy skills to learners by using the learners' vernacular. One may argue that teachers require a specialised knowledge of the learners' language, mother tongue literacy content, and the pedagogical practices pertaining to literacy teaching if any policy on mother tongue literacy is to be implemented successfully. This study responded to the gap in the literature by providing an in-depth understanding of the importance of preparing mother tongue literacy teachers in relation to the four skills of language development. Regarding the teacher education programme, the Junior Primary student teachers are assumed to have been prepared to teach in the mother tongue to enable them to teach using the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in schools. The focus of this study was on the extent to which the pre-service teacher education programme prepares student teachers to teach through the mediums of Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama,

1.4.6 The context of teacher education

Before independence in Namibia teacher training education was fragmented and uneven. The content, the methods and the structure of the indigenous languages were neglected. Teachers were trained in either South Africa or Germany, especially the whites coloured and baster teachers, while black teachers were trained by the Rhenish and Finnish missionaries (Salia-Bao, 1991). This arrangement continued up to 1953 when the Van Zyl, Eiselen and Odendaal Commissions recommended to the South African government that a separate section for administering African education and training be established in the South West Africa Department of Education. The commissions suggested that “the mother tongue of different African groups should be the medium of instruction and the production of African literature should be encouraged and subsidised” (Salia-Bao, 1991). In addition, it was recommended that the South African Department of Bantu Education syllabus be adopted for African institutions and also the South African system of teacher training (UN report, 1975, in Salia-Bao, 1991). Various teacher training colleges were then established along ethnic lines. The following colleges were established:

- Windhoek Teacher Training College for whites
- Khomasdal Teacher Training College for coloureds
- Caprivi, Ongwediva and Rundu Training Colleges for blacks in northern Namibia.

The Academy for Tertiary Education was also established to train teachers to administer and coordinate the above-mentioned colleges. Other private institutions such as the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) and the Adult Education Project also offered teacher training. The curricular for all these training institutions were controlled by proclamation from South Africa and implemented by the National Education Department and the Academy for Tertiary Training (Salia-Bao, 1991).

Several teacher-training programmes had been offered during the pre-independence era. The most popular of these programmes had included a Diploma in Education (a three-year programme), a Higher Diploma in Education (HDE) (a four-year programme), a Primary Teacher Certificate (NTC), a National Education Certificate (NEC), and a National Higher Education Certificate (NHEC).

The teacher training programmes were administered from South Africa. These teacher education programmes all had different entry requirements, scope, duration, organisation and focus. Some were extremely resourceful and provided higher-level qualifications while others provided minimal qualifications only (Namibia, 1993).

After independence in 1990, the Ministry of Education and Culture developed new structures and policies in order to reform the education system in Namibia, including the teacher education programmes. Much was done to integrate the different teacher education programmes of the past. What was required was a 'common, national, feasible and balanced programme that would adequately prepare teachers to face and meet the challenges of reforming education system in Namibia (Dahlström, 1999, p. 1). Accordingly, the above-mentioned, pre-independence, education programmes were scrapped and three types of teacher education developed.

The responsibility for teacher education in Namibia was shared between the Colleges of Education and the University of Namibia. The three types of education programmes that were developed after independence included the following, namely, the Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD), which was a three-year course aimed at preparing teachers for basic education (Grades 1–10), the senior secondary school teacher qualification which was offered by the University of Namibia and the technical and vocational education Instructor qualification, which prepared teachers for instruction in pre-vocational skills in vocational and other technical institutions (Angula, 1993).

The BETD programme was underpinned by the Namibian Constitution which stipulates that all persons shall have the right to education (Article 20 Sub-article (1)). This programme was also guided by the philosophy of learner-centred education, which encapsulates the following:

- the starting point is learners' existing knowledge, skills, interests and understanding, acquired from previous experiences in and out schools;
- the natural curiosity and eagerness of all young people to learn to investigate and to make sense of a widening world must be nourished and encouraged by challenging and meaningful tasks;
- the learners' perspective needs to be appreciated and considered in the work of the school; learners should be empowered to think and take responsibility not only for their own, but also for one another's learning and development; and learners should be involved as partners in, rather than receivers of, educational growth (Angula, 1993, p. 60).

This qualification also encompassed a constructivist perspective on learning with student teachers being expected to experience the types of learning they would have to facilitate and create for their future learners (Swarts, 1999, p. 38). According to the constructivist approach to learning, the role of teacher educators is to help student teachers to build their knowledge during the learning process in the classroom, to facilitate their students' learning and provide sufficient time for collaborative work and problem solving.

Thus, the main reason for introducing the BETD was to replace the South African teaching qualifications and to "reconstruct the education process through the implementation of a learner-centred and democratic philosophy which will involve learners beyond the role of receivers of education" Dahlström (1999 p.1) as in (lipinge, 2013). The BETD placed significant emphasis on the professional aspects of teacher education and the pedagogical and social ways of teaching and learning. It also integrated college experiences with classroom situations (theory and practice)

in a meaningful way for the benefit of the student teacher (Swarts, 1999). Consequently, the BETD strove to:

- develop teachers who will respect and foster the values of the Namibian constitution, contribute to nation building, and respond positively to the changing needs of the Namibian society;
- develop an understanding and respect for diverse cultural values and beliefs;
- develop an adequate command of English and another languages in Namibia to be able to use them as a medium of instruction;
- prepare teachers to be able to develop and use the creativity and expressive abilities and skills of learners;
- provide students with sufficient breadth in curriculum content and depth in selected subject areas to be able to identify and select basic knowledge content for learners and to organise and sequence content and learning situations appropriately (Angula, 1993, p. 81).

The BETD was offered at all of the four colleges of education, namely, the Ongwediva, Windhoek, Rundu and Katima colleges of education and was regarded as the best programme to unify the training of all teachers in Basic Education (Angula, 1993).

Nevertheless, despite the view of the BETD programme as the best programme, one that addressed the injustices of the pre-independence era, and one that responded to the needs and aspirations of the Namibian people in terms of providing access to education (Angula, 1993), it also was criticised for not providing teachers who were abreast with the content and pedagogy (Ipinge, Likando, Haipinge, & Claassen, 2013).

In 2010, the Colleges of Education merged with the University of Namibia. The University of Namibia has since begun to offer teacher education programmes for junior primary school teachers. The merger of the Colleges of Education and the University of Namibia meant that the university has had to adapt different

methodologies in order to prepare teachers for all the school phases adequately. Accordingly, in 2011, the university introduced a Bachelor of Education (pre-primary and lower primary) for junior primary teachers and aimed at preparing teachers to be competent to teach in English and a Namibian language and also to be able successfully effect the transition from a Namibian language as the medium of instruction to English as a medium of instruction as per the Language Policy for Schools (1992).

Teaching pedagogy

Since independence, various teaching methods and approaches have been implemented. Both teaching and learning have been informed by participatory learning that allows for the active involvement of the learner and also the placing of the learner at the centre of the learning process. In other words, teachers have to plan their teaching in a way that facilitates the learners taking an active role in the process. This method allows teachers to organise their teaching in such a way that learners work in larger or small group, in pair or individually. The goal of introducing these teaching and learning approaches was to enhance learning with understanding, problem solving and democratic learning (Angula, 1993).

According to Ministry of Education (2012), the analysis of the qualifications of teachers teaching Grades 1 to 3 show that 6445 teachers are qualified to teach these grades. However, despite the high percentage of qualified teachers teaching the lower primary (Grades 1 to 3), “Namibian teachers scored just below the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) average for reading for teachers” (Namibia Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (MBESC, 2003, p. 145). The low literacy scores for teachers as compared to the SACMEQ average triggered this study to assess the extent to which the initial teacher preparation programme prepares teachers adequately to teach literacy through the mother tongue. It was anticipated that the study findings would

provide a general understanding of literacy teaching and learning in the Namibian context.

1.5 Overview of the thesis

The thesis is divided into nine chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the background and context of the study and its rationale and contains a brief outline of the main areas covered in the thesis.

Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive literature review on preparation of teachers in respect of mother tongue literacy, the implementation of mother tongue literacy teaching in developing and developed countries, and the effect of adequate mother tongue teacher training in improving learning outcomes. Chapter 2 also discusses the two principal theoretical perspectives within which this study was located, namely, the sociocultural and the cognitive perspectives.

Chapter 3 discusses the research design, the study sample, the methodologies and procedures used to collect and analyse the data required to assess the way in which student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in mother tongue.

Chapter 4 presents the conceptual framework used in the study. This conceptual framework guided the design of the study and was also used both to analyse the data and to structure the presentation of the data analyses.

Chapter 5 presents and discusses the research findings in relation to the way in which student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue in Namibian schools.

Chapter 6 examines the practice of mother tongue literacy and focuses on the strategies used to prepare teachers to teach literacy and how these influences the student teachers' mother tongue literacy practices in schools.

Chapter 7 discusses the views and understanding of the teacher educators and student teachers of the Namibian language policy for schools. This policy stipulates that instruction must be in the mother tongue in Grades 1 to 3 and the extent to which this policy improves literacy teaching in schools.

Chapter 8 discusses the characteristics of the teaching methodologies used by the student teachers in the five primary schools, how student teachers translate what they have learn into practice and the extent to which their teaching practice improve and shape their understanding and practice of mother tongue literacy.

Chapter 9 presents a synthesis, and discusses the research findings and draws conclusions from the data on the following:

- How the University of Namibia prepares student teachers to implement the language policy for schools and how student teachers put into practice what they have learnt during their training.
- How the study has responded to the gap in the literature by providing an in-depth understanding of the importance of preparing mother tongue literacy teachers in the four skills of language development.
- How the study contributes to literacy teaching in mother tongue education by exploring the way in which community cultural and social experiences influence both teaching and learning literacy in a developing context such as Namibia.

Finally, the chapter makes recommendations based on the research findings.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of existing literature on mother tongue literacy. The chapter starts with a discussion on what constitutes mother tongue and explains the concepts of mother tongue instruction and mother tongue literacy. The literature review then interrogates the significance of mother tongue instruction in the school curriculum, particularly during the early grades of schooling. The literature review includes studies carried out on the perceptions of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The lecturers' and student teachers' perceptions on using mother tongue as a medium of instruction require investigation as these perceptions have also been found to have an impact on mother tongue teacher training.

Other important areas of discussion in the literature review included the two principal theoretical perspectives within the social constructivist paradigm of literacy development, namely, the sociocultural and cognitive perspectives. These perspectives were included to offer insights into literacy learning. The sociocultural perspective deals with the influence of society and community on teaching and learning literacy while the cognitive perspective is concerned with what takes place inside of the classroom. These theoretical perspectives also assist in revealing the practice and content of the mother tongue literacy curriculum with which prospective teachers should be equipped. Overall, the major part of the literature review focuses on analysing the findings of the existing studies on mother tongue literacy teacher preparation.

2.2 Definition of the key concepts

2.2.1 Mother tongue medium of instruction

There are several definitions of mother tongue, including the following: (1) a child's first language (Ball, 2010; Bühmann & Trudell, 2008), (2) a language that the child learns first before any other language (Gupta, 1997; Poth, 1988) and (3) a language an individual knows best and uses the most (Baker, 2011). Wagenaar (2012), Ouane and Glanz (2012) and Poth (1988) argue that mother tongue is not necessarily the language of the child's mother, for example, when one of the parents comes from a different ethnic group to the other parent and the family lives outside of the geographical area of the other parent's ethnic group. In the Namibian context, the mother tongue is defined as the first language that is acquired at home (MBESC, 2003). However, the majority of learners are learning in languages that are not their first language, neither do they speak those languages at home.

According to Ball (2010), the concept of mother tongue is commonly used in policy statements and educational discourses when it is referred to as the language of instruction used in schools. This may refer to mother tongue instruction or the language of instruction. Mother tongue instruction or the language of instruction identified as the medium of instruction is the "language used to teach most subjects in the school curriculum" (Ball, 2010, p. 13).

Dutcher (2003) argues that mother tongue instruction should include both the teaching of, and the teaching through, the language in question. However, Ouane and Glanz (2005) argue that medium of instruction is not the same as learning a language as a subject. They maintain that there is a difference between learning a language and learning through a language and that this distinction is very important

in mother tongue education. This key distinction was extremely relevant to this study as it made a significant contribution to the understanding of the way in which the University of Namibia prepares teachers to teach literacy through the mother tongue.

2.2.3 Literacy

The argument above raises the question as to what literacy is and the language in which should it be taught. According to Opoku-Amankwa and Brew-Hammond (2011), many writers refer to literacy as reading and writing only. Scholars continue to disagree on the best way in which to acquire literacy with some favouring the phonetic approach and others referring to as literacy as meaning making (UNESCO, 2006). However, Perez (2004) maintains that there are two dimensions to literacy, namely, the “individual” dimension and the “social” dimension. Street (2006) termed these dimensions the “autonomous” model and the “ideological” model. The individual dimension or autonomous model regards literacy as a person’s ability to read and write with this ability being treated as a personal and mental attribute and used for individual purposes (Hossain, 2013). Thus, literacy is seen as a process by which the set of technical skills of reading and writing is acquired. This thus that literacy should be learnt first and practised afterwards.

On the other hand, the social dimension or ideological model focuses on the social and cultural phenomena which exist between people and which connects individual at different points of time. Perez (2004, p. 3) suggests that literacy learning should reflect the diverse context of the learners. This may include “what learners already know and bring to learning experiences; the cultural background of the learners including family culture, oral traditions and indigenous knowledge of the learners and their relation to literacy being required” (Ouane & Glanz, 2012). Through reading and gaining an insight into the social and cultural context influence within which the literacy practices is taking place. Street's (2003) view is that

... literacy is always embedded in socially constructed epistemological principles. It is about knowledge: the ways in which people address reading and writing are themselves rooted in conceptions of knowledge, identity, and being (p. 78).

The debate on the meaning of literacy varies according to the particular theory that is espoused. For the purposes of this study, literacy was taken to refer to listening, speaking, reading and writing while bearing in mind the holistic and meaning making aspects of learning language. This study was positioned within the sociocultural and cognitive perspectives in its aim to discover the way in which student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue.

The above arguments of different scholars clarify the significance of teaching children in their mother tongue in their early years of learning and are explained in detail in the section below.

2.3 Major arguments for mother tongue literacy teaching

The proponents of mother tongue based teaching argue that the development of initial literacy is best achieved when it is taught in the dominant language of the child's home (Alexander & Bloch, 2004; Barrett et al., 2007; Benson, 2004; Cummins, 2001). The overall argument in favour of mother tongue education in early learning, as cited by prominent scholars, is based on cognitive, emotional, psychological, sociological and cultural aspects as well as the pedagogical advantages of such an approach (Ouane & Glanz, 2005; Patel, 2012; Rodseth, 2002).

Numerous studies have revealed that teaching literacy using the mother tongue or first language enables learners to build a strong educational foundation in respect of their first language (L1), and then to use the knowledge and skills acquired successfully as a bridge to the acquisition of additional languages at school (Ball, 2010; Barrett et al., 2007; Benson, 2004; Gorski, 2009; Ouane & Glanz, 2010; Patel,

2012). It has also been reported that learners who first acquire literacy in their mother tongue then acquire a better command of other languages, both written and orally (Ouane & Glanz, 2012). In addition, mother tongue teaching has been found to promote a smooth transition between the home and the school while fostering an emotional stability that further translates into cognitive stability (Ball, 2010; Rodseth, 2002). Learning is thus most efficient when conducted in a language with the learner is familiar “because so much of the automaticity and psycholinguistic guessing that forms part of fluent reading relies on a deep understanding of the language being read” (Benson, 2004).

Learning that does not allow students to make connections with prior knowledge (as the case of mother tongue teaching) encourages rote learning and memorisation, but this type of “banking” knowledge is likely to be forgotten (Cummins, 2001; Marope, 2005; Wray, 1999). Dutcher (2003) reports that, when children’s mother tongue is not used in school, “they are made to feel backwards, inferior, stupid, scared, confused, traumatised and their culture is degraded” (p.11). This statement appears to be valid because learners who are taught through their mother tongue also learn about their culture and compare it with the cultures of other learners while they will also learn to read easily and transfer these acquired skills when learning a new language (Ball, 2010; Ouane & Glanz, 2010; Rai, Rai, Phyak, & Rai, 2011).

In a similar vein, Patel (2012) offers the useful advice that teaching in the mother tongue, specifically in the early primary years, is important for a child’s intellectual and cultural development and also enhances his/her cognitive abilities. It is worth noting that Jabak (2012) identified some valuable advantages to using learners’ first language in teaching a second language: firstly, language may be used to compare the linguistic system of the learners’ native language with that of the second language, and secondly, the teaching may draw on the cultural aspects such as proverbs and idioms of the learners’ first language.

There is, however, some debate in existing literature on the duration of mother tongue teaching. Some writers argue that the optimum cognitive development and academic achievement using mother tongue teaching requires more than three years of instruction, particularly in under-resourced countries/settings (Bühmann & Trudell, 2008). However, in most sub-Saharan African countries (such as Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Kenya) that is possible in three years. Moreover, some scholars further argue that, if the teaching of the mother tongue in the early stages is not long enough, the learners' language skills will not be adequate for learning a second language (Bühmann & Trudell, 2008).

It is on this understanding that Heugh (2009) also recommends a period of up to six years for mother tongue teaching, particularly in a well-resourced context, and eight years in a poorly resourced context. It would appear that the notion of a longer period for mother tongue teaching is well supported by various scholars who maintain that laying the good foundation for quality education requires the use of a familiar language of instruction for a period of six or more years to ensure that the knowledge and skills acquired are sustained (Rai et al., 2011). The statement that the longer the indigenous and minority children have their own language as the medium of instruction, the better they will learn a dominant language provided they are exposed to good teaching (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2004) is thus a key observation.

Ramirez (1991) conducted a comparative study that involved three groups of Spanish speaking minority students. The first group learned through English; the second group had one or two years of Spanish as the medium of instruction and then transferred to using English while the third group had four to six years of Spanish as the medium of instruction before transferring to the use of English. The study confirmed that the late-exit students achieved the best results and were well placed to achieve sound levels of English competence (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2004). It should be noted, however, that the studies in developed countries are grounded in highly resourced environments, which are very different from the poorly resourced African contexts.

Nevertheless, the critics of mother tongue teaching argue that, if education in the mother tongue is promoted, it is essential that the ethnic-linguistic groups in the education system are separated (Gupta, 1997). However, research into L2 acquisition shows that, when a child master the first language, the learning of another language becomes less problematic in the areas of language development skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing (Lartec, 2015).

The significance of mother tongue teaching in the early years of learning was important to this study and, in particular, in relation to the investigation into the extent to which student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue language.

2.4 From policy to practice

Different countries around the world advocate a policy of mother tongue teaching, especially in the early grades, in order to meet the EFA goals. Studies conducted thus far have shown that there is often a mismatch between policy intentions and practice. For example, the findings of the country case study by Mulkeen and Crowe-Taft (2010) and supported by a body of research studies indicate that countries that advocate the policy of mother tongue or local language unfortunately often have a shortage of trained, professional and qualified teachers and the teachers are often not able to either speak or teach in the local language of the learners

A study by Wang (2008), in which he explored teacher's language policy implementation in the tertiary context in China, found that "there is a discrepancy between the policymakers' intention and teachers' practice" (p. 19). A comparative study conducted by Akyeampong, Pryor, Westbrook, and Lussier (2011) in six African countries, namely, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda, concluded that those countries that introduce the local language policy often struggle

with the implementation of the policy because the teachers are not fluent in the local languages. Teachers need to be informed about orthographic structures and be able to use teaching methods and reading materials written in the local languages.

Similarly, Gacheche (2010) and Platteel, Hulshof, and Van Driel (2008) contend that, when teachers lack adequate training on how to use and teach in the mother tongue language, they often revert to the old system of teacher-controlled interactions in which learners are required to repeat content after the teacher, and are given no opportunities to ask questions. Bloch (2005) found that, although linguistic and language scholars are passionate about African languages and keen to see teachers teaching these languages in the correct form, the difficulty is often that the teachers themselves have not been educated in their mother tongue (as cited in Benson, 2004a). This has resulted in teachers teaching the mother tongue as if it were a foreign language, thus presenting a further challenge (Benson & Plüddemann, 2010).

2.4.1 The views and perceptions of using mother tongue language as a medium of instruction

While the available literature overwhelmingly supports the notion of mother tongue instruction in early years, citing numerous benefits, there are also a number of challenges that are cited in other literature. For example, Ejieh (2004) investigated the attitude of student teachers towards mother tongue instruction. The findings revealed, inter alia, some negative attitudes, that educators teaching in the mother tongue may not attract students and that teachers who are able to speak the mother tongue are not necessarily able to teach it, especially in those subjects that involve difficult vocabulary. Equally important, Ejieh's (2004) study found that student teachers believed that teaching in the mother tongue would degrade the teaching profession.

In the Namibian context, it would appear that the pressure from parents for their children to be instructed in English is resulting in the schools not adhering to the language policy. The parents often do not see African languages as having any substantial social and economic benefits or value (Mostert, Hamunyela, Kasanda, ... Zimba, & Veii, (2012); Murray, 2007; Namibia Ministry of Education, 2011). The parents' demands that their children be instructed in the English as the medium of instruction undermines the national policy aimed at promoting equal opportunity (Tshotsho, 2013). Tshotsho further argues that business in South Africa is conducted in English and even job interviews are conducted in English. Thus, those who are proficient in English are likely to obtain good jobs because English is seen as a measure as to whether a person is capable or not (Tshotsho, 2013). Thus, parents are convinced that learners should be educated in English in order to ensure that they better opportunities in the future.

However, contrary to these views, there is substantial evidence from research showing that a child's first language adequately will equip the child to acquire advanced literacy skills at a later date when English is used as the medium of instruction (Barrett et al., 2007; Benson, 2004; Ouane & Glanz, 2010). The argument that mother tongue learning in the early grades has a significant impact on advanced literacy skills is linked to the focus of this study, which aimed to assess the extent to which student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue language.

The following section discusses the theoretical socio-cultural perspectives on mother tongue learning.

2.5 Theoretical perspectives on literacy learning

The two dominant views underpinning literacy learning are the sociocultural perspective and the cognitive perspective. The sociocultural perspective views teaching and learning as being constructed in a socio-cultural context, while the

cognitive perspective views literacy as comprising technical skills that are acquired independently from either social or cultural influences but that literacy learning takes place in the head and is largely taught and learned. It is anticipated that the insight gained from the analysis of these theoretical perspectives will shed light on the extent to which these perspectives inform the preparation of student teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue language.

2.5.1 The sociocultural perspective

Literacy may be perceived as a socio-cultural tool or ideological model, which views teaching, learning, and development as being socially and culturally constructed (Purcell-Gates, 2004). The sociocultural approach aligns itself with Vygotsky, 1989) who proposes that all human activities taking place within a cultural context are mediated by language and other symbols and may be understood in the context of their historical development perspective (as in Davidson, 2010).

Based on the above perspective, attempts have been made to ascertain how children interpret their relations with others and how they learn the process of interpreting and encoding the world around them (Perez, 2004, as cited in Hossain, 2013). Furthermore, Vygotsky's notion of the social constructivist approach is consistent with sociocultural approach and sees knowledge as socially constructed and learning essentially as a social process. Learning is mediated 'through language, in this context learners' first language, facilitated by drawing on the contexts familiar to the learners so that meaning making is prioritised' (in Westbrook et al., 2013, p. 10).

Papatheodorou (2007) further argues that learning happens in the context of, and should start from, the child's experiences (Bausch & Voorhees, 2008; Ng & Yeo, 2013). Children bring their cultural experiences to school and it is vital that their knowledge of, and skill with, letters, words and text relevant to the interpretation of

written language (Purcell-Gates, Degener, Jacobson, & Soler, 2001) are nurtured and scaffold through interactions with more expert or knowledgeable others (Gee, 2008 cited in (Mosley, 2010). Such scaffolding requires a skilful mix of teacher demonstration, praise, practice and direct instruction (Westbrook et al., 2013). The learner-centred and social constructivist approaches, which are advocated in the Namibian education system, have been proved to be appropriate in providing guidelines for scaffolding and the construction of meaning as well as facilitating the effective literacy practices that encourage learners to be actively involved with the subject matter (Cummins, 2001; Rai et al., 2011).

According to the social constructivist approach, teachers must set up a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This means that, with the help of a knowledgeable someone or a peer, learners are able to achieve what they could not do alone (Vygotsky, 1989). The ZPD and scaffolding are both key concepts in the sociocultural theories and also relevant for teaching mother tongue (Papatheodorou, 2007). Hence, meaning is formed through social interaction between people and their environments, history and cultural norms, and interpretation (Creswell, 2012).

Learning to teach is both a sociocultural and a mediated process that involves interaction between individuals such as peers, learners, teachers and mentors (Darling- Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Such interaction requires supervision and coaching, to enable the student teachers to apply the different types of knowledge in the classroom (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). As a social process, this is influenced by beliefs, attitudes, and prior experiences in relation to teaching and that may cause tension between the student teachers' beliefs and what they learn in their initial teacher education courses (Nomlomo & Desai, 2014). It is thus useful if teacher education takes cognisance of this and ensures that teachers are trained in such a way that they acknowledge their learners' cultural experiences.

This study reviewed studies on literacy learning from both the developing and developed countries. It was observed that a number of studies have made use of the

sociocultural approach, including New Literacy Studies (NLS) which is a new paradigm for viewing literacy as a social practice (Bausch & Voorhees, 2008; Cross, 2011; Ng & Yeo, 2013; Wray, 1999). The above-mentioned scholars also regard literacy events as embedded in a particular context such as the home, school, workplace or playground (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Opoku-Amankwa & Brew-Hammond, 2011).

A sociocultural theory of literacy development and practice was deemed to be relevant to this study as the aim of the study was ascertain the extent to which student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in mother tongue language in Namibia. Accordingly, the study also focused on the interactions and engagements that must occur for literacy teaching and learning to take place. The study attempted to apply the sociocultural theory to a literacy study in Namibia because the studies that have, thus far, been conducted on literacy learning using this theory have been carried out in the developed countries. It was argued that if a study such as this was seeking to establish the relevance of the sociocultural theories to developing countries such as Namibia. The next section discusses the cognitive perspective of literacy learning.

2.5.2 The cognitive perspectives

Street (2003) refers to the cognitive approach as “autonomous” because this approach implies that literacy comprises technical skills that are acquired independently from social or cultural influences. Advocates of the cognitive model maintain that literacy is a technical learning process that takes place in the head and which must be taught, learnt and understood (Chall, 1983; Gillon, 2004; Street, 2006). Printed material is seen as a code that presents phonemes/graphemes and therefore deciphering this code is a skill that must be mastered before moving on to other skills (Heredia, 2011).

The cognitive approach is referred to as bottom-up approach because it focuses on understanding the text by combining the smallest units of the whole (Gains, 2010). In other words, the process starts with letter knowledge, moves on to vowels, consonants and then blends them into syllables to form words and, finally, sentences (Davidson, 2010). It is assumed that children learn and progress in a similar way and that the literacy skills are to be taught in isolation and in sequence. The role of the teacher in the cognitive approach is to ensure that each learner develops phonic and decoding skills and constructs meaning from the text read.

Several studies on literacy teaching strategies and activities that examined cognitive skills specifically emphasise the development of phonic skills, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary knowledge and text comprehension (Honan, Exley, Kervin, Simpson, & Wells, 2013; Hudson, Dossel, & Hudson, 2009; Stone, 2012). Thus, instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics has an impact on both reading and writing acquisition.

Some studies emphasise the development of all four of the language skills with Pang, Muaka, Bernhardt, and Kamil (2003) arguing that:

'early progress in reading depends on oral language development and before children can begin to learn to associate the written form with speech, they need to learn the vocabulary, grammar and sound system of the oral language' (p. 8).

Regarding listening and speaking, Gillon (2004) reports that there is a significant relationship between phonemic awareness and literacy development. As a predictor of early reading success, the development of phonological awareness also consists of a hierarchy of skills that progress from word level to syllable, to onset and rime and to the phoneme level (Gillon, 2004). Condy, Chigona, Chetty, and Thornhill (2010) suggest that listening and speaking offer a foundation for the synthetic approach to blending phonemes and segmenting words into their constituent parts.

Regarding reading, Chall (1983) proposes the stages through which all individuals may progress. These stages are age oriented and include the following: Stage 0 – Pre-reading; Stage 1 – Initial reading and decoding; Stage 2 – Confirmation and fluency and Stage 3 – Reading for the new. Progression through these stages is characterised by the recognition and decoding of words, by relating spoken words to written words, by relating letters to sounds, by learning the meaning of uncommon words and by acquiring the word knowledge that assists in comprehending what is read (Davidson, 2010).

In respect of writing, Johnson (2010), citing a theory by Bear et al. (1996), suggests that writing develops according to the following stages or steps: a) *emergent*: drawing, scribbling, pretend writing, printing letters, no sound-system correspondence; b) *beginning*: initial writing or retelling; and c) *transitional*: more fluency, planning and organisation. In order to read and write, a child has to understand both the spoken language and the way in which this spoken language is represented in written forms that may later be read.

The analysis of the two theoretical perspectives provides an understanding of literacy learning. The insight gained from this analysis was important to this study as it guided the study as to the theoretical perspectives which inform the preparation of student teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue language. It was anticipated that the insight acquired from the analysis of the two perspectives would ensure an understanding of literacy teaching and learning in Namibia

This study thus drew on the two perspectives, as it would not have been possible for each perspective on its own to provide a sufficient explanation of literacy acquisition. The cognitive approach guides instructional activities in the classroom and may explain the difficulties that learners may experience in the acquisition of literacy while the socio-cultural approach offers some explanation of the broader literacy learning context. The two perspectives therefore complement each other (Davidson, 2010).

Despite the significance of the teacher possessing adequate knowledge and skills of mother tongue literacy, there is a concern that some teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa and other developing countries are not attaining the level of the knowledge required, probably as a result of inadequate teacher preparation (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010). Effective teaching may be impeded by a lack of understanding of the subject matter or inadequate pedagogical skills that may be improved by more effective teacher preparation (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010). Accordingly, this study assessed the knowledge, skills and pedagogical practice of lecturers and student teachers in respect of mother tongue literacy teaching. The following section discusses the approaches to literacy teaching.

2.6 Approaches to literacy teaching

In addition to the sociocultural and cognitive approaches that were chosen to inform this study, there are some other approaches to literacy teaching. These include the look and say, whole language or language experienced approach, critical literacy, and the New Literacy Studies (NLS) (Opoku-Amankwa, 2011).

Baker (2001) argued that the whole language approach recommends a holistic way of learning a language that involves the teaching of the integration of all the language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing in the teaching of literacy (in Opoku-Amankwa, 2011). In Baker's (2001) view, the whole language approach emphasis the connection between reading and writing and, in other words, the more children read, the better their writing skill will be. The proponents of whole language believe language is best learnt through social construction. According to Luke and Schwazer (2001), the whole language approach advocates the use of real life literature such as children literature, stories and other teaching and learning literacy materials which will allow children to rely on their own purpose and goals while learning literacy (in Opoku-Amankwa, 2011). It is interesting to note the link between the whole language view and the socio-cultural historical approach, which

perceives learning as a process of social interaction, which takes place in a social construction context (Opoku-Amankwa, 2011). Thus, this carries the message that literacy-learning process involves prior learning, the meaning making process and a supporting environment with more experienced companions to assist and guide the child's meaning making of what he/she learns. In conclusion, the socio-cultural approach views language as an important aspect of the communication in the classroom and as having two roles, namely, 1) it provides a medium of communication in the classroom and 2) children use it to construct meaning (Opoku-Amankwa, 2011).

Critical literacy, which is sometimes known as socio-political literacy, goes further than the other approaches and suggests instructional methods, which establish student's ownership of literacy as the main aim of schooling. Critical literacy empowers students to be confident in both their schoolwork as well as in their cultural identity. Which of these approaches referred above may help teachers to shape their beliefs and understanding of literacy teaching and learning in the classrooms? It would appear that several teachers are influenced by the skills/cognitive approach. Nonetheless, this study was positioned within the context of the cognitive/skills and sociocultural approaches in order to establish the way in which student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue of the learners. In addition, the study also focused on how teachers are prepared to teach all the four language skills in the mother tongue.

2.7 Professional competencies

Mata (2014) is of the view that training in the pedagogical competencies of the language teachers should integrate the knowledge, skills and attitudes, which future teachers will require in language teaching, learning and evaluation. Below is a table that presents the main categories of standards according to different scholars who

have focused on classifying the professional standards for preparing language teachers.

Table 2.1: Professional Standards for Preparing Language Teachers

<i>Classification of the Professional Standard for Preparing Language Teachers</i>
<p>Shulman (1986): The categories of professional competencies, according to Mata, (2014), include knowledge of the target language and culture; pedagogical knowledge (learning theories, approaches and strategies); disciplinary knowledge (theories of language learning); professional and contextual knowledge and ethical knowledge.</p>
<p>Commins (1995): Classification is as follows: using and developing professional knowledge and value; communicating, interacting, and working with students; planning and managing the teaching and learning process; monitoring and assessing students' progress and learning outcomes and reflecting, evaluating and planning in the interests of continuous improvement.</p>
<p>Day and Conklin (1992): Categories are as follows: content knowledge of the subject matter (syntax, semantics, phonology and pragmatics as well as literacy and curricular aspects); pedagogic knowledge (knowledge of teaching strategies, beliefs and practices); pedagogical content knowledge (knowledge of how to present content to students, knowledge of how students come to understand the subject matter, what difficulties they are encountering) and support knowledge (cited in Mata, 2014, p. 342).</p>

The table above presents the standards for preparing language teachers in general but may also be adapted to mother tongue literacy teaching.

Teacher training and development in Namibia is based on the National Professional Standards for Teachers. These standards for teachers are categorised into four domains that describe the following professional competencies or areas of skills and knowledge required by teachers:

Professional knowledge (knowledge that teachers require to effectively teach and facilitate students' learning); professional practice (the capacity of teachers to plan and implement innovative, learner-centred programmes that incorporate continuous assessment to enhance student learning); professional values (ethical and professional values of teachers), and professional relationships (MoE, 2006, p. 7).

Universities, colleges and private providers are expected to base their curricula, programmes and qualifications on these standards (Namibia Ministry of Education (MoE, 2006). Content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge fall under professional knowledge and professional practice both in Namibia and Southern Africa and are all essential for teacher training programmes in mother tongue instruction (Keevy, 2014). On the other hand, there is a concern that, if care is not taken, the standards may reduce teaching to the form of checklist and narrow the set of technical skills required (Gambhir, Broad, Evans, & Gaskell, 2008). It was for this reason that this study examined the way in which the junior primary student teachers are prepared to teacher literacy in the mother tongue.

2.8 A critical analysis of the language policy in teacher education

Research from all over the world clearly indicates that children learn best in their mother tongue or first language. In recent years, schools in both the developing and developed countries have realised that the students in their classrooms are linguistically heterogeneous. This has come about as a result of the movement of people because of war, poverty, globalisation and new technology (Cenoz & Hornberger, 2008). It has also been discovered that children instructed in a language other than the one they speak at home struggle with understanding.

The education ministries of several countries have endorsed the language policies in education that encourage the learning of, and through, the mother tongue. In many of the African countries, during the first years of schooling, the mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction followed by English Second Language which is taught as a subject. In South Africa all learners must learn in their home language, particularly in Grades R to 3. In Grade 4 the home language shifts to either English or Afrikaans as the medium of instruction, with provision for the extended learning of the home language (Department of Education, 2002). In Namibia the language of instruction and language of initial literacy is the mother tongue in the lower primary grades (Grades 1 to 3). Grade 4 is a transitional year with English as the medium of instruction for all subjects (MBESC, 2003). In Botswana Setswana is the medium of instruction in Grades 1 to 4 while English is the second language and taught as a subject. English becomes the medium of instruction in Grade 5. In Finland the government had passed an integration policy that stipulates the rights of immigrants to keep their culture and language. Schools are obliged to offer the mother tongue to immigrant children for at least two hours per week (Otterup, 2012).

The summary statements on the policy situation in different countries highlight the varying context in which mother tongue literacy is practised. Nevertheless, providing literacy-learning opportunities for all learners in their mother tongue requires teachers to be trained in the language in which they are to teach. With this in mind, it is imperative that teacher education acknowledges the importance of linguistic diversity and provides support to teachers in their applying the strategies and methodologies that use the language of the learners (Mackenzie, 2013). In spite of the government policy of multilingualism, English and Africans remain the medium of instruction used in tertiary institutions in South Africa with English as the used at the University of Namibia. In Botswana teacher training does not prepare teachers for teaching in a different linguistic setting as the instruction is in English. However, those teachers who choose to teach in the African languages would be prepared for teaching in the African languages they choose because these languages are offered

as modules during their training. This implies that teachers who would teach literacy are prepared to teach using the language used in school as a medium of instruction in schools.

2.9 Pre-service teacher education programmes

The pre-service teacher education programme is assumed to educate competent teachers and to develop the skills required to ensure lifelong teaching careers. Kansanen (2003 p. 89) argues that initial teacher education is crucial and that any deficiencies in the programme will have adverse consequences that that may be difficult to address at a later stage. Hence, the basic professional competencies are imparted during the period of initial teacher education as this may not necessarily happen during in-service teacher training (Kansanen, 2003).

Karan and Morren (2013) suggest that it is essential that student teachers involved in mother tongue programme are familiar with the relevant national language policy which, in this case, is the medium of instruction. They must study and become proficient in reading, writing and the use of academic terms in their first language. Karan and Morren (2013) further postulate that student teachers should relate to the various learning theories and recognise how critical the first language is to learning success (Karan & Morren, 2013). Furthermore, student teachers should be exposed to the first language's structure and to what it means for children's language acquisition and literacy skills in education (Amissah, 2001; Mata, 2014). There is a gap in the existing literature with regard to how junior primary student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue and it is hoped that this study may contribute to this area.

Kosonen, Young and Malone (2006, p. 15) presented an overview of the components of a strong and sustained mother tongue-based, multilingual (MTB-MLE) programme that included:

... orthographies; instructional materials; grade reading materials; recruitment and training; monitoring, evaluation and documentation; supportive language policies; cooperation among different agencies, preliminary research that provide information about languages and learning.

Kosonen et al. (2006) further state that, for the above-mentioned programme to be successful, it needed support from the political parties as well as careful planning. In support of the value of initial teacher training programme, Bühmann and Trudell (2008) also contend that a quality teacher education programme should include adequate teacher training, the availability of teaching and learning materials and a pedagogical innovative approach that may help to ensure the effectiveness of the bilingual programme.

Bühmann and Trudell (2008, p. 38) argue “a change in the mother tongue is not likely to bring about good results if the overall quality of the programme remains poor” because the quality of an education programme depends on the quality of its teachers (Karan & Morren, 2013; Snoek, Swennen, & Van der Klink, 2011). This implies that the teacher has a greater impact on the student learning than the “curriculum, teaching methods, the buildings of the school or the role of the parent” (Hattie, 2009, in Snoek et al., 2011 p.). Snoek et al. (2011) suggest that successful programmes begin by requiring prospective teachers to commence their learning development by observing and collecting detailed information about the learning development of learners as well as their learning context and bridges the learner’s experiences and the school experience.

It has, however, been observed that several teacher education programmes have been criticised for being too theoretical and for having little connection to practice (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Andrews (2007, cited in Hudson et al., 2009) suggests that teachers should combine their content and pedagogical expertise in order to implement learning experiences that enhance and improve student

outcomes. It is thus essential that teacher education programmes include both course work and field experiences so that student teachers have sufficient time to in which to practise and learn from the real classroom situation.

2.10 Initial teacher preparation

While research evidence acknowledges the value of mother tongue education in children's learning, Dutcher (2003) is of the opinion that the success of mother tongue education depends on the recruitment of teachers who are not able only to speak the language of the community but also who also able to use the language in an academic context. As a result, teachers working in a mother tongue literacy programme are required to know the language and to be able use it in the classrooms (Dutcher, 2003; Lewin, 2004). However, this necessitates training because even, if the teachers speak the local language, this does not mean that they able to read write and teaches in that language (Dutcher, 2003). Nevertheless, Gacheche (2010) is in agreement with the assumption that, if teachers are able to speak a child's L1, they are also able to teach in that language. It would however, be ideal if the teachers who are involved in the development and teaching of the mother tongue programme were diverse in terms of both their language proficiency and their teaching experiences (Purdie et al., 2008). In other words, teachers need to be adequately prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in schools.

It is documented in the available literature that, globally, teacher education programmes have moved from teacher-centred to learner-centred curricula and from a theoretical foundation to the actual skills required in the classroom (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010). UNICEF's State of the World's Children 1999 reads as follows:

[T]he Convention on the Rights of the Children guides us towards a more child-centred approach to teaching and learning, one in which students participate actively, thinking

and solving problems for themselves and, in this way, developing the self-esteem that is essential for learning and decision making through life (cited in Dutcher, 2003).

This is in alignment with Ouane and Glanz (2010) and Rai et al. (2011), who maintain that mother tongue teaching in teacher preparation is crucial as it involves the effective facilitation of effective learner-centred teaching practice, which encourages learners to be active and become involved in the subject matter. As highlighted by several writers the social constructivist approach to teacher education is in line with learner-centred education.

Bainbridge and Macy (2008) point out some central principles of the constructivist approach that they found in the Standard for the English Language Arts which was developed by the International Reading Association and that appear to be applicable to mother tongue teaching. These principles include the following: “an open and critical approach to literacy teaching for understanding and real-life application, skill development in context rather than in isolation, student engagement, ownership and choice, student talk and collaboration, interdisciplinary linkage” (Bainbridge & Macy, 2008, p. 47). Overall, social constructivism involves meaning making, critical thinking, and a holistic approach to both teaching and learning (Bainbridge & Macy, 2008).

In Canada, for example, there has been a shift in the perspective of initial teacher education – a shift from the traditional, skill-based and training model to a more holistic view of teacher preparation, which uses a social constructivist approach (Gambhir et al., 2008). In other words, teacher education philosophy in Canada is built on the perspective of the whole teacher that emphasises both reflective practice and critical inquiry. In Namibia, the teacher preparation and teacher education pedagogy is based on an integrated, holistic approach that produces student teachers who are committed to participatory, learner-centred and reflective teaching and learning (Namibia Ministry of Higher Education, Vocational, Training, Science and Technology, 1998, p. 2:1:28). Learner-centred education in Namibia is a central focus of Basic Education as it presupposes that teachers have a holistic view of the

learner and that they value the learner's experience as the starting point of the studies. This demands a higher degree of learner participation, contribution and production (Angula, 1993, p. 80)

The proponents of mother tongue teacher preparation argue that teachers who are well prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue have a positive impact on their learners' learning outcomes (Amissah, 2001; Benson & Plüddemann, 2010; Karan & Morren, 2013) and also demonstrate adequate knowledge, skills and competencies in respect of the language used as the medium of instruction in schools (Karan & Morren, 2013).

The policy framework "Towards Education for All" requires that teachers ensure the participation of all learners, irrespective of their social, economic, and language backgrounds (Angula, 1993). It is acknowledged that teacher preparation and development play a significant role in meeting this requirement. According to Gambhir, Broad, Evans & Gaskell, (2008, p.6), the assumption is to "provide critical knowledge and practice to teachers, which assist them with the development of a fundamental understanding of high quality student, and teacher learning and performance".

Thus, teacher educators for mother tongue instruction should be equipped with a specific skill that allows for certain flexibilities when preparing teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue. These teacher educators should demonstrate the following characteristics, namely, strong curriculum and subject content knowledge; knowledge of how to teach; an understanding of how learners learn and their development and context; professional knowledge and the expertise that allows them to make judgements (Gupta, 1997).

The literature on the required knowledge for teachers strongly identifies and supports the above-mentioned components that, either directly or indirectly, impact on adequate teacher preparation. Shulman (1986a) and a number of other researchers

such as Gupta (1997) have contributed to this area of teacher knowledge. Shulman (1986a) argues that the characteristics cited above play a significant role in the preparation of teachers. It is essential that teachers possess an advanced understanding of the subject matter to enable them to teach effectively. The understanding of the subject matter also provides a foundation for pedagogic content knowledge (PCK), and enables teachers to present knowledge of mother tongue literacy to others (Pang et al., 2003; Shulman, 2000). Several developing countries, including Namibia, have identified the significance of subject knowledge and competencies in shaping the skills of pre-service teachers in mother tongue instruction and thus have established professional standards for effective teaching practice to guide the professional improvement of teachers (Gambhir et al., 2008).

It is generally assumed that the teachers' knowledge of the subject area which they teach actually correlates with the students' achievements and therefore it is vital that the pre-service teacher acquires a deep knowledge of both the subject content areas and pedagogical competencies (Dutcher, 2003).

2.11 Teaching practice or field experiences

Teaching practice or field experiences is one of the most effective components of the pre-service teachers education programme. Teacher education programmes are required to prepare pre-service teachers for this activity and also include them in it in advance by micro teaching with their peers and also providing follow-up seminars and discussions in order to build on the earlier teaching practice (TP) experiences (Lewin, 2004). Learning to teach effectively requires that pre-service teachers integrate what they have learnt at college with the context and the practice in the classroom. This means that theory and practice should be integrated and presented in a logical manner.

It is imperative that teacher education is rooted in the reality of everyday school life (Bunyi, Wangia, Magoma, & Limboro, 2013). There must be a closer link between the theory and the practice in the classroom. Thus, teacher education programmes should provide opportunities for trainees to practise teaching and learning through integrating theory and practice and ensuring that students teachers have sufficient pre-service time to apply what they have learned (Darling-Hammond, 2006). This will ensure that real classroom challenges related to learning inform the way teachers understand teaching and how they promote effective learning (Bunyi, Wangia, Magoma, & Limboro, 2013).

Scholars in literacy pedagogy argue that the commitment to provide pre-service teachers with critical pedagogy builds upon the belief that teachers should have an 'opportunity to practise, take risks and explore their learning environment, which should be rich in feedback and support' (Bharuthram, 2012; Gambhir et al., 2008). In view of this, the quality of field experience (practicum) is central to the quality of the pre-service learning experiences within the programme.

Accordingly, practice serves as a site for

[s]ynthesising the connection between the theoretical, research-based pedagogical concept presented in the academic programme and the actual practice of teaching (Gambhir et al., 2008, p. 20).

The teaching practice not only serves as a bridge between theory and practice in the process of learning how to teach, but it is also the context in which student teachers develop personal teaching competencies (Smith & Vaux, 2003). It is therefore vital that the pre-service teacher education programmes support this development of personal teaching competencies in the interests of successful mother tongue literacy learning (Benson & Plüddemann, 2010; Hudson et al., 2009).

Shaw, Barry, and Mahlios's (2008 p.35) indicated that "becoming a professional teacher is an interactive, dynamic and interpretive process between the meaning-

making of the teacher in relation to the content of the teacher education programmes, and the context of the actual practice". This was, in fact, the reason why this study examined the way in which student teachers present mother literacy to learners in the classroom during the teaching practice.

The next section reviews and analyse existing studies on the preparation of mother tongue literacy teachers.

2.12 Review of research studies on teacher preparation in mother tongue literacy teaching

Researches have carried out studies on mother tongue-based multilingual (MTB-MLT) implementation. For example, Lartec (2015) analysed the strategies which teacher training in the Philippines use in implementing mother-tongue based multilingual focused on classroom teaching and identified problems which the teachers encountered. The findings revealed that teachers in Philippines used strategies such as translations into mother tongue, the use of the lingua franca and improvisation. However, they encountered problems such as a shortage or lack of books written in the mother tongue, a lack of vocabulary and a lack of teacher training.

This study reviewed literature on the initial teacher education programme with regard to the teacher preparation in respect of initial literacy teaching in the mother tongue. Some of the international studies reviewed focused on the preparation of pre-service teachers in respect of the teaching of literacy through the mother tongue while others tended to focus the teaching of literacy in general. In addition, there have several studies conducted on reading and writing (Benson, 2010; Desai, 2012; King, 2003; Perry, 2012)

It appeared that there have been insufficient studies conducted on the preparation of mother tongue literacy teachers in developing countries due to the fact that the majority of the studies conducted tend to focus on developed, Western, industrialised countries; and may therefore not be relevant to developing countries such as Namibia. The contexts may be well different because the developed countries may be well resourced in terms of local language and medium of instruction and the teachers adequately prepared to teach using the languages of the learners compared to the developing countries such as Namibia.

A study conducted in Canada by Kosnik and Beck (2008) examined the views and practice of both the pre-service teacher educators who taught literacy including and certain graduates of the programme. This study placed much emphasis on reading and writing, and focused on the practices used by new teachers in literacy teaching. The study found that the new teachers were of the opinion that what was taught during the training did not always correspond to what they were supposed to teach as the approaches used in training did not help them in practice while the programme also covered so many facets that the new teachers were unable to always follow. However, the study did not include listening and speaking skills even though oral language develops a foundation for the building of reading and writing skills (Chard, Pikulski, & Templeton, 2000) and focused more on teachers who had started their teaching careers and not on teacher training.

An Australian project was conducted by Loudon and Rohl (2006) and focused on the preparation of literacy teaching with considerable emphasis on reading, writing, speaking and listening. This study involved new teachers, senior staff members and teacher educators who participated in a national survey. The study also covered aspects such as personal competencies, broad knowledge and relevant knowledge. The findings revealed that the majority of the new teachers were confident about their literacy skills, their conceptual understanding of literacy, curriculum documents, the assessment strategies and their broader preparation to teach. However, fewer new teachers were confident about their capacity to teach specific aspects of literacy

such as viewing spelling, grammar and phonics or about their capacity to meet the challenges of student diversity. The study included the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) of language development, but did not include evidence of preparation during teacher training that involved actual preparation, which included teacher educators and student teachers.

However, despite the fact that the two studies discussed above examined teacher preparation for literacy teaching, they did not appear to be consistent. The study conducted by Kosnik and Beck (2008) concentrated on reading and writing only, while Loudon and Rohl (2006) included all the skills of language development. Although both studies focused on the impact of the teacher programme for literacy teaching on new teachers it is not clear whether the studies included aboriginal or indigenous language teachers.

In the African context a comparative study conducted by UNESCO (Paris) (2000) in six countries (Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda), focused on the initial preparation and continuing education in respect of reading and basic mathematics in the six African countries. The study was designed to identify the knowledge; understanding and practices expected of teachers during their preparation phase and compared these with those of new teachers. The findings revealed that tutors lacked knowledge of and practice in realistic strategies to relation to teaching reading. However, the study by UNESCO (Paris) (2000) concentrated on the reading dimension of literacy only while this study focused on all four of the language development skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Benson (2010) conducted a case study at Solwezi College of Education in Zambia that focused on the extent to which teachers were prepared to handle initial literacy in a local language through the “New Breakthrough to Literacy (NBTL)” programme that was based on the language experience approach. Benson's (2010) study was deemed to be particularly relevant to this current study as it sought to ascertain, inter alia, what teachers learnt during their pre-service training as preparation to teach

initial literacy in the local languages the using NBTL programme and how teachers were trained. However, this case study of Benson (2010) focused particularly on a specific literacy programme and used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The findings of Benson's (2010) study revealed that some lecturers were not fully trained in the NBTL methodology and, hence, they failed to prepare trainees to teach initial literacy in a local language. In contrast, this study investigated the methods and strategies used by teacher educators at the University of Namibia to train student teachers to teach literacy through the mother tongue but without focusing on a specific approach.

A Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) created a training programme for educators and implementers in multilingual Southern Africa. The programme was a five-week course which was offered to teacher trainers, teacher educators and educational managers (Benson & Plüddemann, 2010). The authors further examined how the programme had supported teacher educators in promoting mother tongue-based schooling in the multilingual African context. Although the majority of the programme objectives have been achieved and outside evaluators have praised the relevance of the timeline, language planning content and ideology of the course, it is clear that this programme was not intended for student teachers but, instead, for teacher trainers and educators. There are, however, studies that have investigated the preparation of the pre-service teacher. For example, a study by Zimmerman, Botha, Howie & Long, (2007) that investigated how the training curricula for Foundation Phase teachers prepare and support teachers to address reading instruction in terms of literate language development in diverse, linguistic, foundational and intermediate setting in South Africa. The findings revealed that there was a gap between what student teachers were taught during their pre-service teacher training and what was expected of them in the classroom. However, although the study investigated how Foundation Phase students were prepared to teach in diverse classroom settings, the study tended to focus more on the reading component as compared to the other components. A study by Pretorius (2002) investigated the relationship between reading skills and academic

performance at graduate level. The study found that several graduate students experience serious reading comprehension problems. However, the focus of Pretorius (2002) differed from that of this study that aimed to examine how student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue of the learners.

Based on the review of relevant literature, it was concluded that relatively little research has been carried out into the way in which teachers are prepared for teaching literacy in the mother tongue in Namibia. The Namibian studies that were reviewed did not appear to focus on how adequately teachers are prepared for teaching literacy in the mother tongue but, instead, examined and analysed the implementation of the language policy and the challenges encountered (Harris, 2011; Murray, 2007; Töttemeyer, 2010).

Nevertheless, there have been studies conducted which are somewhat relevant to this study such as the study by Legère, Trewby, and Van Graan (2003). The latter study focused on the way in which pre-service programmes prepare teachers to address the reading and writing skills of young learners in Namibian schools. However, the findings revealed little on how pre-service teachers are prepared in Namibia's teacher training institutions and how these teachers acquire the mother tongue teaching skills and strategies they eventually apply in the classrooms.

It may thus be concluded that this research study was triggered by the: (1) dearth of empirical research on how junior primary student teachers are prepared for teaching literacy in the mother tongue language, and (2) limited empirical research on how junior primary student teachers are prepared for teaching all four of the literacy skills namely, listening and speaking, reading and writing, as per the national curriculum of schools in Namibia.

2.13 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed concepts and theoretical perspectives, which were relevant to the study. The chapter discussed the sociocultural approach which advocates that the teaching of literacy does not happen in isolation but, instead, in the context in which the schools are located and where children grow up. This approach focuses on the cultural influences on the literacy learning of learners. The chapter also discussed the cognitive perspective, which focuses on what happens in the classrooms when learners learn literacy. Thus, it concentrates more on the order in which literacy is presented to the learners and how they learn literacy.

The review of relevant literature also highlighted the components that are essential for mother tongue literacy teacher preparation, namely, *mother tongue teaching, mother tongue instruction, and literacy*. The review of relevant literature also established that the preparation of teachers plays a significant role in achieving quality teaching and learning outcomes. It was further established in the literature review that there appear to be limited studies available on mother tongue literacy teacher preparation, especially in the developing contexts. The majority of the existing studies have been carried out in developed and industrialised contexts and may not be relevant to developing countries such as Namibia. Other studies have tended to focus on reading and writing only and not on the four skills of language development which were the focus of this study.

Accordingly, this study aimed to fill the gap in the literature on literacy teacher training in the mother tongue language by providing an insight into and understanding of the way in which student teachers are prepared for literacy teaching in the mother tongue in a developing context such as Namibia; and by highlighting the possibilities and challenges of teaching all four of the skills of language development in mother tongue literacy teaching and learning. It was thus anticipated that the study would have national and international significance in terms of the preparation of student teachers for teaching mother tongue literacy in a practical way.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

The literature review in the previous chapter identified the following elements that appear to have either a direct or indirect effect on the preparation of teachers, namely, literacy as a social and cultural practice, teacher preparation programme, curriculum, as well as the practice of mother tongue literacy (Karan & Morren, 2013; Shulman, 1986a; Winter, 2009). The above-mentioned factors were identified as the most important in bringing about change in teacher education programmes because they influence the student's learning outcomes (Snoek, Swennen, & Van der Klink, 2009).

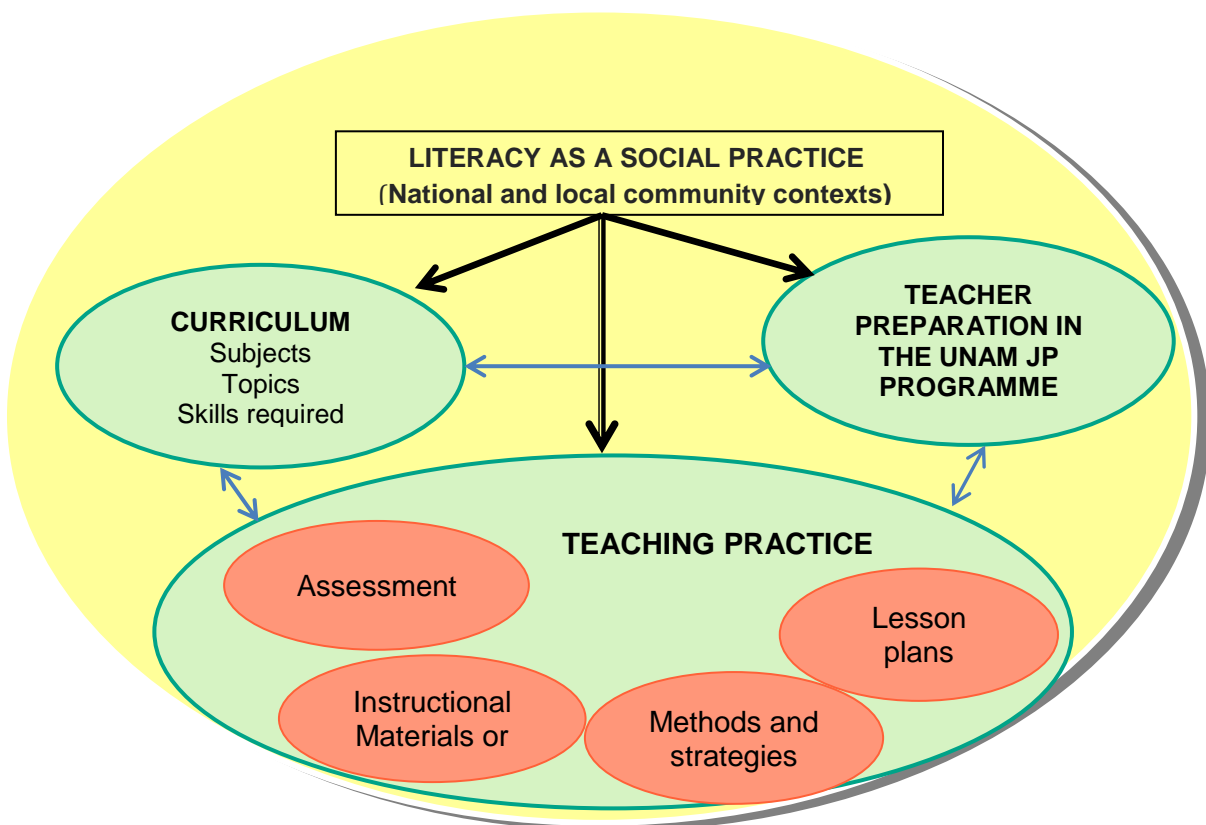


Figure 3.1: A framework for assessing mother tongue literacy teacher preparation and teaching practice

Figure 3.1 on page 59 presents the proposed conceptual framework used in this study. The components in the figure may be used to demonstrate how teachers are prepared to teach mother tongue literacy.

The diagram shown above is labelled “Literacy as a social practice” and shows that mother tongue teacher literacy practices occur within the social context in which schooling takes place. There are three components that constitute the conceptual framework, namely, teacher preparation programme, curriculum and teaching practice. These components are related and influence each other.

This conceptual framework helped the researcher to design the study, particularly data collection, data analysis and the interpretation of the findings. It also helped the researcher to organise the findings into chapters.

3.2 Literacy as a social practice

According to Purcell-Gates et al. (2004), teaching and learning occur within the social and cultural contexts in which children grow up. The understanding is that, when children come to school, they bring both their cultural experiences and their knowledge of letters, words and text to the interpretation of the written language (Hammond & Bransford, 2005). In other words, children do not come to school as blank slates. They bring with them a rich heritage of their contextual realities. The learner’s social context has a significant influence as it affects the readiness and ability to absorb new information.

It is for this reason that Hossain (2013) maintains that literacy is one of the social skills that enable people to take part in social groups. In trying to understand, the important role of the child’s social context in the child’s learning Purcell-Gate et al (2004) offer an example of what happens when paying a bill. They regard this as a

literacy event that comprises a number of literacy practices. Purcell-Gate, further indicate that paying a bill also entails interpersonal interactions that are social because the action involves reading what is written on the bill, writing a cheque or an address to pay and speaking to a teller.

According to Obanya (2010 p. 29), the pedagogy of African traditions consists of seven elements:

1. Oral communication: the telling of stories, usually by an elderly person, around the fire.
2. Instructing: assigning tasks with accepted rules for their execution.
3. Demonstrating: physically showing the step-by step process of how things should be done, for example cooking, harvesting – a process that encourages learning by doing.
4. Encouraging and reproving: reinforcement of socially accepted behaviour, reprimand for unacceptable behaviour.
5. Repetition: saying, demonstrating over and over again until the rules, skills and process are mastered.
6. Team teaching and collaborative learning: adults collaborating to transfer skills to children; older children teamed up to take care of younger ones.
7. Internship and apprenticeship: exposure to the skills of knowledgeable practitioners of, for example, craft work traditional medicine, music and dance, thus allowing mastery of the technical and social aspects of a trade.

In Namibia context, the Oshiwambo language, where the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama fall, culturally, they educate their children through story telling with children listening to the stories told by parents/elderly person. Oduolowu and Oluwakemi (2014) explain that, although these stories were unwritten, they have been passed down from generations without losing their originality. Storytelling, songs and dances are all ways of passing on cultural history and a way of teaching values to both the young and the old (Rahim and Rahiem 2012). According to the

culture of the Aawambo people, they are an agrarian people. They grow crops, they look after cattle and they socialise during every festival such as weddings, harvest time and birthdays, as well as festivals related to cattle, to name a few. During these festivals, or when people work in the field, they sing songs that are specifically dedicated to the festival in question. Their songs have never been written down and are in original language. Thus, people have to memorise them. When someone is suffering as the village must come together and share the pain.

In other words, learners participate in and observe all the cultural activities that they see happening around them, for example, they participate in various activities in the community such as Sunday schools, church youth groups, teenage groups, or even church choirs. In the majority of these groups, the children interact and play different games with others in the community, often they imitating their elders and pretending to be teachers while others pretend to be learners. Thus, they listen to the instructions given by the elders and use words that the elders use. Learners listen to stories told by elders, they read the labels and posters in the community and they communicate with people in the market places when they want to buy and sell things. All these every day, literacy related incidences and occasions could be incorporated into school literacy in order to link what the learners learn at home with what they learn in school. It is in this context that Skutnabb-Kangas (2004) proposed the notion that children enter Grade 1 with a variety of skills; such as verbal skills (vocabulary and phonemic awareness) and early literacy skills (understanding printed concepts, knowing the names of letters), which may facilitate their acquisition of reading and writing skills. These experiences also relate to the type of communities in which they grow up and in which the schools are situated.

Therefore, if teachers in the classrooms are to assist learners to learn successfully, the teachers need, firstly, to begin with what the learners already know – that is what is in their heads already – namely, their own language, and the knowledge and skills they have acquired through living in their own communities as they will use this as a

point of departure before learning new content and concepts. This principle is widely recognised as it is believed to guide teachers on where to start and where to scaffold.

Secondly, teachers must assist the learners to develop verbal, written and higher level thinking skills in the language they know best. At the same time, these teachers must support their learners as they gradually learn the official school language (Zoss, Holbrook, McGrail, & Albers, 2014). Compton-Lilly (2006, as cited in Davidson, 2010) provides an example of how to link the children's out of school literacy to the literacy learned in school by using traditional stories for reading and familiar topics for writing until the children gradually begin to feel confident with the school literacy activities. According to the technical skills teaching approach in the African context, children start at the bottom of the language, learning first the letters of the alphabet, then forming syllables by associating consonants and vowels and then words and sentences (Chatry-Komarek, 2003; Davidson, 2010).

Similarly, prospective teachers do not enter the teaching profession empty-handed but they bring with them their experiences and understandings of teaching that shape their practice (Akyeampong, Pryor, Westbrook & Lussier, 2011; Rahim & Rahiem, 2012) and which may date from their primary and secondary school days (Bainbridge & Macy, 2008). In other words, prospective teachers do not begin their teacher training as blank slates with regard to the teaching profession. They come with experiences that they may have developed over years of observation, or even research. According to Birello (2012), this perspective also includes the beliefs and knowledge that influence what teachers do. Birello (2012b) continues by postulating that to understand what teachers do is to unearth what they believe and know, including their attitudes and feelings.

However, Shulman (2000) warns that we will not know whether a person knows something until we ask the person to discuss, converse and debate the issue in question. Shulman (2000) goes on to state that the only way to know whether students understand something is to ask them to either write it down or talk about it.

These points to the need to consider the fact that every person undertaking the study of any discipline comes with some degree of knowledge about that discipline. In view of this, literacy as social practice, as conceptualised by this study, foregrounds the programmes, curriculum and teaching practice of teacher education for mother tongue literacy preparation.

3.2.1 Teacher preparation programme and the policy context

Literacy instruction in Namibia is based in the policy of mother tongue instruction; this is to say Grades 1 to 3 are to be instructed in the mother tongue languages. This facilitates the linkage between what learners do or speak at home/community with what they are learning at schools. This is the reason why Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) suggested that the teacher preparation programmes should begin with the prospective teachers' personal experiences as a way in which to activate their beliefs and knowledge to build on these. Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) then proposed that other programmes start their courses of study by engaging the students in writing and sharing education autobiographies and narratives, thus assisting them to critically examine their own educational experiences and prepare themselves for professional and pedagogical thinking. In order to achieve this, teacher education programmes must help prospective teachers to understand all these initiatives because teachers are the most crucial agents of change (Li, Zhao & Yeung, 2012). In this case, teacher education programmes should be committed to training teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue or local language. The assumption is that these teacher education programmes should effectively prepare teachers as follows:

- exposure to and a clear understanding of the language policy
- use the language policy to adopt a medium of instruction for literacy learning
- relate learning theories to the teaching of the mother tongue and how important it is for learner success

- familiarity with the local language materials to be used and confidence in the methodology for literacy acquisition in the local language (Amisshah, 2001, p. 3; Karan & Morren, 2013).

It must be remembered that there are different types of mother tongue-based teacher training programmes offered to pre-service teachers in some countries. These programmes differ in terms of the type of knowledge and practical experiences offered to the student teachers and how this is supported. Dennis and Malone (2011) cite four mother tongues based training programmes that are offered to pre-service trainees:

- Firstly, some programmes offer a two, three and four-year certification that provides local language teachers with the requisite knowledge and skills, how to apply these language theories in the classrooms, and how to use the local language effectively as the medium of instruction.
- Secondly, some programmes offer a one year certification in order to equip trainees with pedagogical knowledge and skills as well as the theories and practical skills that they require to teach in the mother tongue as a medium of instruction.
- Thirdly, some programmes comprise two to four-week workshops for certified teachers to equip them additional theoretical and practical knowledge and the skills required to teach in mother tongue classrooms
- Lastly, some programmes are non-certification programmes for assistant teachers from local language communities and who are bilingual in their home language and the second language but lack the educational background required to qualify to teach a certification programme.

Whether the entire programme is certified or not, these programmes are aimed at providing the teachers with the requisite curriculum knowledge and instructional skills to enable student teachers to teach the mother tongue in their classrooms. The pre- and lower primary BEd programme is a four-year certificate programme.

3.2.2 Curriculum Knowledge

According to Shulman (1986a), the curriculum is concerned with knowledge and understanding and especially how teachers view knowledge as this has an influence on the curriculum practice and implementation.

It is crucial to note that the curriculum includes the structure of the subjects and the sequence of topics or concepts to be taught and thus the pre-service curriculum encompasses a range of programmes designed for the teaching of a particular subject, topics, and instructional materials (Ball, Thames, & Phelps, 2008, p. 75). In short, a curriculum is a schedule indicating the plan of action and the topics for any given subject. The curriculum is crucial in the sense that it stipulates the learning outcomes as well as the objectives to be realised by the learner upon completion of a topic or subject. The curriculum for mother tongue teachers should thus reflect and equip the student teachers with the skills required to teach using the mother tongue. This is the reason why Akyeampong et al. (2011) suggest that the pre-service curriculum should specify the content to be taught. Bearing in mind that literacy is acquired through social practice, teacher education curriculum should consider this and include topics that are from the natural and local environments of the students so that they would be able to encourage learners to listen, speak, read and write about issues from their surroundings.

3.2.2.1 Listening and speaking

Listening and speaking are extremely important stages in the early years of learning and enable learners to gain competence and confidence in terms of using the language in question for communication and for the learning of concepts (Kosonen et al., 2006). There should be emphasis placed on ensuring that teachers give

learners an opportunity to think aloud, ask questions, hypothesise and discuss issues from their cultural context (MBESC, 2003).

In addition, oral language is very important, especially in the early grades for children with limited language experiences and access (O'Sullivan, Canning, Siegel, & Oliveri, 2009). This requires that teachers and adults or older children should engage in telling and reading stories in the mother tongue and participating in open dialogues (Bloch, 2005). Bloch (2005) also suggests the use of rhymes, riddles, songs, and messages and notes to develop listening skills (p. 16). The learners' listening skills, vocabulary and speech abilities develop through their listening to stories and conversations; following and carrying out instructions; presenting formal and informal talks; conducting conversations; dramatising stories and reading dialogues (Landberg & Swarts, 2011).

Children need first listen to people speaking and understand what is being said, read and written (Arua, 2003). In his paper Arua (2003, p. 37) suggests that listening to an adult speaking enhances the child's 'correct pronunciation of words and correct sentence pattern'. In terms of providing practical classroom experience of presenting phonemes (i.e. the smallest units of speech in words), Raynolds (as cited in Phelps & Schilling, 2004) believes that the ability to hear and manipulate the sounds in spoken words and understand how these relate to letters and spelling patterns are crucial to learning how to read. Similarly, Li, Zhao, and Yeung (2012) also attest to the fact that reading and writing stem from the ability to listen and speak the language. In other words, instruction on phonemic awareness and phonics is key to learning how to read and write.

3.4.2 Reading and writing

Reading and writing does not start in a vacuum. Kosonen et al. (2006) state:

... some teaching of reading and writing is focused on alphabet, syllables and sound symbol relationship in a language while other teaching is focused on the meaning of what is being read, and on whole words, rather than on the individual sounds of the language (p. 54).

It is in this context that N'Namdi (2005) provides a historical overview of various methods for teaching reading. N'Nandi (2005) highlights that, during the 1930s and 1940s, there was much emphasis placed on 'Look and Say' methods. However, in the 1960s and 1970s, the focus changed to the development of skills such as 'phonetic and other word decoding skills'. The 1980s witnessed a change to a 'whole word language approach' with the focus on meaning and later expanded to the 'whole word' methods. However, the teaching of literacy in schools integrated all four of the components of language development (listening, speaking reading and writing) with the teaching of reading being done across the curriculum and organised into themes and topics (N'Namdi, 2005).

With regard to writing, the Namibia Ministry of Education (2015) suggests that learners should write purposefully and meaningfully every day in their mother tongue to establish good handwriting skills, writing habits, spelling skills and strategies and creativity, and to prepare them for the demands of the following years.

Experience has shown that the teachers' knowledge of the subject area which they teach correlates with the students' achievements and it is therefore vital for the pre-service teachers to acquire a deep knowledge of the content areas of both the curriculum and the pedagogical approaches to be used (Dutcher, 2003). It is thus clear that student teachers require both subject content and curriculum knowledge in order to be able to teach literacy in the mother tongue. In this context, knowledge of pedagogical content is also extremely important as it links knowledge of content and teaching practice in the classroom (Ball et al., 2008).

3.2.3 Teaching practice

This section relates to the research questions on the way in which student teachers are prepared to teach mother tongue literacy and the way in which student teachers teach mother tongue literacy in the classrooms. These practices include the lesson planning, methods and practices used, teaching strategies, resources and materials as well as assessment. In view of literacy as a social practice, the above mentioned practices would be influenced by the community context.

3.2.3.1 Lesson planning

It is a well-known fact that lesson planning, particularly in respect of literacy teaching, is at the core of both teaching and learning as it allows teachers to combine their understanding of literacy teaching and pedagogy with their knowledge of their learners. Given this understanding it is incumbent on student teachers to plan their lessons and use lesson approaches and methods as well as materials that will consolidate their teaching and support them in delivering the content. In addition, a lesson plan also helps teachers to remain focused on what they have set out to teach and achieve in any given subject. All in all, lesson plans enabled teachers to contextualise their teaching, putting into concentration learners social contexts.

3.2.3.2 Teaching and learning methodologies and strategies

This section is relevant to the research questions on the methodologies and strategies which lecturers use to prepare student teachers to teach literacy using the mother tongue. According to Shulman (1986), this category is significant as 'it is the representation of ideas, analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, demonstration in words and in the language used as a medium of instruction, as well as the skills to integrate what is known into the school context' (theory into practice).

As suggested by Westbrook et al. (2013), teaching methodologies encompass the strategies that ensure active learner participation and cooperative efforts such as teamwork, group work, whole class interaction, higher order questioning, teacher modelling and demonstration. Having an understanding that literacy is acquired through social interaction, these strategies will maximise mother tongue literacy acquisition.

Bloch (2005) concurs with the above notion when he states that children should be allowed to work in pairs and groups and that teachers should model good teaching habits so that learners may learn from them. Chang (2008) went further by suggesting that class groups could be classified into the following four categories:

1. Teacher-directed whole class activity
2. Teacher-directed small group activity
3. Teacher-directed individual activity
4. Student-selected activity

In *teacher-directed method whole class activity*, the teacher focuses on uniformity of instruction, formulates same objectives and issues instructions to the whole class. However, this method may cause problem in the instruction of language minority students or underachieving students because all the students are expected to solve the same problem, follow the same pace and use the same methods and materials. As a result, the underachieving students may fall behind because individual attention is difficult (Chang, 2008, p. 84).

Teacher-directed small group activity has been proven to offer advantages in student learning (Lazonder & De Jong, 2005, as in Chang, 2008). This method allows the teacher flexibility in terms of the instructional objectives, thus enabling the teacher to formulate more instructional objectives for class group based on performance, interest and abilities. According to Chang (2008), working in small groups provides students with the opportunity to exchange ideas stimulate each other and verbalise

their thoughts in order to clarify and improve their understanding, thus, promoting cooperative learning. Kutnick, Blatchford, Clark, MacIntyre, and Baines (2005) maintain that using this method gives the teacher to provide either remedial or enrichment activities. However, according to Chang (2008), this method may be harmful if the language minority students are not ready to work in small groups. For example, it may happen that a few learners only may participate in the activity as the fast learners would dominate the group and exclude the weaker students. As a result, the minority language student may feel incompetent and neglected (Chang, 2008).

Teacher directed-individual activity may be used to compensate for several weaker aspects of teacher-directed whole class activities, for example, teachers not adjusting the curriculum for individual students but, instead, expecting all the students to learn the same content. However, with the teacher directed-individual activity method teachers identify the learning problems being experienced by individual students and provide remedial help such as explanations, demonstrations, examples and tasks to those students who require such assistance. This may significantly benefit disadvantaged students as the instructional activities and pace are adjusted for individual students. However, although this method has benefits for minority language groups, its application requires that the instructor possess both knowledge and understanding of the individual students (Chang, 2008, p. 75).

Students-selected activity is based on philosophy that students should be transformed from passive listeners to active performers. The teacher plays the role of facilitator rather than instructor, helping the students with discussions and presentations. The students are at liberty to choose their own projects for individual and group learning (Hong, Horng, Lin, Chang, Chu, & Lin, 2005 p. 76). This method requires both teacher discretion and student ability and creativity. Teacher should provide the students with guidance to enhance the excitement of learning and stimulate their motivation to learn. However, this method has been observed to have some disadvantages when students are allowed to choose their own tasks as they

sometimes tend to choose less demanding tasks that limit their opportunity to acquire the knowledge that they need to master

Other possible teaching strategies include modelled, shared, guided and independent reading and writing (Ministry of Education, 2014; N'Namdi, 2005). It is in this context that teachers are encouraged to deliver effective and quality instruction by applying diagnostic reading techniques before, during and after stages (Ulusoy & Dedeoglu, 2011).

In view of the fact that the development of reading skills is a huge concern, researchers suggest that reading activities, such as short and easy reading materials that include big books, regular books, posters and pamphlets which may be read individually or in pairs, should be encouraged (UNESCO, 2007). It is in the same vein that the Namibian Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture (MBESC, 2003) argues that literacy development may be promoted by creating a print-rich environment in the classroom which may include a reading corner with published readers, charts, posters, newspaper cuttings and the learners' own creative writings.

As far as the development of writing is concerned, the MBESC (2003) suggests that learners be encouraged to write different types of texts, including short texts and writing down questions relating to what they have said or heard. In the same vein UNESCO (2007) advises that teachers should allow students to create pictures, stories and add text to pictures and also write creatively and expressively using correct spelling in order to communicate in writing.

3.2.3.3 Instructional materials

The effective teaching of sound literacy to young learners also depends on the resources or materials used by the teachers. As advised Amissah (2001), UNESCO (Paris) (2000), Kosonen et al. (2006), Benson (2004) and Legère et al. (2003),

materials or resources in the local language must be both available and used appropriately. Thus, teacher education should equip student teachers with the knowledge of how to develop teaching and learning materials in the local languages to enable them to prepare their own materials and use such materials to teach literacy in schools effectively (Amissah, 2001). In other words, student teachers should be trained to develop teaching materials in the mother tongue to help them teach in the mother tongue.

The findings from several international countries that advocate a policy of mother tongue or local language have revealed that there is a critical shortage or lack of trained and professionally qualified teachers who are able to speak and teach in the local language of the learners (Ball, 2010; Murray, 2007; Ouane & Glanz, 2010). Existing research reveals that in the countries where the first language is used in the teaching of the foundational phase, is often so poorly planned and implemented (Kosonen et al., 2006), the teachers are poorly trained and there is insufficient classroom material such as textbooks, grammar books and dictionaries (Ball, 2010; Ndamba, 2008; Njoroge & Gathigia, 2011). In addition, there is little time for the learners to learn and achieve the mastery of their language, which could help them to learn a new language (N'Namdi, 2005; UNESCO (Paris), 2000). Thus, if the mother tongue policy is to succeed, there is need for the rigorous development of resources in the mother tongue, which may then be used by the mother tongue teachers in their classrooms.

3.2.3.4 Assessment for learning

Assessment is an extremely important component of any project, including the teaching and learning process of mother tongue literacy. It is in light of this Kosonen et al. (2006) suggest that, for a good mother tongue literacy teaching to happen in schools, the teachers must identify the learning needs of the learners and design appropriate learning experiences. They proceed to postulate that teachers should

keep a record of the learner's progress. This constitutes the process of evaluation. Thus, teachers who teach mother tongue literacy should also develop appropriate tools with which to evaluate their learners' progress in this regard and therefore the training programme for mother tongue teachers should equip these teachers with procedures for record keeping that are user friendly.

In this vein, Karan and Morren (2013, p. 9) suggest that 'student teachers need to keep relevant records for learners' evaluation; be familiar with the evaluation approaches to track learning progress, including a portfolio for each child'. In other words, the training programme should review various evaluation tools, their purposes and their different formats for assessing listening, speaking, reading and writing in mother tongue. Student teachers should then make appropriate choices and know how to use the learner's evaluations and this would enable to assist struggling learners based on their findings.

3.6 Conclusion

Based on the information discussed above on the preparation of mother tongue literacy teachers, it is clear that literacy may take place through social interactions and in cultural contexts in which children live. Given this reality, teachers/schools are encouraged to base their teaching and learning on what the learners bring to school in terms of what they already know. The technical skill approach differs from the sociocultural approach which indicates that skills have to be taught and mastered before moving on to the next skill. In other words, learners first learn the letter of the alphabet, they form syllables by associating consonants and vowels and then words and sentences.

As far as the teaching of literacy in the mother tongue is concerned, it is essential that teachers in Namibia are informed about the country's language policy. In addition, the teachers also need to use the learners' mother tongue as the language

of instruction in the schools. It is also incumbent on them to develop teaching materials and resources in the local language and use these in their teaching.

It was also concluded that teachers must be adequately trained and equipped with curriculum knowledge as well as pedagogical knowledge in respect of delivering the content of mother tongue literacy. Such knowledge will make it easy for the young learners to conceptualise new information and internalise it, thereby enabling them to learn a new language once their thinking, reading and writing skills have been developed in environments with which they are familiar.

As far as the teaching methods and approaches are concerned, methods such as phonics, look and say and the whole word and language experience approach are regarded as effective methods ensuring mother tongue literacy development. Mother tongue literacy development may be approached in a holistic way with the emphasis on thematic teaching and meaning making rather than on isolated skills development. It is also important to note that teaching strategies such as modelled, shared, guided and independent reading have been proven to be effective in delivering mother tongue literacy instruction by applying diagnostic reading techniques before, during and after.

Overall, if the mother tongue literacy policy is to be a success, it is essential that instructional materials or resources in local language are developed and used appropriately. Student teachers therefore need to be trained on how to develop these teaching materials in the mother tongue.

In conclusion, this chapter highlighted that student teachers need to be familiar with the various evaluation approaches in order to track learner progress and to use these evaluations tools to determine those learners who require help in the process of learning literacy in mother tongue.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design, the study sample, data collection methodologies and procedure used to collect and analyse the requisite data.

4.2 Research design

The theories informing the research design

The literature discussed various theoretical orientations, which espouse different views of reality and how knowledge is acquired. Each research orientation contains its own ontological and epistemological assumptions of reality and knowledge, which underpin the specific research approaches (Scotland, 2012). Ontology is addressed through the questions of being. An ontological orientation requires researchers to ask questions such as 'how the world is built?', 'is there real a world out there?' (Marsh & Furlong, 2002); 'what types of things exist and what is there that needs to be known?' (Ahmed, 2008). On the other hand, epistemology deals with issues of knowledge; how we come to know what we know and, this makes researchers obtain knowledge about the world around us (Crotty, 2003). It is worth locating the ontology and epistemology for this study. The ontological stance of the study would relate to the experiences of both the lecturers and the student teachers, while the epistemological aspect relates to the lecturers and student teachers knowledge which is investigated in this study. The researcher's investigation of the world is manifested in the various research methods and techniques employed, such as interviews and observations, in order to interpret the lecturers' and student teachers views' and thoughts about mother tongue literacy practice. These orientations are important for the purposes of this study.

On one hand, there is the positivist view about how knowledge is acquired. This view claims that reality may be understood through scientific methods and statistical analysis and that the results obtained may be generalised to a wider context (Mack, 2010). This paradigm upholds the view that meaning and meaningful realities exist but await human discovery. On the other hand, there is the constructivist view which is an interpretive approach within which this study was located. This orientation was developed as a reaction to positivism.

The constructivist view claims that reality is understood through language and knowledge is acquired through discovery. In addition, there are multiple realities that require different methods of understanding (Scott, 1996). Each of these theoretical orientations has its own basis and contributes to the understanding of reality and knowledge acquisition. This research study was based on the constructivist assumptions that conceive knowledge as being constructed and as emerging from the social-cultural practices of people. Accordingly, this study conceptualised social realities as being generated and constructed by people and existing within people minds (Yazan, 2015). The researcher strove to answer the question as to how student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue by presenting case studies of UNAM lecturers and fourth year students in the junior primary Bachelor of Education (BEd) programme.

The researcher used qualitative case study methods to gain an in-depth understanding of the views and experiences of lecturers and student teachers on the preparation of teachers for mother tongue literacy. The study was conducted within an interpretive paradigm with the emphasis on the exploration of meaning and obtaining an understanding of the context in which events occur (Foster, 1996, p. 6). Thus, the researcher was interested in understanding the meanings that people have constructed, their worlds and their experiences (Merriam, 2002). As an interpretive qualitative researcher, the researcher's role was to analyse the lived experiences of both the lecturers and the students in order to construct meaning. The construction of meaning was shown within a social context in the interviews, classroom

observations and documentary studies, which were conducted, and by analysing the literacy content of the teacher education curriculum as well as the way in which it is organised and eventually put into practice. The researcher was also interested in understanding how the student teachers eventually presented mother tongue literacy to primary school learners in classrooms in order to identify the reasons for the learners' low level of literacy performance. As a qualitative researcher, the researcher focused on the participants' lived experiences and the meaning the participants were making about the mother tongue literacy practice.

The researcher physically collected the requisite data and engaged in active observations throughout the period of the study. The data was inductively analysed to identify recurring themes and patterns that emerged from the data. The findings were descriptively presented and discussed (Merriam, 2002).

Research methodology refers to an analytical strategy and the research design a researcher has selected. The study also used a qualitative case study research design. A case study is a qualitative approach whereby the investigator explores a real-life situation through a detailed and in-depth data collection process that involves the use of multiple sources of information (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2003). The case study was chosen to enabling the researcher to obtain an in-depth understanding of the participants' first-hand information. In this research the case study used ensured that the issue was not explored through a single lens only, but through a variety of lenses which allowed the multiple aspect of the phenomenon in question to be revealed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The case study method helped the researcher to make observations and to collect data on the way teachers are prepared to teach mother tongue literacy in a natural setting rather than relying on someone presenting the data (Yin, 2003); being where the implementation of mother tongue literacy teaching took place enabled the researcher to obtained first-hand information (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Yin (2003, p. 13) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that 'investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly

evident, and in which multiple sources are used'. In this study the aim of the researcher was to obtain a holistic overview of the context within which the study carried out (Miles & Huberman, 2014, p. 6).

The researcher chose to conduct single case study because the study involved more than one unit of analysis (Yin, 2003). Despite the fact that the focus of the case study was the University of Namibia (UNAM), the study included lecturers and student teachers on the two campuses of the University of Namibia.

4.3 Data collection

In order to collect the data required for the study, the researcher employed a variety of data collection instruments to gather in-depth data that would ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the study. The researcher designed the following guides for the purposes of directing and recording the data collection process, namely, semi-structured interview guide, focus group discussion guide, classroom observations guide and document analysis guide. These guides are discussed briefly below;

4.3.1 Interview guide

In preparation for the semi-structured interviews, the researcher designed an interview guide to elicit the lecturers' views and experiences on the way in which they prepared future teachers to teach mother tongue literacy. The interviews were focused on topics such as

- the lecturers' understanding of the language of instruction in the Namibian education policy
- the lecturers' personal philosophies of mother tongue teaching
- the success and the challenges experienced in mother tongue literacy teaching
- whether there were measures in place to address these challenges, and

- the methods and strategies they used to prepare future mother tongue literacy teachers (see Appendix A).

4.3.2 Focus group discussion guide

To obtain the views and understandings of the student teachers regarding their preparation to teach literacy using the mother tongue, a focus group discussion was held with the fourth-year student teachers specialising in teaching at Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. For this focus group, A guide was designed to elicit the student teachers' views and experiences on how they were being prepared to become mother tongue literacy teachers. The questions formulated were aimed at ensuring that the researcher gained an in-depth understanding of the following:

- the student teachers' views and perceptions of mother tongue teaching
- how the student teachers were being trained to teach literacy in the mother tongue
- how literacy teaching in mother tongue was being taught and managed
- whether the teaching in mother tongue improved the learners' learning in the classroom
- the student teachers' experiences of School Based Studies (SBS), and
- whether there was congruency between what they learn during their training and what they encountered in the schools (see Appendix B).

4.3.3 Classroom observation guide

The classroom observation guide was designed so as to enable the researcher to obtain first-hand data on the lecturers' classroom practices when preparing future teachers to teach mother tongue literacy (see Appendix C). The use of the observation guide provided the researcher with the opportunity to be a non-participant observer, just watching and taking notes.

Another classroom observation guide was developed to gather information on the student teachers' classroom practices during their teaching practice in relation to what they had learned during their training (see Appendix D). Both Appendices C and D focused on the following the literacy content taught, teaching methods/strategies and assessment approaches employed to measure the learners' mastery of the literacy content, how mother tongue literacy was learned and managed, and the classroom interaction as a social practice. These classroom observation guides were used to record the classroom behaviour of both lecturers and the student teachers. In addition, a field journal was created with the specific intention of documenting what happen during the mother tongue literacy practice.

4.3.4 Documentary analysis

The document analysis guide was designed to gather information on whether the BEd programme at UNAM had an internal language policy that underpinned the teaching of the mother tongue and the implementation of such policy. In addition the researcher also wished to evaluate whether other teacher education policy documents supported the implementation of the national language policy (mother tongue instruction). The document analysis guide consisted of guiding questions aimed at providing the researcher with guidance in the analysis the teacher education policy documents (see Appendix E).

4.4 The sample for the study

There is only one university in Namibia that trains students to become teachers at the pre-primary, primary and secondary school levels. UNAM includes four campuses that train junior primary school teachers to teach mother tongue instruction in schools. Of these four campuses, two campuses only were purposefully selected for the purposes of this study. Of the two selected campuses one is situated in the central part of the country and the second in the northern part

of the country. These campuses were specifically chosen, as they are the only campuses that offer the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects of the Oshiwambo language used as the medium of instruction in schools in the northern part of the country. This allowed the researcher to evaluate how student teachers were being prepared to teach literacy in the above mentioned two languages.

4.4.1 The sample

The study targeted the lecturers responsible for training Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga speaking junior primary school teachers and fourth year junior primary school student teachers. The reasons for selecting this target group included:

- the fact that this group would teach in the junior primary school phase where the medium of instruction would be Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama as advocated by the language policy for schools
- the fact that these are the dialects of the Oshiwambo language which the researcher understands, speaks and writes.

The language policy for schools specifies that the mother tongue of learners must be used as the medium of instruction in Grades 1 to 3. At the time of the study there were fourteen written languages with a standard orthography used in schools in Namibia as the mediums of instructions (Chapter 1 above). Of these fourteen languages, two dialects of the Oshiwambo language only, namely, Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama, were purposefully selected for the purposes of this study. As stated above, the choice of these two dialects was motivated by the fact that the researcher was able to understand, speak, and write these two languages. Secondly, these two dialects of the Oshiwambo language are also represented in the majority of the regions in Namibia (seven regions) and are officially used in schools. Although English is the official language of instruction in Namibia and should therefore be used as a medium of instruction in all schools in Namibia, it is important to stress that the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects of the Oshiwambo language are

also official modes of instruction in Namibia (Ministry of Education, 2012). Thus, Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama are among the most widely spoken dialects of the Oshiwambo language spoken in the country.

It is also crucial to note that the researcher recognised the limitation of excluding other languages and dialects from the study and that an understanding of how teachers are prepared to teach Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama leaves gaps in understanding how other languages and dialects are used in the teaching and instruction of learners in the foundation level of primary education in Namibia. This should form part of future research.

It was assumed that the mother tongue student teachers had been adequately trained to teach in the mother tongue and that they would have their own ideas and understandings of the implementation of the language policy which could then be used to assess and evaluate: 1) the junior primary pre-service mother tongue programme, 2) the teaching skills and pedagogies of mother tongue literacy, 3) perceptions and views of literacy preparation programme, and, 4) the way in which student teachers are trained and practise teaching literacy using mother tongue instruction in Junior Primary classrooms.

There were two lecturers who taught Oshindonga and two teacher lecturers who taught Oshikwanyama on the two selected campuses that provided training for fourth-year student teachers. It was interesting to note that one campus had one lecturer only who was responsible for teaching the above dialects of the Oshiwambo language. This lecturer taught all the levels, namely, first, second, third and fourth year students in both Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama while the other campus has three teacher educators, one responsible for Oshikwanyama and the other two for the Oshindonga dialects of the Oshiwambo language. All these four teacher educators were selected to participate in the study.

At the time of the study there were approximately 75 student teachers enrolled for the fourth year Bachelor of Education Junior Primary Education on the selected campuses. However, the number enrolled for Oshikwanyama was lower than the Oshindonga dialect. On the one campus a total number of 16 students was enrolled in the fourth year, of which three student teachers only were enrolled for Oshikwanyama. These three students were all selected to participate in the study. On the other campus, 73 student teachers were enrolled in the fourth year but only 22 enrolled for Oshikwanyama. Thus, a total number of students 25 was enrolled for Oshikwanyama on the two campuses and the remaining 50 students were all enrolled for the Oshindonga dialect of the Oshiwambo language.

Thirty student teachers were selected from the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama class lists of both campuses. The researcher asked the lecturers to recommend students whom the researcher could interview and observe, stressing the fact that the researcher would prefer students who were both academically strong and also good teachers as well as students who were struggling academically and who were very skilled in teaching practice. The sampling was also gender sensitive and also aimed at a good mix of both young and mature student teachers. A total of 30 student teachers participated in the interviews – six male students and twenty-four female students. All those students who were selected to participate in the study were fourth-year students. Of the total of thirty students, 24 were academically strong, 14 were average and seven were academically weak. The selection was also based their willingness to participate in the study.

The researcher carried out the interviews and succeeded in obtaining all the relevant information required for this study. The interviews were found to be very valuable in terms of gathering the requisite data in the sense that the researcher was able to sit and speak to the interviewees and thus have the opportunity to read the interviewees' facial expressions. The interviews also help the interviewer to seek immediate clarity on those areas which were unclear.

For the purpose of the classroom observations, ten students out of the total of 30 student teachers were selected for the lesson observations. Five of these students were from the one campus and five from the other campus. The plan has been to select three student teachers per Oshiwambo dialect but, on the one campus, the researcher could find only two student teachers for Oshikwanyama. The researcher was not able to find the schools where the Oshikwanyama student teachers were doing their teaching practice because they had not been placed at the schools at which they registered to do their School Based Studies (teaching practice) and their cellphones were not reachable.

As mentioned above ten fourth-year student teachers were targeted for the purpose of observing their teaching using mother tongue literacy skills during their teaching practice and internships at schools. The researcher was able to observe these student teachers delivering their instruction using the mother tongue in the schools where they had been placed for their teaching practice.

4.4.2 Selection of the case studies

As mentioned earlier, the case study research was conducted at two UNAM campuses located in Windhoek and Ongwediva, respectively.

In order to maintain anonymity in the study, the names of the campuses used appear in this study are pseudonyms with different names being given to the campuses that were selected as case studies. Table 4.1 below provides descriptions of the two case studies selected:

Table 4.1: *Rational for selecting these two case studies*

Case study	Descriptions and rationale
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Campus: A	This campus is located in the central part of the country, in Windhoek. Campus A is both multilingual and multicultural. Tutorials on the campus are conducted in five different languages, namely, Otjiherero, Afrikaans, Oshindonga, Oshikwanyama and Khoekhoegowab.
Campus B	This campus is located in the northern part of the country, in Ongwediva. The placement schools that were selected are situated in the suburbs of the towns of Oshakati and Ongwediva, Oshiwambo (Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects) was the dominant language used on campus B. The teaching staffs of the placement schools were qualified to teacher in the junior primary school phase.
<p>These specific campuses were selected as case studies, firstly, because the campuses offered the Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga dialects of the Oshiwambo language to their student teachers; secondly, the researcher understood and spoke these two languages, thirdly, Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama are represented in most of the regions of Namibia (seven regions) and are used in schools as the mediums of instruction</p>	

4.5 Data collection procedure

Prior to accessing the research sites the researcher obtained permission to do so from the Permanent Secretary (PS) of the Ministry of Education (Appendix F), the UNAM Review Board (Appendix G), and the participants at the research sites (Appendix H). Letters for permission to visit the schools where student teachers were

doing their teaching practice were sent to the Directors of the two regions, namely, the Khomas and Oshana regions (Appendix J). Before the data collection process commenced, the researcher visited the research sites in order to familiarise herself with the culture of the participating organisations. This was done by perusing the appropriate documents and making preliminary visits to the University of Namibia campuses and the schools. This enabled the researcher to establish a trusting relationship with the participants who were willing to provide information on how junior primary student teachers were prepared to teach mother tongue literacy. The researcher also managed to identify somebody who helped her to gain access to the research sites and assisted with the selection of the participants in this study. The researcher identified and selected lecturers, student teachers and schools. The researcher then met with the participants and explained the purpose of the study to them and the reasons why their participation in the study was important.

The study involved interaction with lecturers and student teachers during which their personal views on literacy and the mother language policy in Namibia were solicited. The information obtained during these interactions and the observations comprised the data needed for the study. The researcher also explained that the participants would be interviewed and that some of them would be selected for classroom observation. It was explained to the participants that they had the right to refuse to participate in the study and also to withdraw from the study at any given point. It was stressed that their participation in the study was voluntary. The researcher also ensured that the issues of ethical practice were observed and respected.

With regard to the issue of confidentiality, the researcher emphasised the fact that the identity of the participants in this study would be protected through the use of pseudonyms. After permission to conduct research on the two UNAM campuses as well as in the two regions had been granted, the data collection by way of the interviews and observations started.

One key strategy used by the researcher was to prolong the process of engagement with the participants so that the researcher and the participants could build up trust and to provide the researcher with the latitude to cross-check information. Such prolonged engagement with participants is extremely important because the participants become comfortable with the researcher and, as a result, they may reveal critical information that they may not otherwise have shared during the data collection stage (Creswell, 2012).

4.5.1 Case study research data collection

As indicated in the table above, the research was carried out at two of the six UNAM campuses which offer pre-service teacher education. The case study enabled the researcher to obtain in-depth and rich data on the way in which the lecturers prepare student teachers to teach mother tongue literacy and whether the student teachers were applying the knowledge and skills acquired during their training in the classroom. The case study research data collection took place from February 2016 to July 2016. However, despite the fact that the actual data collection stopped at the end of July 2016, the researcher returned to the research field several times to follow up on outstanding issues and to verify certain information and thus in fact, the process of data collection ended in September 2016.

4.5.1.1 Interviews

Prior to the face-to-face interviews with the lecturers, the researcher met with the lecturers to set up a schedule and agree on a venue and time. The face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the four lecturers of Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama on the two campuses mentioned above. The researcher first interviewed the lecturers from campus B from 16 to 18 April 2016. This was followed by the interviews with the lecturers from campus A on 28 April 2016. The lecturers

were informed of their right to withdraw from the interviews at any given point should they wish to. It was emphasised that their participation in the study was voluntary.

At the beginning of each of the interview sessions, the researcher held an informal discussion with the participants with the specific intention of making them feel at ease. The interviews took place at the lecturers' offices where there were no interruptions.

The interviews were conducted in the following manner. The researcher first asked specific questions as outlined in the interview guide and then guided the discussion that followed with more specific questions. The researcher followed up ideas, probed the responses and investigated motives and feelings. This was in line with the advice of Bell (2014), Cummins (2001) and Patton (2005), who suggest that questions should be framed in a truly open-ended fashion so that participants are given the opportunity to respond in their own words and express their own personal perspectives and opinions. The participants' viewpoints reflected the type of meanings they attributed to what the institution of higher learning was doing in relation to the preparation of future mother tongue literacy teachers. The aim of the interviews conducted with all four lecturers responsible for the teaching of Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama was to ascertain their views on how they were preparing future teachers to teach mother tongue literacy. Lecturers were also asked how the student teachers' sociocultural characteristics were acknowledged and how student teachers were assisted to link what they knew already with what they were learning.

Situated within the interpretive paradigm, the semi-structured interviews resulted in the researcher gathering in-depth and detailed information on how adequately (or not) student teachers were being prepared to teach mother tongue literacy. Semi-structured interview also provided the lecturers with a range of choices in relation to their answers (Benson, 2010; Papatheodorou, 2007) because they were given time in which to clarify the points they were making. The researcher also ensured that the

questions were posed in such a way that it was possible to solicit the information that was needed. During the semi-structured interviews researcher kept a field journal in which key points or information were recorded. At times the researcher found it difficult to take notes during the interviews and simultaneously give the participants her full attention, listen to their views and facts as well as their attitudes and beliefs. The researcher also used a tape recorder to audio record all the interviews. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes to an hour. Once the interviews had been completed, the data was transcribed and checked and then confirmed and corrected by the participants.

4.5.1.2 Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions were conducted with fourth year student teachers in four groups (three groups from campus B and one from campus A) of five members each. The researcher requested the permission of the lecturers and student teachers who participated in the study to conduct these focus group discussions. The discussions took place at times convenient to the student teachers and in their classrooms. However, when the lecturers were busy with either the second-year or third-year students in the classroom in question, the venue was changed to the lecturers' staffroom.

Originally, the researcher had planned to hold six focus group discussions with three groups from campus A and three groups from campus B. However, the researcher managed to organise two focused groups from campus B and one focus group from campus A only. Since the student teachers were free to withdraw at any time, some student teachers, especially on campus, A did not commit to participate and two groups simply did not turn up for the focus group discussions. Accordingly, the researcher managed to interview one group from campus A only.

As a result, the researcher switched to conduct individual, face-to-face interviews with the student teachers. The researcher managed to interview ten student teachers

from the campus A, although they were not observed during their teaching lessons. In total, the researcher managed to interview four groups comprising five student teachers each. Thus, a total of 30 student teachers were interviewed.

The discussions in focus groups centred on the participants; experiences of becoming junior primary teachers, their views on mother tongue teaching, their understanding of the language policy for schools and the strategies and methods their lecturers used to train them to teach mother tongue literacy. As with the lecturers, the student teachers were also asked to explain how they used the knowledge that the learners brought to class in their teaching. According to Cohen et al. (2013), the use of open-ended questions helps the researcher to probe the answers given by the participants and to delve more deeply into the topic with a view to obtaining an in-depth understanding of the topic.

The focus group discussions took longer than planned because the participants took time to clarify the points they were making and to build on each other's points. They provided a variety of responses (Seabi, 2012) and engaged in lively and fruitful debate. The researcher observed that the focus groups also empowered those individuals who would have been uncomfortable if they had been interviewed on a one to one basis. Each group discussion took approximately one hour to one hour and 30 minutes.

In order to avoid misinterpretation of the data and to recognise the participants' experiences, the data collected was checked by the participants, especially the lecturers. The participants read the verbatim transcript of the interviews in which they had participated to check whether their words had matched what they had intended to say. However, this was done only with the lecturers because it was difficult to get hold of the student teachers, who had been employed as permanent teachers and their cell-phones were not reachable. Lastly, the research findings were made available to the researcher's peers for scrutiny. Accordingly, the researcher identified one colleague and one academic and asked them to provide feedback to enable the

researcher to refine her methods and develop a deeper understanding of the subject under investigation.

In order to enrich and consolidate the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis and classroom observations were used to observe directly how the student teachers were practising mother tongue teaching in the schools during the SBS/teaching practice.

4.5.1.3 Classroom observations

Two sets of classroom observations were carried out. One set of classroom observations was carried at the five primary schools (three primary schools situated in the northern part of the country, and two primary schools situated in the southern part) and one set of classroom observation at the two selected UNAM campuses. The classroom observations at the two campuses focused on observing the lecturers who were training the student teachers on how to teach literacy in the mother tongue, while the classroom observations at the primary schools focused on observing the student teachers teaching literacy to the junior primary school learners. The five primary schools selected for classroom observations used Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama as the languages of learning.

Before the classroom observation commenced, the researcher requested permission from the school principals to conduct these observations. The principals referred the researcher to the junior primary heads of department (HODs) who then arranged the researcher's meetings with both the class teachers and the student teachers who were doing their practice. The researcher's aim was to access the classrooms and observe the student teachers teaching. The teachers in the schools were informed that the observations would focus on the student teachers. The student teachers were also informed that the observations would be analysed and assured that their anonymity would be guaranteed. Ten classroom observations were conducted from

the beginning of March to the end of April 2016. The first set of classroom observations took place in March 2016, and the second set in April 2016.

The classroom observations were carried out during the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama lessons and focused on literacy teaching (listening, speaking, reading and writing). The overall observation concentrated on the way in which the student teachers were practising the teaching of literacy, examining the methods and approaches used. In order to assess how the students teachers were practising mother tongue literacy, the classroom observations focused specifically on the following (refer Appendix: D):

- classroom interactions
- learners' responses to teacher instructions
- the literacy skill taught
- teaching strategy/method/approach the student teacher used
- student teachers' acknowledgement of the learners' experiences, paying particular attention to the way in which the learners' socio-cultural contexts were taken into account
- materials used to support the learners' mother tongue literacy learning;
- management issues that affected the teaching and learning of mother tongue literacy
- assessment of learner mother tongue literacy learning
- extent to which student teachers practised what they had studied
- student teachers' confidence in teaching in the mother tongue language.

The presence of the researcher in some of the classrooms appeared to pose a threat to certain of the class teachers because they thought the researcher had come to monitor the implementation of the new revised curriculum. However, after a while, the class teachers became accustomed to the presence of the researcher in their classrooms. They clearly felt more comfortable and their behaviour changed.

On the other hand, the student teachers were all at ease with the presence of the researcher as her presence appeared to have no influence on their behaviour. They were comfortable at all times. During the classroom observations, the researcher tried to capture the major instructional events that took place in the classrooms and took detailed notes in order to help her to remember what happened during the lessons.

When the observations had been completed, the researcher reviewed the classroom observation notes using the guiding questions in the classroom observation guide. The classroom observations were conducted in the junior primary classrooms where the literacy lessons took eighty minutes – a double period. In the interests of the reliability and validity of the data collected, classroom observations were repeatedly carried out with ten student teachers (three observations per student teacher) in ten classrooms.

The aim of observing the student teachers teaching mother tongue literacy was to examine the extent to which the student teachers were putting into practice the knowledge and skills they had acquired during training. Thus, the observations focused on how the student teachers put into practice the mother tongue literacy activities by carefully examining the student teachers' lesson planning; teaching methods/strategies and assessment approaches employed during actual teaching; how the learners learnt mother tongue literacy; classroom interaction and, more specifically, on evaluating whether there was congruency between what the pre-service teachers had been taught in the pre-service programme and their actual practice.

As mentioned previously, a second set of classroom observation was carried out at the two selected UNAM campuses with the four lecturers teaching second and third year students. The aim of these classroom observations was to assess how the lecturers presented the content of mother tongue literacy in the selected indigenous languages to the student teachers. It was planned that the classroom observations of

the student teachers would take place after the observations of the lecturers in order to collect data on how the student teachers were being trained to teach literacy in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. It was hoped that this would help the researcher to ascertain whether the student teachers were practising what they had learnt during their training during the observations. It is important to note that classroom observations could not happen first because, when permission to conduct the research had been granted, the fourth year student teachers were already in their final term of teaching practice. Thus, the researcher was forced to conduct the student teachers' classroom observations first before the lecturers'.

It was also planned that the lecturers would be observed teaching the fourth year students. Again, however, this could not happen because of the modular approach used by the university. The listening and speaking module is offered in the second year of training and the reading and writing module in the third year. Accordingly, the researcher was forced to observe lecturers presenting mother tongue literacy content to the second and third-year students and not the fourth-year students.

The focus of the observations of the lecturers was to evaluate how they delivered literacy content and their teaching methods and strategies, and to assess the approaches employed to measure the mastery of the literacy content in terms of the way in which mother tongue literacy was learned and managed, and also the classroom interactions as a social practice. The observations also focused on the way in which the student teachers' own personal and socio-cultural experiences were used.

Detailed field notes were taken during the classroom observations. These included a descriptive note section where the researcher summarised the activities that took place during the mother tongue literacy lesson, and also a reflective note section. The researcher reflected on the activities and concluded the activities for the development of the theme (Creswell, 2013). The observations provided the researcher with an opportunity to learn about matters that the participants had been

unwilling to discuss during the interview sessions. Moreover, it offered the researcher an opportunity to gather “live” data from naturally occurring social situations as suggested by Benson and Plüddemann (2010), Cohen, Manion, Marrison (2013) and McMillan & Schumacher, (2014).

The data from the observations and the interviews was compared to establish relationship between what participants had said in the interviews and what they did in practice in order to determine whether people did what they said or not and behaved in the ways they claimed to behave (Benson, 2010; Cohen et al., 2013).

After each observation the researcher used what Miles and Huberman (1994) describe as a Contact Summary Form. The researcher completed this summary form every day after she had reviewed and corrected the field notes (Appendix J). The researcher also included her reflective remarks as well as questions that still needed to be answered during the next contact sessions (see Appendix H). This summary sheet included the following three relevant questions:

- 1) What were the main issues or themes that struck the researcher during this visit?
- 2) What information did the researcher receive each day, focusing on each questions?
- 3) What new target questions must the researcher pose on the next visit?

The researcher used the information in the summary sheet to

- carry out further planning for the next contact,
- extend the summary notes and help the researcher with further data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

4.5.1.4 Documentary analysis

A documentary analysis was carried out, focusing on the literacy knowledge and skills the programme offered. This involved the analysis of the policy documents that guide the preparation of mother tongue literacy teachers. Documents were collected during the first visits to the UNAM campuses. The researcher asked permission to use the documents and also cite them where necessary. Documents such as literacy modules (to see whether the elements of mother tongue teaching were recognised and supported), course study guides, language policy, lesson plans, assessment policies and the National Professional Standard for teachers were analysed to reveal the extent to which they were aligned and supported mother tongue literacy teaching and learning in schools. The researcher reviewed and summarised the contents of each document and also took detailed notes of the contents of each document in relation to the implementation of the language policy (mother tongue teaching). The interviews and observations were conducted in the context of the information acquired from the documents.

4.6 Data analysis

The data analysis process started before the actual field study with the researcher deciding on a conceptual framework and the research questions (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014). This implies that the researcher carried out the analysis deductively. Entering the field with a tentative list of codes greatly helped the researcher to obtain a better understanding of the way in which future mother tongue teachers were being prepared to teach literacy.

The data analysis conducted for the purposes of this study was carried out in accordance with the steps suggested by Miles et al. (2014) for analysing qualitative data, namely, data condensation, data display and drawing and verifying conclusions. According to Miles et al. (2014), data condensation refers to the process of selecting,

focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data from the field notes, documents and transcriptions in order to make the data reliable. Firstly, all the transcripts were carefully transcribed and the field notes expanded upon immediately after each observation. Once the expanded notes for each lesson observed had been transcribed, files for both the interviews and the classroom observation were created on the computer in which these notes were stored. The researcher studied the data acquired several times in order to obtain a sense of both the field notes and interview transcripts.

The researcher started to assign codes and then followed this coding process by sorting and shifting the coded materials to identify similar phrases, patterns, themes and categories (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014) using the data obtained from the field notes that had been recorded during the lesson observations with junior primary lecturers and the fourth year student teachers (Creswell, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 1994). All the patterns were sorted and the same patterns grouped together. The researcher had written notes in the margins of the field notes and transcripts and these helped greatly in the process of exploring the database (Creswell, 2013) and attaching meaning to the pieces of data (Lofland, Snow, Anderson & Lofland, 2006). Those labels enabled the researcher to summarise data, identify patterns and pull together themes.

The researcher started to write up summaries, carry out coding, develop themes, form clusters, and write memos using the data obtained from the field notes that had been recorded during through the lesson observations with the junior primary lecturers and the fourth year student teachers (Creswell, 2013). The same process that had been used to analyse the classroom observation was used for the semi-structured interviews that had been conducted with the lecturers and the focus group discussions with the student teachers. In other words, the researcher followed a process of describing, classifying and interpreting the data in order to obtain a detailed understanding of what had been emerged and how this related to her interpretation of the views cited the existing literature (Creswell, 2013, p. 184).

Thirdly, the researcher analysed the data by verifying and comparing the findings from the interviews, classroom observations and documentary analysis so as to establish the quality and truth of these findings. The different types of data were integrated during the writing up and presentation of findings.

4.6 Credibility and trustworthiness of the study

In order to ensure that the study measured or tested what it was intended to measure/test (Shenton, 2004), as well as to ensure the trustworthiness, rigour and credibility of the study, the researcher employed various strategies throughout the research process. Firstly, the researcher familiarised herself with the culture of the participating organisations before the data collection commenced. This was achieved by perusing appropriate documents and making preliminary visits to the University of Namibia campuses where the study was to take place. As suggested by Creswell (2013), prolonged engagement with the participants is extremely important because it allows the participants to become comfortable with the researcher and perhaps reveal critical information that they may not have shared during the data collection stage. The data collection process lasted at least five months. The final months being more intensive as the classroom observations were conducted during this period.

Triangulation is a key strategy for enhancing the credibility of a study. Accordingly, multiple data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and classroom observations as well as a document analysis, were used to strengthen each other in an effort to eliminate the weaknesses which may have arisen if one method only had been used. In other words, the views of different people were triangulated in this study.

In order to avoid any misinterpretation of the data and also to recognise the participants' experiences, member checking was carried out, especially with the lecturers when they were asked to read the verbatim transcripts of the interviews in which they had participated to check whether their words matched what they had intended to say. Lastly, the research findings were exposed to peer scrutiny in whereby colleagues and academics were asked to provide feedback that would enable the researcher to refine the methods used and develop a greater understanding of the topic under study.

4.7 Ethical considerations

The study was guided by the ethical considerations that are upheld by the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria with the researcher upholding these same requirements, including obtaining the written permission and informed consent of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, the UNAM review board, the two Education Directors of the regions where the placement schools were located, and the school principals of the schools where the student teachers had been placed. The researcher applied to the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee for permission to conduct the research study (see Appendix H). The study involved interaction with teacher educators and student teachers during which their personal views about literacy were solicited and the information they supplied used as data. Accordingly, the issues of ethical protocol were the guiding principle which underpinned the carrying out of the study.

4.8 Limitations of the data

The study focused only on junior primary lecturers and student teachers for Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama; thus excluding other languages and limiting the understanding of how mother tongue teachers are prepared to teach literacy in other languages.

The other shortcoming was that the lecturers' classroom observations could not take place first as had been planned so as to provide clarity on how student teachers were prepared in order to ascertain whether they were practising what they had learned during their training. This was the result of that, when the researcher was granted permission to conduct the research at the sites indicated, the fourth year student teachers were already in their final term of teaching practice, and thus the researcher was forced to observe the student teachers' teaching first.

The other limitation was that it was not possible to observe the lecturers' presenting mother tongue literacy to the fourth year students. The reason for was the modular approach used by the university with the listening and speaking module being offered to the second year student teachers, and the reading and writing module to the third years. Thus, the researcher was forced to observe the lecturers presenting mother tongue literacy content to the second and third year student teachers. As a result, the researcher could not compare and determine whether what the fourth year student teachers practically applied was what they were trained on.

The other shortcoming was that focus group discussions could not take place with six groups as had been planned. In view of the fact the student teachers were free to withdraw from the study at any time, some of the student teachers, especially on campus A, did not commit to the study. Thus, the researcher managed to interview one group only from campus A. This could have improved the result of this study as the participants in the focus group could have provided a variety of responses and could have empowered those that would be uncomfortable if they had been interviewed individually.

CHAPTER 5: HOW DO TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES SUPPORT MOTHER TONGUE LITERACY TEACHING?

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the data on the extent to which the teacher education policies are aligned with and supports the implementation of the national language policy for schools in Namibia. It further analyses the extent to which higher education policies support mother tongue literacy teaching and the approaches to mother tongue literacy teaching. As previously discussed, the following legal and policy documents constitute the legal and policy framework for mother tongue literacy:

- The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia (1990)
- The Education Act, 2001 (Act no. 2 of 2001)
- Towards Education for All: A Development Brief for Education and Training (1993)
- The Language Policy for Schools (1992)
- The National Professional Standard for Teachers in Namibia (2006)
- The National Curriculum for Basic Education (2016)

All the above-mentioned national policy documents make provision for the use of the learners' mother tongue in schools and thus it may be assumed that the policy documents for teacher education are also aligned to national policies. Without such alignment, there is likely to be a gap in the teacher education programmes which prepare student teachers to teach mother tongue literacy in primary schools in Namibia.

5.2 The analysis of teacher education policy document in relation to mother tongue literacy learning

The policy makers assumed that teacher education policy documents support and are aligned to the national policies that form the policy framework for mother tongue literacy learning in primary schools in Namibia. The review discussed below was conducted based on the following criteria: significance of the document to mother-tongue teaching, the relationship between the policies and the curriculum and the curriculum compliance with the National Professional Standard for Teachers in Schools. As mentioned previously, these policy documents were reviewed with the specific intention of acquiring an understanding on whether teacher education policy documents in Namibia are aligned with the national policies.

5.3 Institutional language policy and language of instruction

In order to prepare student teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue, it is assumed that the institutions of higher learning would have formulated their own institutional language policy that guide and strengthen the implementation of the language policy. However, this study established that the pre-and lower primary BEd programme at Faculty of Education at UNAM does not have in place an institutional language policy which stipulates the use of the mother tongue in preparing student teachers to teach literacy and, instead, the institution is only partially use the national language policy for schools.

It is not clearly stipulated in the prospectus which language of instruction is to be used when training pre-and lower primary teachers for literacy teaching. The majority of the student teachers indicated that most of their lecturers were non-Oshiwambo speaking and that tended to teach in English. It became clear that English was being used as the medium of communication for all subjects other than the Namibian languages course modules. The student teachers indicated that the only opportunity

they had to speak their own languages was during the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama classes. In other words, the data provided by the lecturers and student teachers provided evidence that the language of instruction in the entire university was English. This supports a study conducted by Tshotsho (2013), who found that the policy of University of Fort Hare states that English is the medium of instruction at the university despite the higher number of isiXhosa speakers in the region as compared to English speakers while the University of the Witwatersrand has chosen English as the medium of instruction in spite of the many isiZulu speaking students.

5.4 The Faculty of Education Prospectus (2016)

The review of the Faculty of Education Prospectus (2016) revealed that a component of mother tongue teaching featured in the course learning outcomes as well as in the admission criteria of students to the programme. The review also established that the content and aims of the Pre and Lower Primary BEd Programme did mention the teaching of mother tongue learning. The Prospectus also stipulates that the student teachers must be able to communicate the relevant concepts and topics in mother tongue effectively and in the official language. Students should also plan for learning through themes, topics and lessons, implement suitable teaching approaches for pre and lower primary (integrated/thematic approaches), use different assessment strategies to assess learners in pre-grade to Grade 4 and also analyse and communicate the assessment results (University of Namibia 2016). It was found that student teachers who wished to specialise in pre and lower primary education were required to pass both English and an African Language and, therefore, they should study English Language Education and a Namibian language.

The programme is divided into course work and School Based Studies (SBS). During the coursework period, the student teachers are exposed to learn the theories and principles of the teaching of mother tongue literacy. While during teaching practice,

the student teachers are expected to teach all the subjects at the junior primary phase in mother tongue with the exception of English which is taught as a second language. It is during this period (SBS) that the student teachers experience the reality of being a teacher.

5.4.1 Pre and lower primary BEd curriculum

The study set out to review the UNAM curriculum document for mother tongue teaching. However, it was found that there appeared to no curriculum for the training of pre and lower primary teachers in bilingual education. The document that was found and that stipulated mother tongue instruction in Namibia was the UNAM Prospectus for 2016 which, in the main, referred to learning outcomes and described the various course modules for the whole programme.

According to the UNAM Prospectus 2016, the pre and lower primary BEd programme is organised around courses or modules. The table below presents the modules that were reviewed.

Table 5.1: *Language course modules*

Year	Module	Title
1	Language in society	
	Children's literature	
1 & 4	Namibian language in education	Grammar
2	Namibian language in education	Listening and speaking
3	Namibian language in education	Reading and writing

It was noted that some modules clearly supported and revealed links to the language policy while, in other modules, the support for the teaching of mother tongue was found to be minimal, if not non-existent. For instance modules such as:

Environmental Education, Numeracy and Mathematics, Art Education, Physical and Health Education, Religious and Moral Education, Learning Support, Inclusive education and many more, are taught through the medium of English.

The description and analysis of some modules provided below sheds more light on the issue.

Module: Language in Society. This module enables student teachers to reflect on the issue of language identity and language and culture. It allows student teachers to analyse the constitution and language policy of Namibia. The students have to explore the role of the family and society in the socialisation of the child and how family and society can take part in the formal education process (UNAM Prospectus, 2016).

It was clear that the module supported the national language policy but not mother tongue literacy learning. In terms of the module student teachers were required to analyse both the constitution of Namibia and the national language policy and, in so doing, they were studying and familiarising themselves with the language policy, which stipulates which language to be used as a medium of instruction. Again, the exploration of the role of the family and society in the child's formal education process was assumed to enable the student teachers to: 1) find out what the learners already know and extend that to new knowledge, and 2) understand that language is a cultural tool that takes place through the social interactions between people and their environments. It was thus concluded that the module did not support mother tongue teaching and learning because it was offered in English. The goal of mother tongue based teaching is to teach children in their mother tongue in the early years so as to enable them to understand relevant concepts easily and form ideas and opinions based on their common environments.

Module: Namibian Language in Education 1 & 4. This module develops student teachers' language proficiency as well as phonics and morphology, spelling rules of a particular language and correct use of tenses.

It is worth noting that these two modules did also include elements of mother tongue literacy teaching. Although mother tongue teaching was not explicitly referred to, these modules are taught in the mother tongue and are designed to develop the student teachers' language proficiency the phonetics (sound system), morphology, syntax and semantic issues of a particular language as well as code switching, thus indicating that they did support mother tongue teaching and learners learning literacy through their mother tongue. In other words, these modules supported mother tongue literacy teaching – the focus of this study.

Module: Namibian Language in Education 2 and 3. The module for listening and speaking enables student teachers to develop a theoretical understanding of listening and speaking skills, strategies to teach English to English learners. The module for reading and writing enables students to develop a theoretical understanding of reading and writing skills and the ability to apply methods and materials necessary to teach and assess reading and writing skills.

It was noted that the listening and speaking, as well as the reading and writing, modules supported mother tongue literacy teaching because these modules were taught in the mother tongue of the student teachers. However, as stated in the Prospectus 2016, the listening and speaking module provided the theoretical understanding of listening and speaking skills and strategies to teach English to English learners. It was thus left to each lecturer to modify and translate the modules to suit his/her own language used in teaching. The reading and writing module was silent about the language policy although it did indicate that its aim was to develop student teachers' theoretical understanding of reading and writing skills. However, the language in which the reading and writing skills were to be developed was not clearly stated and therefore it could have referred to the mother tongue. Nonetheless,

the course outline which cited the learning outcome for listening and speaking, as well as those for the reading and writing had been translated into Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama and modified by the lecturers themselves.

Module 1 & 2: Children's Literature. The module develops student teachers' understanding of selecting, analysing and appreciating children's literature in English as well as other Namibian languages.

As is the case of other modules the Children's Literature module was offered in English just as like other module.

Thus, the analysis revealed that the link between the national language policy and the student teachers preparation in some modules was minimal because it was only in the literacy modules (1, 2 and 3) Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama that the teaching was in mother tongue. The rest of the modules are taught in English. It was clear from the lecturer's views below that almost all the modules were offered in English with the exception of the modules for the Namibian national languages. This is what Nadia, a lecturer, said:

there are shortcomings when it comes to the other subjects because, when I say we teach in the mother tongue, it's mostly just me who is teaching in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama or my colleague who is teaching Khoekhoegowab or Otjiherero but, in other subjects like Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Religious and Moral Education and Arts, we teach those subjects in English because the lecturers might not be Oshiwambo speaking or Otjiherero speaking and so on (Nadia).

However, according to the lecturers, there was provision made for the teaching of the modules that were taught in English in the mother tongue. During the practical and micro-teaching lessons, the content and vocabulary were translated into Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. According to Nadia, she was certain that, even although some modules were offered in English, the lecturers tried to familiarise their student teachers with the mother tongue vocabulary as per the learning outcomes.

For example, regarding grammar 1 module, Nadia explained that, in this module, the student teachers were allowed to learn the vocabulary from others subjects that were not taught in their mother tongue:

... we have an exit learning outcome (ELO) objective that stipulates that we have to teach the vocabulary of the different lower primary subjects in the mother tongue. For example, I have to teach all the mathematical concepts to them in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama as well as all the Mathematics concepts so that they know things like shapes in Oshiwambo, i.e. shapes (omalupe) square-ombine, triangle- onkuvundatu as well as the number concepts in Oshiwambo (Nadia).

It was clear from the lecturer interview above that mother tongue was supported because, during the microteaching, the lecturers' made sure that all the concepts from the different modules were taught in the mother tongue as per the exit learning outcome. They were doing this in their teaching with guidance from the language policy for schools although the bilingual system was not fully supported.

Another student added:

... our lecturers told us to improvise our teaching aids which we are going to use in schools. They taught us that they should be written in Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama because these are the mediums of instruction in the Oshiwambo language (Nina).

It was clear from the discussion above that, despite the fact that some modules were taught in English, the system did take cognisance of what the national policy stipulated regarding the language policy, especially the medium of instruction. The fact that the lecturers for Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama were using their microteaching periods to teach the concepts and vocabulary from the modules that were offered in English was an indication that the language policy was being supported, even if only partially.

Nevertheless, despite the efforts being made by the teacher BEd programme at the University of Namibia in supporting the implementation of the language policy and preparing student teachers to teach literacy using mother tongue, the student teachers indicated that they are not fully equipped with the knowledge and skills required to fully implement mother tongue literacy teaching in the schools. One student stated:

... here we are trained to teach all the subjects in English except Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama but, when we go to the schools; we are expected to teach in the mother tongue and it very difficult for us to translate into the languages used in the schools (Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama). Therefore, I think the lecturers need to give us training in all the subjects in the mother tongue because some of the concepts are very hard, especially those in mathematics (Nina).

There was clearly a strong belief among the student teachers that, for the proper implementation and support of the language policy, especially in the lower grades where the mother tongue was the main medium of instruction, their training should involve all curriculum subjects also being offered also in the language used as a medium of instruction in schools.

Although the BEd programme is aligned with the language policy, especially the mother tongue literacy teaching modules – the focus of this study – it fully supports the trainees to teach literacy in the mother tongue, the evaluation of the research findings found out that English remained the main language of instruction on the two campuses studied in spite of the government policy of multilingualism.

5.4.2 The course outline

The Namibian languages competencies are outlined in the course work, which, as indicated in the previous section, comprises literacy modules. The learning outcomes of the pre and lower primary for listening, speaking, reading and writing course

outline specify what the student teachers should be able to do upon completion of the course. The table below presents the language course outline.

Table 5.2: *Language course outline*

Language Module Course Outline (2015)	Skill
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explain the importance of developing listening skills, auditory perception and auditory discrimination; describe the development of attentive listening and appropriate responses by using stories; rhymes and songs and select appropriate texts for listening development (e.g. rhymes, jingles, poems, folk tales); 	Listening skill
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explain what ‘communication skills’ involve and how to develop learners’ desire to communicate; explain the relationship between oral language, literacy and culture; demonstrate story telling skills while including ‘before’, ‘during’ and ‘after’ strategies, phonics and listening comprehension skills; discuss and apply methods and materials that facilitate the development of speaking skills using correct standard pronunciation and demonstrate key public speaking/presentation skills; 	Speaking skill
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describe and apply the development of phonological skills; use phonics as building blocks for literacy development, design and apply methods and instructional materials according to the principles of contextual, integrated and thematic teaching; 	Reading skill

<p>compare and contrast the two main streams of reading instruction: Reading Readiness Approach and Emergent Literacy Approach; explain the five key areas of reading instruction; demonstrate the use of phonics and word building to promote reading skills; demonstrate ability to apply various reading methods and critically evaluate them; demonstrate strategies to teach comprehension and demonstrate strategies to promote the expansion of reading vocabulary;</p>	
<p>- demonstrate the application of process writing through the writer's workshop and reflect on effective teaching methods</p>	<p>Writing skill</p>

The above learning outcomes, as presented in the table above, include English literacy and are generic and applicable to all the Namibian languages. The lecturers in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama managed to translate the above course outline into the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects to suit their language context.

In order to achieve the learning outcomes presented above, the lecturers in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama have developed literacy schemes of work which they have managed to translate into these two languages. The schemes of work for listening and speaking, reading and writing and which were developed, based on the national professional standards competence areas, the modules cited in the Prospectus 2016 and the learning outcomes, are discussed below:

Listening and speaking: Communication skills, theories of auditory perceptions and development, storytelling resources for the development of listening skills, phonological awareness and phonics; speaking skills vocabulary, instructional

materials and lesson planning/teaching methods, learning strategies and assessment.

Reading and writing: Reading as a skill, theories of reading and reading programme, five key areas of reading, assessment of learners' reading, development of writing skills and process writing, and assessment of writing.

The learning outcomes and course outline revealed support for mother tongue literacy teaching and learning, thus directly supporting the implementation of the language policy for schools. This is because the content of mother tongue literacy modules was translated into and taught in the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects, the mother tongue of the student teachers and thus these two dialects of the Oshiwambo language were adjusted accordingly. The interviews with the four lecturers also confirmed this reality as all four of the lecturers attested to the fact that the language policy was supported, integrated into and linked to the content they taught

Lecturer Nadia postulated that in, most of the modules they taught included a topic on the importance of the mother tongue. Throughout the training years they touched on this topic and they also integrate it into their teaching because, according to her, the programme included a type of bilingual programme in terms of which the students were required to take both the mother tongue and English. She further stated that it was compulsory for each student teacher to include the mother tongue module in their programme during their training. In other words, the lecturers had to teach the student teachers in their mother tongue. According to Nadia, during the mother tongue teaching modules, the

... lecturers discussed in the student teachers' mother tongue, taught in the mother tongue, gave notes in the mother tongue, responded in the mother tongue, told mother tongue stories, and read mother tongue books.

In the same vein, Grace believed that the language policy was fully supported and integrated into the teacher education curriculum and in their teaching. She indicated that the language policy was integrated into their teaching because the student teachers were taught in Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga as opposed to before when they had been taught in English.

Sara expressed the view that the language policy was not wholly supported by the Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD) which had been offered to teachers. She mentioned that all the modules were taught in English, including Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama, although the student teachers were expected to teach in their mother tongue upon completing their studies.

This view was supported by Maria, who stated:

The language policy is the reason why some of us ... have to come to the junior primary phase to teach these specific student teachers to enable them to teach and be competent in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama in the schools ... During the BETD course, the language policy was not really integrated because everything was taught in English and thus student teachers found it difficult to teach the concepts in their mother tongue.

According to the structure of the course work for the BEd curriculum, the grammar 1 module is taught in the first year, the listening and speaking module in the second year, the reading and writing module in the third year, and the Grammar 2 module in the fourth year. However, it is worth mentioning that the compartmentalisation of the literacy teaching for the pre-and lower primary BEd programme into different modules did not support the teaching of literacy in schools to any extent because literacy in schools was taught in a holistic way. This compartmentalisation was confirmed by Maria when she stated:

I do not really teach literacy skills because that module is in year three, and year three is with another lecturer. I only integrate some components of literacy. This happens when I have to teach the student teachers how to integrate language skills within a lesson. So, I am concentrating on the grammar, listening and speaking modules ... but I always remind the student teachers not to teach listening, speaking, reading and writing in isolation.

The Oshiwambo dialects, namely, Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga, course outline adopts a modular approach whereas the school curriculum adopts a thematic approach. This is in line with N'Namdi (2005) who attested that, at the time, teaching reading integrated all four components of language development (listening, speaking reading and writing) and that teaching was done across the curriculum and organised into themes and topics. The fact that the literacy modules in the case study were taught by different lecturers limited the holistic way of teaching literacy to the student teachers.

It was observed from the course outline that the training offered placed significant emphasis on theoretical knowledge rather than on pedagogical knowledge. As observed by Nadia, the lecturers were also aware that they have to give much of the literacy theory. She surmised that:

I think at the university level, we want to give them in-depth theory of each skill (Nadia).

However, the student teachers clearly regarded this as a challenge as one clearly indicated that when the lecturers taught them in the university, they were presenting the theory only and not practice in relation to how they should teach. The student teacher said that, when the student teachers went out to the schools; they struggle because they should have practised what they learnt to enable to teach the learners in class.

The analysis of the UNAM policy documents showed that, although UNAM did not have in place an explicit institutional policy with a clear link to the national language policy for schools, the teacher education curriculum document, known as the Faculty of Education Prospectus of 2016, included modules on mother tongue literacy teaching and learning, especially in African Languages. The analysis also showed that the African language module was taught as a language while the entire training was conducted in English. In other words, the module was not taught in the medium of the mother tongue, but in English.

5.5 UNAM compliance with the National Professional Standards for teachers in Namibia

The National Professional Standards for teachers in Namibia is a national policy document that came about as a result of the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) in 2006. The ETSIP was initiated in order to improve the quality of education in Namibia. The National Professional Standards for Teachers document is an approach to teacher training and development in Namibia which states that pre-service education providers – universities, colleges and private providers – are required to align their curricula, programmes and qualifications with the National Professional Standards in Namibia (Ministry of Education, 2006).

The National Professional Standards set out clear expectations for the students being taught using this curriculum, including key learning areas or domains of learning. Meeting the National Professional Standards for Teacher indicators, it demands sound performance in all four of the professional domains, namely, professional knowledge, the knowledge that teachers require to enable them to effectively teach and facilitate student learning. This, in itself, includes the use of the official language of instruction which has been identified, in particular, mother tongue in the early grades (Grades 1 to 3). It is through this medium of instruction that the teachers communicate the subjects' concepts in an understandable manner to the

learners. Once this has been observed, the learners tend to become more involved and participate actively and fully in their learning, thus increasing the opportunities for language development, use and learning among them.

Professional practices requires teachers to plan and implement learner-centred education that includes active participation and effective continuous assessment. This in itself requires both lecturers and student teachers to plan activities that would require the use and practice of the mother tongue.

Professional relationships refer to the knowledge that the teacher establishes with learners, parents, colleagues and the community in order to enhance learning. This may include the language spoken in the community, and how learners learn. This may also require student teachers to learn more about what learners learn from the community and this would allow teachers to build on experiences learners have come with to school.

Professional values refers to teachers' ethical and professional values. The fact that teachers need to improve their professional practice requires teachers to learn more about the management of mother tongue literacy learning. The standards are designed to assist teachers understand and develop their own practice (Mátă, 2014) within their own context. This is the context within which Angula (1998, p. 61) warns that "we must be very careful, that we do not rely very much on the standards set elsewhere". Angula continues, saying that although it is important to recognise international standards, it is important for Namibia to set and develop its own standards that reflect what is unique about Namibia and what we expect from our students and institutions, rather than what may be considered relevant in other countries.

The findings revealed that, to a large extent, the University of Namibia (pre and lower primary programme) used the National Professional Standards for Teachers policy document when planning and "directing" the teacher training, including the

development of the teacher education curriculum. It is for this reason that the National Professional Standards for Teachers document was reviewed to establish whether it is aligned with the mother tongue literacy modules. It was thus possible to conclude that UNAM was complying with the National Standards for Teachers in Namibia.

5.6 Conclusion

It emerged from the discussions that UNAM did not have in place an institutional policy that had a direct link to the national policy for schools. Nevertheless, the teacher education curriculum for pre and lower primary education did support mother tongue literacy teaching.

The study established significant support for the teaching of mother tongue literacy because the Namibian language course outline of the BEd degree programme and the national language modules had been translated into Namibian local languages. In addition, the teaching and instruction of literacy was conducted in the student teachers' mother tongue with these languages being used as the mediums of instruction in schools. However, only the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama lessons were conducted in the student teachers' mother tongue.

While the advocates of mother tongue based teaching assume that the literacy teaching of teachers is better than it may have been if the teachers are adequately prepared to teach using the learners' language, the language policy makers expect the teacher education programmes to be aligned with the national policies and also to support the implementation of these policies.

CHAPTER 6: LECTURERS AND STUDENT TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND VIEWS OF THE MOTHER TONGUE LITERACY TEACHING POLICY

6.1 Introduction

The Namibian Education Language Policy for schools requires that learners in the lower grades (Grades 1 to 3) are to be instructed in their mother tongue. It is thus expected that the teacher training institutions will expose their student teachers to teaching in accordance with the national language policy. This chapter discusses some of the views and understandings of the lecturers and student teachers of the Namibian Education Language Policy for schools and the extent to which the teacher preparation affects the literacy teaching in schools.

6.2 Mother tongue based teaching policy

Mother tongue based teaching is assumed to have several benefits that are crucial to the young learners' learning. According to Patel, (2012, p. 67), learners will acquire communication skill in the language that enable them to widen their interpersonal relations with family members and relatives; develop understanding of cultural identity and compare with other cultures; prevent disappearance of the language and culture; and assist the child's general intellectual and conceptual development.

Scholars, such as Dennis and Malone (2011), who advocate mother tongue based teaching, identify issues that are crucial in the mother tongue teacher's preparation, namely:

- understanding of the national language policy
- the use of language as a medium of instruction, and
- materials for teaching and learning in a local language.

It is assumed that if, teacher training is dedicated to training teachers to teach mother tongue literacy, then the student teachers will need to be supported to enable them to understand the importance of mother tongue teaching in the early years.

6.2.1 Lecturers' understanding of the language policy

This study aimed to assess the way in which teachers were being prepared to teach mother tongue literacy, with the understanding that the teacher education programmes, and especially the lecturers in these programmes, were fully aware of the language policy and made a significant effort to ensure that the student teachers were made aware of the importance of mother tongue teaching for young learners. This section discusses understanding of the lecturers and student teachers of the language policy.

All four of the lecturers interviewed were aware of the language policy for schools in Namibia and understood that children at the junior primary level had to be taught in their mother tongue in their first year of schooling. However, as illustrated below, their reasons for such understandings varied.

For example, Nadia highlighted that, after independence, Namibia had made the decision that children had to be taught in their mother tongue (Grades 1 to 3). She pointed out that her understanding was that it is the most important and also right that children are taught and introduced to education in the language with which they are the most comfortable, namely, their mother tongue. She also stated that she believed strongly in this because she had studied this subject and had also attended several conferences and deliberations on the language policy. She elaborated as follows:

My understanding is that children have to be taught in their mother tongue (Grades 1 to 3), that is what our country has proposed since independence. My understanding is really that it is the most important or it's the right thing to do, that a person has to

be taught, has to be introduced to education in the language with they are most comfortable and that is their mother tongue. I have a strong belief in that, because I have read about the subject and I have also attended a lot of conferences or deliberations on the language policy (Nadia).

Nadia appeared to have an in-depth understanding of the language policy and the language of instruction, in particular. As a lecturer she had derived her understanding not only from the language policy document but also from other sources as other documents and also attending conferences. This explained her understanding of the mother tongue language education policy in in Namibia.

Grace appeared to share a similar understanding of the language policy as it had been explain to them and how they explained it to their student teachers. According to the language policy Grades 1 to 3 should be taught all subjects in the mother tongue, except English. Grace stated:

Hmm, the language policy, as it was explained to us and how we explained it to our students, states that the lower grades – from Grade 1 to Grade 3 – should be taught in the mother tongue, all the subjects apart from English. So the students are, like, against the idea because they feel like it is disadvantaging the kids, they are going to start with English in Grade 4 which they think is a bit late (Grace).

Although Grace referred to what the language policy says on the medium of instruction in the lower grades, she sounded as if she did not fully understand the language policy document herself. The fact that she could not elaborate and explain fully what the language policy says concerning all its requirements revealed a lack of understanding of this particular document.

On the same note, Maria from the same campus explained that, at the time of the study, there was a policy which was under discussion but she did not know whether

or not it had been finalised. However, she was aware of a policy that stated the following in relation to Grade 1 to Grade 3.

What I know, there is a policy which is under discussion. I don't know whether it has been finalised up to now, but I know there is a policy that says from Grade 1 to Grade 3, if possible, learners should be taught in their mother tongue as the medium of instruction. It is only in some other cases, for example, where you find a combination of several learners speaking different languages in the group, and then maybe the school could apply for permission to make use of English as the medium of instruction. Otherwise, they should be taught in the mother tongue as the medium of instruction (Maria).

Maria quoted exactly what the policy said. The fact that she was aware that this policy was still under discussion was proof that she was well informed about the language policy stipulations regarding the medium of instruction in the lower grades. Nevertheless, she did not also say anything about what the policy said regarding the other grades.

On the other hand Sara explained that the school had to consider the language that is used by the majority of people in that area or the one that is the more dominant in that area. She stated that, if the community members felt that they wanted English to be used as the medium of instruction, they have to write a motivation to the Ministry of Education or to their education directorate stating why they wanted to use English, and not the mother tongue as stated in the policy. She explained:

My understanding with regard to the language policy in schools is that the school must look at its location and look at the language that is use by the majority of people in that area or the one that is the more dominant in that area ... if the school and the community feel they do not want to that language to be used and they want English as the medium of instruction ... they have to write a motivation to the ministry, or to their education directorate and explain their reasons (Sara).

One may conclude from the explanation provided above that Sara was aware of the language that should be used in junior primary. However, it seemed as if this lecturer had not read the document herself because her explanation was neither clear and nor was it convincing. She appeared to be unsure of what should happen when the local community wanted to make use of English language instead of the most popular language in the area and the language used by the majority of the population in that area.

It is clear that the lecturers had different understandings of the language policy in Namibia. Some of them articulated what the policy says about the language to be used as the medium of instruction in the junior primary school phase. However, others revealed a lack of understanding of the language policy which may influence the student teachers' understanding of it as well.

6.2.2 Student teachers' understanding of the Namibian Language Policy for schools

This section discusses the student teachers' understanding of the language policy in education in Namibia. Although the study found that some of the student teachers were about of and could articulate what the language policy for schools stipulates regarding the language of instruction in schools, the responses of some revealed an inadequate understanding of the language policy as they were not able to explain it properly. For example, Diina stated that

... when we are talking about the language policy for schools, only mother tongue can be used. Teachers are allowed to teach learners in Oshiwambo or in other mother tongue – Grade 1 up to Grade 3 is mother tongue.

Generally, all the student teachers knew that the language policy for schools stipulates the use of the learner's mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the lower grades. However, although, some of the student teachers were able to express

their understanding about the transition year – the switch from mother tongue to English in Grade 4 – their answers also showed an inadequate understanding of the policy. For example, Kaana's response showed that the student teacher did not have much information about the language policy and that she had clearly not read it herself, although she had heard about it and understood the essence of it. It was obvious that she needed to engage with the language policy more fully so as to acquire an in-depth understanding of it. This was clear in the following excerpt:

I heard about the language policy but I didn't go into detail with it. I need to become familiar with it ... so; it says each and every child must be taught in his or her mother tongue from pre-primary up to Grade 3. And from there, they switch to English' (Kaana).

The study found that the majority of the student teachers mentioned only the language to be used from pre-primary up to Grade 3 but were not able to cite what the language policy articulates. One may therefore conclude some of the student teachers clearly did not have the understanding required to implement the language policy in Namibian schools.

6.3 The views and perceptions of mother tongue literacy teaching

Mother tongue teaching is believed to bring about learning with understanding and also help in the teaching and learning of a second language (Osman, 2012). With this in mind, the personal views and perceptions of mother tongue literacy teaching of the lecturers and student teachers were deemed crucial for this study because their attitudes and beliefs would impact on their mother tongue literacy practice. In fact, teaching not only depends on the ability of teachers to use their knowledge and skills in respect of the content to be taught and also how to teach, but it also depends on the attitudes, personalities, beliefs, identities and involvement of both the lecturers and students (Snoek et al., 2011). The data presented in this section reflects the views and perceptions of the lecturers and student teachers of the

mother tongue teaching policy, especially as a medium of instruction in schools in Namibia.

6.3.1 Lecturers' views, beliefs and perceptions of the mother tongue teaching policy

The data from the interviews conducted with the lecturers showed both differences and similarities between the views, attitudes and beliefs of the lecturers about mother tongue literacy teaching. For example, Nadia, a lecturer from campus A, explained:

When learning in the mother tongue, especially in the first year, it connects and builds up the foundation for the second language ... it links with the research finding that those children whose oral language is good in their mother tongue also benefit in relation to the acquisition of reading as well as numeracy skills. It has a connection with cognitive transfer, the way the children think and the way their thoughts are translated in their minds, and, it has an impact on learning itself, understanding, participation in class and so on.

It was clear that Nadia felt there were certain cognitive advantages to mother tongue teaching. For example, she was of the opinion that the child's thinking capacity would be developed by learning through his/her own mother tongue. In addition, when children are instructed in the mother tongue from their early years in school, they would understand the teaching in classroom and thus actively participate in classroom activities and follow the teacher's directions. Nadia based her argument on the research findings that indicate that, by mastering the first language, a child develops the capacity to learn another language and thus benefits in terms of the acquisition of both reading as well as numeracy skills.

In the same vein, Grace, a lecturer on campus B, expressed similar views regarding the mother tongue teaching policy. She pointed out the following:

The experiences a child acquires through learning their own language would help the child learn a second language. Children benefit greatly from being instructed in the mother tongue compared to if they are instructed in English.

In addition, the link between home and school is strengthened if the language the child speaks at home is the same language used in school. Grace also suggested that a child would use the skill acquired in his/her first language to learn a second language.

It is also worth mentioning at this point that the issue of cultural identity was not mentioned in the discussions although it is assumed to be important in that the culture of the mother tongue language may be used as a basis for comparison with other cultures (Patel, 2012). In other words, the use of the mother tongue may lead to a deeper sense of cultural pride and self-awareness by giving the learners a social identity (Njoroge, 2011).

Lecturer Maria also claimed that there is 'a belief that learners learn best if their mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction in school'. She expressed the view that the language policy did not discriminate when we say the child's mother tongue. She continued by saying

If that child has been growing up in town and in that environment the mother tongue of the mother or father is not spoken, whenever they play, their communication is in English unless there is clear difference on which one is the mother tongue (Maria).

As mentioned earlier, there were differences and similarities between the ways in which the lecturers viewed the mother tongue teaching policy. Maria's views differed from those of the other lecturers. She was aware of the benefits of mother tongue teaching in relation to a child's learning but she based her view on the linguistically heterogeneous nature of the community set up (Njoroge & Gathigia, 2011) and,

hence, the argument about the situation in which a child does not have access to his mother tongue, for example, children living in towns. The fact that Maria argued that the mother tongue language policy did not discriminate regarding which language would be regarded as the child's mother tongue shows support for both views.

In relation to mother tongue teaching Sara stated:

... enables learners to quickly understand what they are learning but, again, Sara is concerned that the teachers they are training do not have the same understanding.

According to Sara, when the lecturers went out to the schools to conduct moderation, she observed that, when the student teachers were teaching, they would switch to English on the pretext that they were helping the learners to understand the content. She was thus concerned about whether the student teachers would teach the pre-school and Grades 1 to 3 in Oshindonga because they always seemed to want to switch to English.

Although Sara appeared to be positive about mother tongue teaching, she seemed to have doubts about the student teachers' preparation in respect of mother tongue teaching. Sara argued that she was not certain whether the student teachers would carry out the literacy instruction in the learners' mother tongue as she claimed that, during the classroom observations in schools, the student teachers had switched to English as the language of instruction and that this would adversely affect the learners' literacy learning.

Nadia indicated that several people in Namibia were not always convinced about the merits of mother tongue teaching. *"They are telling you about the children who have never been taught in the mother tongue but they still pass academically"*. Nadia argued that, in general, there were still significant challenges in terms of understanding and perceptions.

Grace had clearly had the same experiences as Nadia as she mentioned that some of the student teachers are against the idea of mother tongue teaching as they felt that it was a disadvantage for the children as they would have to start with English in Grade 4 which, according to the student teachers, was too late.

Nadia expressed the view that many people in Namibia were still not convinced about teaching in mother tongue language. This may be argued from the perspective discussed earlier in the literature review that the majority of parents view mother tongue teaching as having no economic value (Murray, 2007) for their children and that it was the reason why children sometimes take longer to understand new knowledge.

Although the lecturers expressed different views it was clear that they agreed that mother tongue instruction is important in the children's early learning. With the exception of Maria, who argued about mother tongue literacy teaching from a heterogeneous perspective, the other lecturers indicated that it was important for children to learn literacy in their mother tongue because they understand what they are learning while their thinking capacity as well as communication skills develop fully and easily (Patel, 2012).

It was evident from the interviews with the lecturers that the majority of the lecturers were in support of the mother tongue teaching policy and, especially, mother tongue medium of instruction in the early grades.

6.3.3 Student teachers' views, beliefs and perceptions about the mother tongue literacy teaching policy

As in the case of lecturers, the views and perceptions of the majority of the student teachers from both campuses who were interviewed are positive about mother tongue teaching in the early phases of the children's education. These student

teachers expressed the view that teaching using mother tongue language expedited the learners' literacy learning processes.

According to one student teacher, Gradencia, *“learners do understand things better in their mother tongue as compared to learning in English”* because the mother tongue is a *“language that the learners mostly speak at home”* (Gradencia).

The data from the student teacher focus group discussion also revealed that the student teachers were convinced that mother tongue teaching helped the learners to relate what they learn in school to their home environment.

When learners come to school, they already know how to speak, and they understand you when you teach them. It was further argued that mother tongue lays the foundation for the skills that learners will learn in another language; once learners know how to read in Oshiwambo, and then they will read in English while, for their cultural identity, to know whom they are, learners have to learn in their mother tongue because it helps them to reflect back and link what they are learning to real life situations. (Focused Group)

It was concluded that almost all the student teachers interviewed were in support of mother tongue teaching. Most of them teachers claimed that teaching learners in their mother tongue helps them understand what they are learning because the teaching is in the language they speak at home and the language they know best. In addition, the majority of the student teachers pointed out that mother tongue instruction lays a foundation for learning another language, for example, English. This finding is contrary to those of Ejieh (2004) who investigated the attitude of student teachers towards mother tongue instruction. Ejieh (2004) found student teachers believed that teaching in the mother tongue would degrade their profession.

In addition to facilitating learning with understanding, mother tongue instruction may also impart a cultural identity to the learners. This is in line with the argument of one

mother tongue-based teaching scholar who averred that ‘through mother tongue children learn everyday patterns of their contemporary age-group, cultural traditional social conventions, historical roots, relationships with other cultures, cultural achievements and cultural events’ (Patel, 2012, p. 68). Similarly, the Namibian MBESC (2003, p. 2) stressed that ‘a person’s identity is contained in the language and the culture inherited from forefathers. Therefore, the promotion of mother tongue should not be promoted only through the language in education policy but also through the status of mother tongue/ indigenous languages within Namibia.

It was evident from the interviews with the student teachers that the majority of the student teachers perceived mother tongue teaching in a positive light. According to their point of view, it is important for learners in Grades 1 to 3 to receive their learning through the mother tongue medium of instruction. The data from the classroom observations also confirmed this finding because, despite their different opinions, all the student teachers who were observed conducted their literacy teaching in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama.

Although the fact that most of the student teachers expressed a positive attitude towards mother tongue teaching, some of them did feel mother tongue teaching would constitute a major challenge to the children’s learning of English because, according to their experiences, many children could not attempt any languages other than Oshindonga. Mensia stated:

Teaching in mother tongue is putting the learners’ learning of English down. Grade 4 is a transitional year when they have to be taught in English and do code-switching; learners will struggle with literacy learning in English (Mensia).

It was thus clear that some of the student teachers were extremely concerned about the transitional year – the year learners reach Grade 4. They argued that learners would face a problem because they have to switch to learning in English. However, it seemed that these student teachers were not aware of the fact that the learners

were also learning English as a subject. The Namibian language policy stipulates that Grade 4 is a transition year to English as the medium of instruction although the mother tongue will continue to play a supportive role in teaching (Ministry of Basic Education Sport and Culture, 2003). It is for this reason; Karan and Morren (2013) maintain that;

Teacher candidates need to recognise that many of their future pupils will begin school with little or no understanding of the official language. Candidates need to understand that the first language (L1) is the foundation on which learning is acquired. They need to know why moving in small steps works best to build their pupils' confidence in understanding and speaking the second language (L2) (p. 6).

Despite the positive attitudes expressed towards the mother tongue teaching policy, both the lecturers and the student teachers highlighted certain challenges that could arise as a result of the implementation of the mother tongue teaching policy.

6.3.4 The views of lecturers and student teachers about factors influencing the implementation of mother tongue literacy teaching

This section presents the data derived from the interviews in response to the question 'What challenges are experienced when teaching literacy in the mother tongue? The lecturers and student teachers were asked about the factors affecting the implementation of the mother tongues teaching policy during the interview and focused group discussion. Common issues were cited in the discussions such as teaching and learning resources, several languages and dialects and time allocated for mother tongue training. Below is a discussion of these three issues.

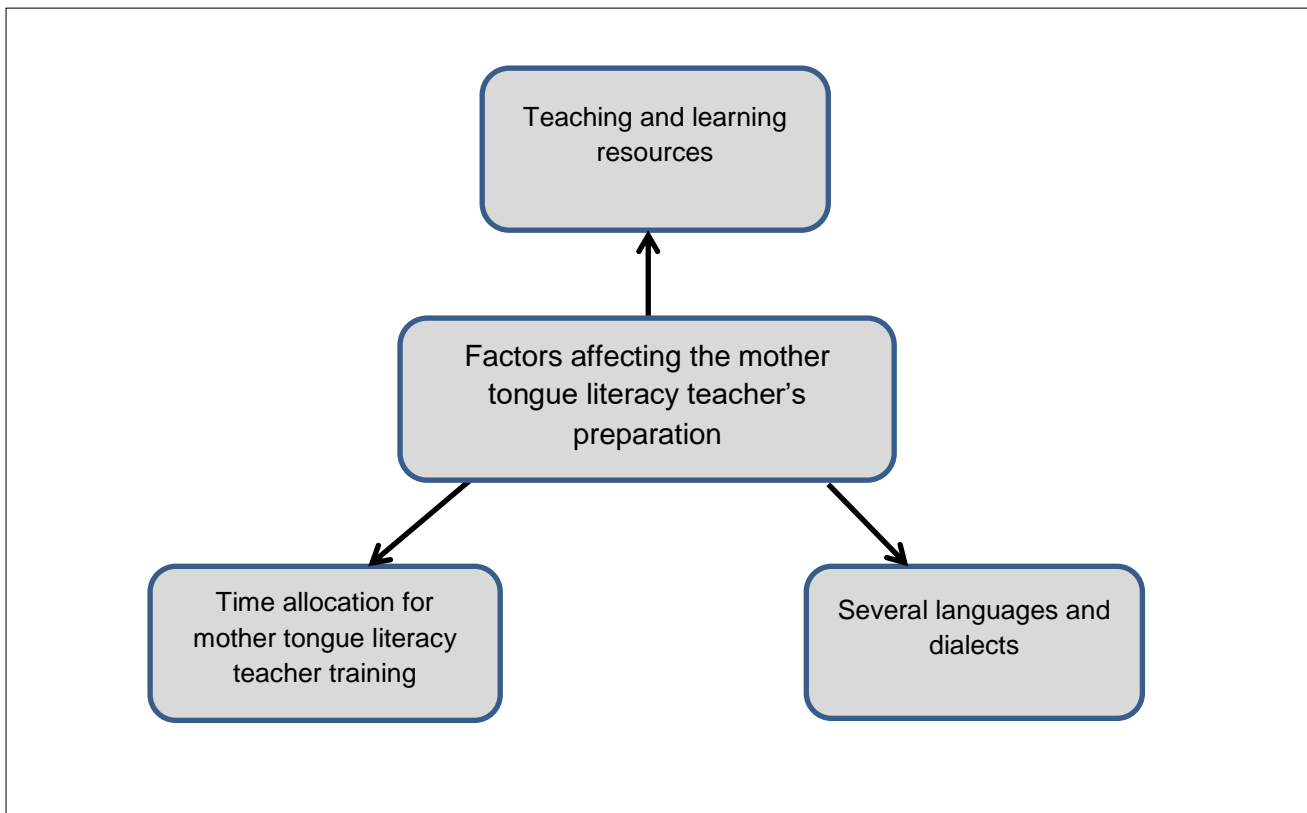


Figure 6.1: Factors affecting the mother tongue literacy teachers' preparation

6.3.3.1 Teaching and learning resources

It is assumed that, in a mother tongue based teaching programme, both the lecturers and student teachers would practise teaching using different instructional and learning materials effectively in order to support the learning in the mother tongue (Karan & Morren, 2013).

Nadia, a lecturer, indicated that, although there are books such as grammar and sound system books on which they rely heavily, these represent just the bare minimum. Nadia commented as follow:

... we have grammar books which also cover the sound system – we rely on that a lot and sentence analysis, but pure academic knowledge about the Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga languages and how they are acquired, we do not have anything.

Nadia further commented that, regarding the content delivery when they taught purely academic knowledge, the theories and principles about the literacy in mother tongue, they did not have books in Oshindonga and/or Oshikwanyama and that this was a worrying situation. Grace (a lecturer) explained that it became a problem when student teachers request sources and they are provided with sources that are always in English.

This statement was in line with that of Sheeli, a student teacher, who maintained that when their lecturers were teaching them it was difficult to translate some of the words into Oshiwambo and that, in such instances, they needed someone to interpret and translate things for them.

Although Maria, a lecturer, believed the schools did have resources, she also highlighted the urgent need for books. She explained that she was impressed by the teaching aids that the student teachers created. This practice was supported in the review of the available literature where it was suggested that trainers should encourage their student teachers to learn how to use graded materials effectively and to create their own instructional materials (Dennis & Malone, 2011).

The student teachers pointed out that there were no materials available in either Oshikwanyama or Oshindonga. For example, Kaana, a student teacher, mentioned that teachers were struggling to find storybooks to use, especially during the reading period. In addition, she mentioned teachers were also finding it difficult to decide on whether to use some stories from environmental studies and to find specific stories appropriate to the themes. She suggested that the government should do something because the teachers in schools were struggling to teach in the mother tongue.

Likewise, Sheeli, a student teacher, explained that teachers were trying to follow the syllabus and had complained that the Ministry of Education wanted them to teach in the mother tongue but did not provide teachers with the requisite materials.

She stated that there are numerous books in English that are available and books that are written in Oshiwambo (Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama) are minimal.

Niina, a student teacher, indicated, even although there were some books, there were not enough books and the learners had to share the available books in pairs. She further stated that the books for Mathematics and Environmental Science were in English and thus the teachers had to translate from English into Oshindonga.

The lack of teaching and learning materials in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama featured strongly in the data obtained from both the lecturers and the student teachers. It may thus be concluded that the implementation of the mother tongue literacy medium of instruction in the early years was poorly planned as the materials that both the learners and teachers were supposed to use were not yet available in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. In addition, one may safely conclude that the lack of material in the local languages was one of the contributory factors hindering the proper implementation of the language policy for schools in Namibia.

... most of the time we have to search for information, like on the internet, and most information is in English ... when translating you come across some words that you can't find the meaning of in Oshikwanyama ... sometimes we just translate according to our own understanding and interpretations (Grace, a lecturer).

In the same vein, Sara, another lecturer, maintained that

... I have to search for notes ... but all this information is in English. I have to seek and translate into Oshindonga which is a challenge in terms of vocabulary and spelling (Sara).

It is therefore clear that, although the ideology of the policy of mother tongue teaching is good, materials supporting the implementation of the policy are not

available and that is impacting adversely on the proper implementation of the language policy in schools.

As in the case of the lecturers, the student teachers were all of the opinion that it was impossible to carry out mother tongue literacy teaching effectively in view of the scarcity of learning materials in either Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama. It was clear in the lecturers views cited above that they believed that materials in the language used as a medium of instruction impact significantly on mother tongue literacy learning. In addition, the student teachers contended that the information that was available was in English and thus it either had to be translated or else taught as it was in English.

6.3.3.2 Numerous languages and dialects

Mother tongue based teaching assumes that the learners' development of mother tongue literacy skills takes place under teachers who have been adequately trained to teach in the languages used as the medium of instruction in schools and that the requisite materials and/or resources are available in the local languages and may be used appropriately (Amissah, 2001). The following section discusses the challenges which the lecturers and student teachers had encountered in relation to the teaching of literacy using mother tongue instruction.

The previous section highlighted that the lecturers were positive about the policy of mother tongue teaching in the early years of education for the children in Namibia. However, they also stressed that certain challenges may be encountered during the teaching of mother tongue literacy.

Nadia, a lecturer, mentioned that literacy was the most difficult module to teach.

... I think literacy is not easy to teach ... and I realised that this is the most difficult module for me to teach as well as the reading module ... you think that you have really started explaining first the theories of reading, how different people believe reading skills are acquired and the strategies of teaching reading ... but the students will still give you the impression that they don't know how to do it ... so it is, like, always we are swimming every year, although we seem to know that this is the way. It's just phonics – we just need to know the right sounds, the right phonics, how they are represented in writing and how to put it, to decode, to start with decoding skills'

Another lecturer, Sara, postulated that

... there are challenges with regards to the student teachers of the other six dialects of Oshiwambo (Kwambis, Nganderas, Kwaluudhis, Kolonkadhis, Mbalantus, Mbandjas) and who are trained to go and teach in the Oshindonga dialect as the medium of instruction in schools...those children who happen to be taught by teachers who speak the above dialects are being given the wrong spelling, thus contributing to reading and writing problems of these children (Sara).

As was pointed out in chapter one, that there are approximately five dialects that are taught in Oshindonga which is not the language spoken at home. Sara cited the other Oshiwambo dialects that are taught using Oshindonga as the medium of instruction in schools. She explained that some of the concepts are not pronounced in the same way. For example, the word 'chair', how is being pronounced is different from how it is written. However, the student teachers sometimes forget the pronunciation of these dialects in speech. The fact is that spoken and written Oshiwambo is not the same in some cases. It is thus important that the children are taught the correct spelling and also the correct pronunciation of words in Oshindonga. It is therefore clear that the issue of the Oshiwambo dialects is both problematic and difficult to solve because Oshindonga is the only dialect that is approved for use as the medium of instruction in schools where the learners speak the other six dialects of Oshiwambo. Sara's view was also supported by the student teacher who stated:

At the school I was teaching, the medium of instruction is Oshindonga and, sometimes, learners who are Oshikwanyama speaking do things and answer in Oshikwanyama although they are supposed to answer in Oshindonga (Niingo).

Both the lecturers and the student teachers believed that the other dialects of Oshiwambo were delaying the process of learning Oshikwanyama or Oshindonga as it took time to correct a child's answer and translate it into acceptable Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama.

6.3.3.3 Time allocation for mother tongue literacy teacher training

The information in chapter 2 indicated that, in most sub-Saharan African countries, mother tongue instruction in the early years is for a period of three years. There are, however, arguments that the cognitive development and academic achievement derived from teaching in the mother tongue requires more than three years of instruction. Maria, a lecturer, argued that

... yes, we expose the child to the concept of mother tongue teaching from 1 to 3, from there, mother tongue is no longer used as a medium of instruction... is too early ... if it can go up to Grade 6 (Maria).

Thus, Maria concurred with the recommendations of scholars, such as Heugh (2009) and Skutnabb-Kangas (2004), who suggest a time frame of up six years in a well-resourced environment and eight years in a poorly resourced context such as Namibia for mother tongue teaching. It is evident from Maria's view that she was convinced that the time frame which Namibia has decreed for mother tongue instruction was too short.

All the lecturers indicated that they experienced numerous challenges in respect the training of teachers who would be teaching using Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama as the mediums of instruction in schools. In addition, they also cited the time frame

for the teaching of mother tongue literacy as playing an extremely significant role the mother tongue teaching in the junior primary schools in Namibia. The lecturers all indicated that three years is not long enough for a learner to acquire a language.

I think the problem with Oshikwanyama or mother tongue, the child will only learn it at school like those children in towns, and after school they don't use Oshikwanyama anymore. So, when they are watching TV programmes, they are in English ... even in society there is no encouragement to proceed with Oshikwanyama ... the children just feel that Oshikwanyama is just something for school (Maria).

They lecturers also expressed the view that the understanding and attitudes of the Namibian people also had an impact on the implementation of the mother tongue teaching policy

6.3.3.4 The perceived lack of value of mother tongue languages and the lack of an African language policy framework in higher education

The student teachers argued that the community, as well as the home, were not encouraging children to learn their language of Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. The children received more exposure to English and thus they would not realise the value of their language.

There is a gap because of the language at the university ... it is not actually enough to say that the language policy would be implemented correctly ... because the training itself was not in the mother tongue ... this makes it difficult for the teachers to apply it ... in some of the contexts the case is that they might not understand things in the mother tongue although they might have understood it in English (Gradencia).

In short, it would appear that the training offered by the University of Namibia does not equip and support the student teachers fully in the implementation of the policy of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in schools as the training in some

subjects is conducted in English. The Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama modules are taught in Oshiwambo, the student teachers' mother tongue (Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects). The fact that UNAM chooses to use English as the medium of instruction except in the teaching of the indigenous languages often in student teachers facing enormous challenges in their implementation of the language policy.

It was confirmed by both the lecturers and the student teachers that English is the main medium of instruction for all the subjects in the entire university, except in respect of Oshindonga, Oshikwanyama and some other Namibian languages.

The student teachers explained that the only time they learnt their mother tongue was in the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama lessons as they had to speak their mother tongue in these lessons. It was clear from the student teachers that the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama modules were taught in Oshiwambo, the student teachers' mother tongue (Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects). The fact that UNAM chose to use English as the medium of instruction except in the teaching of indigenous languages was resulting in the pre-and lower primary student teachers facing huge challenges in their implementation of the language policy in schools.

It emerged from the study findings that huge challenges were experienced regarding the teaching and learning materials and the fact that English was used in most communications. Both the lecturers and student teachers reflected deeply on the areas that challenged them when presenting the content of mother tongue literacy to the students and learners in their classrooms. One student teacher commented as follows:

Challenges are there, many of them, the first one is integration. When teaching literacy, we need to take the activities from the theme or topic from environmental studies. To integrate different subjects into a theme or topic is really challenging ... and the second one is the integration of the language skills. For example, when

teaching listening, you need to include other skills ... learners need to speak, read and write about what they have listened to.

As indicated in chapter 1, the teaching and learning in junior primary is theme-based. This involves the use and linking of different activities from different subjects to the topic or themes in Environmental Studies. In other words, teachers are required to plan their teaching based on the themes from the learners' environment in order to teach in a holistic way. A student teacher had the following to say:

The challenge I have is with teaching reading and writing skills is that the kids are from homes where there is no one to help them with literacy ... there are not even books ... they only read when they are in the school' (Niingo).

The student teachers also referred to the issue of parental involvement, stating that the children were not receiving support at home because there was no one to assist them with homework and to help them to read books.

6.4 Lecturers and student teachers' views about supporting the implementation of mother tongue literacy teaching policy

The lack of materials had driven some lecturers to look for alternatives ways of addressing the challenge of scarce resources. It is clear from the views of the lecturers that they were considering writing support materials that could be used by teachers in their teaching of Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. Despite the lack of experts in these languages, the lecturers had started to translate some concepts into Oshiwambo in an effort to compile reference materials for Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. Sara claimed that recording the sounds of the letters and recording all 22 sounds would improve the teaching of mother tongue literacy in the two dialects under study.

The student teachers also suggested possible solutions to address the shortage of the instructional materials. They proposed making copies of the learners workbooks for every learner or asking the parents to either buy or donate money for books for the learners in order to improve the mother tongue literacy learning. One student teacher attested that the four years of the training had also involved producing instructional materials in Oshindonga that could also be used should teachers find themselves in a school with no teaching materials. Clearly, this skill could also be used to produce new teaching and learning materials.

The notion of forming a committee that would translate and devise picture books and posters in Oshiwambo was also cited as a possible solution to the lack of instructional materials. One student teacher also suggested writing flash cards and replacing the English labels with the Oshiwambo words as a valuable option. This suggestion was in line with another student teacher who stated that the lecturers had advised them that, when are teaching literacy, they should use concrete objects so as to have a deeper understanding of what the learners were supposed to do. Teaching aids are the foundation of effective teaching and learning in the classroom.

Although there is already literature available for adults written in Oshiwambo, the student teachers felt that it was advisable for teacher educators, teachers in schools as well as authors to either write children's books in Oshiwambo or else to translate English books into the local vernacular. They also argued that creating a fun club where Oshiwambo learners would play games and dramatise stories would improve the teaching and learning of mother tongue literacy.

6.5 Conclusion

Both the lecturers and student teachers regarded mother tongue teaching as important in children's learning. They maintained that the mother tongue links the home and the school because the language used at home is then the same as the

language used at school. They further argued that, by mastering their first language, learners would be able to use the skills acquired to learn a second language.

The lecturers voiced their concerns about the lack of understanding on the part of both community members and parents who regarded mother tongue teaching as having no economic value. This helps to explain the lack of understanding about the importance of the mother tongue literacy policy.

It was clear that there were insufficient teaching and learning materials and that this makes it difficult for both lecturers and student teachers to teach mother tongue literacy. Nevertheless, despite the scarcity of instructional materials, the study found that the participants were doing all they could to facilitate their mother tongue literacy teaching by either translating information from English into Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama or by creating new resources in these two dialects of the Oshiwambo language.

The student teachers also argued that the fact that some subjects are taught in the English makes it difficult for the student teachers to teach certain subjects in the junior primary phase as, in this phase, these subjects are supposed to be taught in the first language of the learners as the medium of instruction

CHAPTER 7: HOW STUDENT TEACHERS WERE PREPARED TO TEACH LITERACY IN MOTHER TONGUE

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data on the way in which student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga. In order to collect comprehensive data on this, data was obtained from the lecturers' training profiles, and their experiences in teaching mother tongue literacy, the student teachers' views of their competencies in relation to literacy teaching, classroom observations on the lecturers' teaching practices in the lecture halls, the lecturers' views of the literacy teaching approaches and strategies and the student teachers' practical lessons on the campuses. In order to assess the extent to which student teachers were being prepared to teach mother tongue literacy in primary classrooms, the following criteria were used:

- classroom interactions
- learners' responses to student teacher instruction
- literacy skills taught
- teaching strategies/methods/approaches the student teachers used
- student teachers' acknowledgement of learners' experiences
- materials used to support mother tongue literacy learning
- management issues that affect the teaching and learning of mother tongue literacy
- assessment of learners in relation to their mother tongue literacy learning.

The criteria were adopted from existing literature on the classification of professional standards for preparing language teachers (Cummins, 1995; Day & Conklin, 1992, as cited in Mata, 2014; Shulman, 1986b). The above-mentioned criteria were used to assess the way in which the Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga student teachers were being prepared to teach literacy (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the

mother tongue. Thus, the focus was on the way in which the lecturers prepared the student teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue and how this impacted on the student teachers' mother tongue literacy practice in schools.

The description of the case study

Both the campuses were clean. Campus A is both multilingual and multicultural. Tutorials on this campus are presented in the following five different languages, namely, Otjiherero, Afrikaans, Oshindonga, Oshikwanyama and Khoekhoegowab. The predominant language on Campus B was Oshiwambo (Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects).

The Oshikwanyama enrolment rate for the fourth year students on Campus B was low (three Oshikwanyama student teachers) as compared to the enrolment for Oshindonga (27 Oshindonga student teachers). It was noted that on this campus, there was only one lecturer who was responsible for both Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. This lecturer spoke the Oshikwanyama dialect of the Oshiwambo language.

On both campuses, the students who were enrolled in the Oshindonga class were not all Oshindonga dialect speakers as some spoke the Oshikwambi, Oshingandjera, Oshikwaluudhi, Oshikolonkadhi and Oshimbalantu dialects. All these dialects belong to the Oshiwambo language. It is important to mention that everybody who uses the above mentioned dialects learn Oshindonga at school because their dialects are not yet sufficiently developed and could not therefore be used in the schools.

It is also worth noting the enrolment on Campus B was slightly higher than that on Campus A. The reason for this was Campus B is situated in the regions where the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects are commonly spoken and thus the fourth-year enrolment of 56. There was one lecturer for Oshikwanyama and two for Oshindonga on Campus B. In view of the fact that the majority of the junior primary

school teachers are women, it was not surprising that this was also the case on Campus A and that, of the thirty fourth-year student teachers enrolled for Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama, there were three male students only enrolled in the fourth year.

The study assumed that learning to teach literacy effectively requires teacher educators who possess the relevant teaching experiences as well as the ability to help student teachers to develop adequate skills in relation to teaching literacy in the early grades (EFA Global Monitoring Report Team, 2015).

7.2 The training profile of the Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga lecturers

It must be remembered that this study was seeking to answer the question as to how the University of Namibia was preparing future student teachers to teach literacy using the mother tongue of the learners as the medium of instruction in schools. In order to acquire a clear understanding of how student teachers were being prepared to teach literacy in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama, the researcher was interested to learn more about the lecturers' profile and also their teaching preparation experiences in order to ascertain whether these had an impact on mother tongue literacy teaching preparation.

Studies on primary teacher education have indicated that the tutors do not generally have much professional experience of the primary school classroom. For example, a study by Mulkeen (2010, p: 87) using eight case studies of Anglophone Africa teachers found that the majority of the tutors were formally trained secondary school teachers and that some had never even been primary teachers. Mulkeen (2010, p: 87) also found that, in Gambia, the majority of the tutors teaching the primary teacher certificate course were not primary teachers while, in Eritrea and Zambia, most of the tutors in the primary teachers training institutions had taught at secondary schools. Similarly, the study conducted by Akyeampong et al. (2011) in

six African countries found that the tutors trained in languages were primarily from a secondary school background and also that those who had been primary school teachers had little theoretical background. In the main, the lecturers who train the pre and lower primary mother tongue literacy teachers have various training qualifications. This was generally true of the teacher educators who participated in this study. The findings of this study revealed that the majority of the lecturers had not been trained either to teach the lower grades or to teach mother tongue literacy. The training and teaching experiences of the lecturers who participated in this study discussed below.

Nadia explained that she had trained as a junior secondary and senior secondary English teacher but that she had had the opportunity to teach in both phases except junior primary. She had studied for a senior secondary diploma first and subsequently for a degree. Her first years of teaching were at the junior secondary level, then next four years at the senior secondary level after which she had been appointed to teach at the teachers' training college which provided training for primary school student teachers.

Grace had qualified to teach Grades 5 to 8 (senior primary) and also Grades 8 to 10 (junior secondary). During her training Oshikwanyama was taught in English. Despite the fact that, in some cases, the students were able to Oshikwanyama the training was in English.

Maria had first been trained to teach at primary school level and had subsequently undergone both secondary schools as well as trained for teacher training. During her primary school teacher training, she had studied Oshindonga as a subject as well the method of language teaching. However, both her secondary education certificate and her higher education diploma had not included Oshindonga although they had included English as a language.

Thus, both Nadia and Grace had been trained to teach in the upper primary, junior and senior secondary school phases, not in the junior primary phase. On the other hand, Maria had diploma in teaching at all the levels, including higher institutions. It also emerged that the training they had all undergone had been in English with even Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama being offered in English.

Although Sara was fortunate to have been trained to teach in mother tongue, this training had not included practical teaching but focused more on the theory and the structure of mother tongue as a language. Sara commented:

My first qualification was in primary ... I was prepared to teach in mother tongue ... but, in the 1990s ... we were taught in Oshindonga but it wasn't much on how we had to teach ... it wasn't connected much to the practical part of teaching but they taught us the content or the structure of the language.

It was thus clear from the lecturers' experiences discussed above that the majority of lecturers who trained teachers to teach literacy in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama had not had any training in junior primary teaching and nor had they ever taught the junior primary phase. Instead, they had been trained to teach senior primary and senior secondary. In other words, their training and experience in respect of teaching young children appeared to be minimal.

It is also worth noting that even those who had been trained in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama had received their training in English. Even in the case of lecturer Sara, who was fortunate to have been trained to teach primary education, the training had focused primarily on theory and not on practical teaching. It must be remembered that the training experiences of lecturers may have an impact on the way in which they teach.

7.3 Lecturers' experiences in preparing student teachers for mother tongue literacy teaching in the early grades

In view of the fact that the majority of the lecturers observed had not been trained to teach the junior primary phase, the researcher was interested to ascertain the extent of the lecturers' experience in preparing student teachers for mother tongue literacy in the early grades. The discussion with the lecturers revealed that at first, they had been anxious because they had not known much about the training of teachers for this phase. This however was solved through a crash course organised by the pre-primary and lower primary department

Nadia stated that, at first, she had been clueless but had later realised the important junior primary training and that one had to make a difference. Nadia explained that her involvement in the preparation of pre and lower primary future teachers had been a revelation for her because she had so enjoyed creating and telling stories and singing and rhyming with the students. She also reiterated that junior primary is a very important phase. Sara cited how both her personal as well as her professional growth improved and explained that the level at which she found herself in terms of mother tongue literacy teacher's preparation had tremendously improved. She commented that her knowledge and skills had improved since she had started with the preparation of pre and lower primary mother tongue literacy future teachers.

On the other hand, Maria viewed her junior primary teacher's preparation experiences as the same as her experiences in the other school phases she had previously taught. She maintained that the only differences in the training were the amount of time the learners spent on the activities and the work to be given to the learners. She argued that when training teachers how to teach the junior primary learners to develop their listening skills, a short story of approximately 50 words should be used whereas secondary school learners should listen to a story of 100 words.

However, despite the various training courses the lecturers had undergone, Nadia asserted, that in order for them to start with the preparation of the mother tongue literacy teachers, they had to go through different capacity building experiences and attend workshops and trainings sessions. In addition, they were supported by officials in the pre-and lower primary departments who had experience in literacy teaching. For example, the head of department (HOD) had greatly supported them and given them a crash course in a one day workshop on what lower primary is all about, the philosophy of teaching young children, teaching through songs and handwriting. Nadia also mentioned they used to have co-teaching where those who were more experienced taught others who observed them.

It is clear from the two lecturers' accounts of their first experiences of training mother tongue literacy teachers for the junior primary phase that they had been anxious and had had little idea how they should go about it. Nevertheless, after the departmental interventions had they noticed an improvement in their teaching and also the progress they had made in their training of mother tongue literacy teachers. In addition, they had also realised the importance of the junior primary phase. This had an impact on the way in which lecturers conducted their mother tongue literacy teachers' training. Studies of primary teacher education training have revealed that, in general, the tutors do not have professional training and experience in the primary classroom (Akyeampong, Pryor, Westbrook, & Lussier, 2011; Mulkeen, 2010). This was also true of the lecturers in this study as the majority of them had received professional training for the senior level of the school phase. It was thus clear that most of the lecturers who prepare student teachers for pre and lower primary teachers have not been trained to teach this phase and neither have they had any experience in teaching this phase.

7.4 Lecturers' mother tongue literacy skills and knowledge

In order to assess the lecturers' skills and knowledge in relation to mother tongue literacy, the classroom observations focused on the lecturers' mother tongue literacy practices involving listening, speaking and writing in the lecture hall. Accordingly, the researcher observed their mother tongue literacy skills and content in the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama lessons they taught as they taught the Junior Primary BEd course and focusing on listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Surely teaching of *listening and speaking* was observed in the way in which they taught storytelling, songs, games, rhymes and riddles – all resources for promoting listening skills and phonological awareness. However, despite the fact that the lecturers encouraged the student teachers to use games, rhymes, riddles and phonological awareness, there was evidence of how the student teachers should use these in their teaching during the observations. The lecturers' explanations were in line with what is suggested in the literature, namely, that developing the learners' listening, vocabulary and speech abilities comes about through listening to stories and conversations, playing games, singing songs and dramatising stories (Bloch, 2005; Landberg & Swarts, 2011).

Surely the lecturers' knowledge of teaching *reading* was observed in the way in which they were teaching reading based on phonics, whole word as well as look and say, fluency, and comprehension while the lecturers' teaching of *writing* skills was observed in the way in which they demonstrated to the student teachers how they should teach children to draw patterns, letters, spelling, words and short texts.

In addition, the classroom observations also focused on the way in which the lecturers taught the theories of mother tongue teaching. It was observed that the student teachers were taught using literacy theories, which encapsulated both ideas and facts relating to literacy. The student teachers also learned through practising what they had learned by explaining and demonstrating how to teach what they had

learned to the rest of the class during the practical and micro teaching lessons. In most cases the literacy theory and principles of mother tongue literacy content were put in to practice using the face-to-face method and delivered in the form of a lecture to a large number of students. In the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama classes which were observed, the lecture method, accompanied by slideshows, was used to deliver the content. All the lecturers observed used PowerPoint presentations to communicate literacy theories, ideas and facts to the student teachers. It was further observed that, while some of the lecturers presented the theory of the literacy content to the student teachers, other lecturers' lessons also focused on the details of literacy activities and the literacy teaching methods and approaches in general.

The following section provides a detailed account of the lecturers' mother tongue literacy teaching practices which demonstrated how the student teachers were prepared to teach mother tongue literacy. The classroom observation was based on the following criteria:

- teaching methods
- literacy methods and strategies used to prepare students to teach mother tongue literacy, i.e. the way in which literacy is taught and managed
- the approaches to assessment used as well as the availability of mother tongue teaching resources
- classroom interaction
- type of literacy skills being taught
- teaching methods and strategies employed
- availability of teaching materials or resources
- connection between previous experiences and new information
- how literacy was learned and assessed
- the language proficiency of the teacher educators.

7.5 Lecturers' teaching methods for mother tongue literacy

In order to obtain data on the way in which the student teachers were trained to teach literacy in the mother tongue, classroom observations of four lecturers teaching literacy in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama were carried out. The purpose of these observations was to obtain an understanding of the methods, approaches and strategies which the lecturers in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama used to prepare student teachers to teach literacy when these two languages were used as the medium of instruction in schools. Below are descriptions of the teaching methods which the lecturers used to teach mother tongue literacy.

7.5.1 Lecture method

The lecturers using this method presented the content, explained it and moved on. The student teachers were expected to listen and take notes when necessary. Below are examples of Oshindonga lessons that Nadia presented to the third year student teachers. This lesson provided a demonstration of lecture method of teaching. The student teachers sat in rows. Nadia had has experience in teaching junior secondary and senior secondary and had taught for ten years.

Lesson observed on 7 March 2016 from 7:30 to 8:30: A general overview

Nadia presented a literacy content lesson that was on how to teach literacy using stories, poems, songs, rhymes and games. She rushed through the Powerpoint presentation, and then read out notes on pre-listening, pre-reading and pre-writing. She stood in front of the class explaining the notes that were on the screen. Nadia did not allow the student teachers to participate and verbalise their opinions. She explained one point after the other and moved on to the next point without allowing any active interaction with the student teachers. When she presented a point, she asked the student teachers to apply their understanding, but only few student teachers had the opportunity to express their reactions. It was observed that Nadia

found it difficult to hold the attention of the student teachers as they appeared bored and withdrawn.

Lesson observed on 7 March 2016 from 7:30 to 8:30: A general overview

Based on the researcher's observation the following evaluation of the lesson presented above (07 March 2016 starting 7:30 to 8: 30) was made:

- The classroom communication and interaction between the lecturer and the student teachers was fairly poor because student teachers were not given the opportunity to ask the lecturer questions about points they did not understand and nor were they given the opportunity to ask each other for clarification. The lecturer asked the questions. A few student teachers only were given the chance to respond with the majority of the student teachers not being given a chance to respond and share their views.
- The lecturer used a teaching method which presents the lecturer as the expert one who knows everything while the students comprise a group of *tabula rasa* waiting to be filled with knowledge from the lecturer
- There was no evidence of the way in which the student teachers were assessed to improve their mother tongue literacy teaching in schools. The student teachers had little chance to engage and to be actively involved in the lesson and this may have affected their literacy learning experience
- Little or nothing was done to connect to what student teachers already knew with what was new.
- Nadia's curriculum knowledge was good; her subject knowledge was also good; she communicated fluently and presented the lesson in line with the student teachers' language level in Oshindonga.

According to the criteria for evaluating observations, it would appear that Nadia failed to explain the information she was presenting in detail as she rushed through each point. She confirmed that the lecturers usually had to rush through the notes/summaries because it was not possible to discuss a certain topic within the

space of an hour and finish with it. She explained that if the student teachers were given a topic to discuss and report on so that they could be provided with feedback and also the information required, time would run out, thus implying that the time allocated to each session was not long enough (1 hr).

As a result, the student teachers' engagement during the lesson was limited as the lecturer found it difficult to attract and hold the attention of all the student teachers. The interaction and communication between the lecturer and the student teachers were limited because only the students who sat in the front of the class followed and participated in the discussion while those who sat at the back of the class just made a noise and were either busy on their cell phones or their laptops. According to Bhattacharjee (2015), the constructivist process works best in the social setting of a classroom where the learners are given the opportunity to compare and share their ideas with others. However, Nadia's approach was in contradiction to this view as she did little to engage and active involve all the student teachers in the teaching and learning activities and thus they appeared both passive and disconnected. This may have impacted adversely on the effectiveness of their mother tongue literacy learning. Although the lecturer did allow the student teachers to answer questions or explain things to demonstrate their understanding, the students were not placed in either pairs or groups to allow them to discuss and share their views and opinions with the rest of the class in a plenary session.

Contrary to the view expressed by Hoover (1969, as cited in Amineh, 2015), that people construct new understanding using their existing knowledge, Nadia did nothing in this lesson to connect to her student teachers' prior experiences. In other words, there was no chance of the student teachers' previous knowledge influencing their new knowledge. Nadia could have taught the lesson using local and familiar examples and the traditional community practices familiar to the student teachers, such as songs and dance, as well as listening to fairy stories in order to enhance their acquisition of the new information. In other words, Nadia's presentation contradicted Darling-Hammond's (2007) suggestion that the preparation programme

should begin with the student teachers' personal experiences as a way to activate existing beliefs and knowledge in order to build on them.

There was no evidence showing the way in which the student teachers were assessed and, instead, the lecturer asked questions which a few of the student teachers answered. It was observed that the lecturer failed to encourage the student teachers to expand on their responses by asking for additional thoughts from others (Filomena, Sanders, Valente, Radio, Henry, Powers, & MacIntyre, 2004.). It was, however, also noted that the lecturer did not possess sufficient skill in respect of the lecturing methods. It may be argued that, when one talks of lecturing methods, thus does not necessarily mean just telling the student teachers but also includes design strategies that may help the student teachers to connect their experiences to the new knowledge (Filomena et al, 2004).

There are a variety of lecture methods which all show a number of strengths and weaknesses. The lecturer used the lecture method that involves the lecturer standing in front of a class and pouring out information to a group of student teachers. Although such a method has been recently criticised as not being the best method to use and as demonstrating several weaknesses, it is also believed to be a convenient method for instructing large groups of people because it saves time and energy as the lecturer is able to say one thing to the whole class at the same time (Muhammad, Bala & Ladu 2016). It is also believed to help students develop and improve their ability to listen attentively to the teacher.

However, on the negative side, this method of lecturing is believed not to encourage students' initiative as it turns them into passive listeners (Muhammad, Bala & Ladu 2016). In view of the fact that this method has been criticised for not promoting higher order thinking skills, such as conceptual understanding, independent learning and problem solving abilities (Kimmel, 1992; Puett & Braunstein, 1991, as cited in Saroyan & Nell, 1997), modern scholars in education discourage the use of this

method of teaching and, instead, it is recommended that this method be combined with those methods that promote participative learning.

Nevertheless, on a positive note, Nadia demonstrated a strong subject content knowledge of pre-literacy and she was able to explain the pre-literacy content in Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga fluently.

7.5.2 Lecture-discussion method

As indicated earlier, the lecturers observed in this study used various methods to deliver the mother tongue literacy content in their lectures. It was observed that, although the direct teaching method dominated the mother tongue literacy lessons observed, the lecturers did sometimes use both the lecture and the discussion methods to deliver the literacy content.

The lecture-discussion method was another type of lecturing method which was used by some lecturers in certain lessons to deliver the content of mother tongue literacy. According to Kaur (2011), the lecture-discussion method is a type of lecturing that encourages students to comment and express their concerns, views and opinions rather than ask and/or answer questions. When using this method, the lecturer starts with the presentation, speaks for few minutes and then asks the students to discuss key points in the presentation. During the discussion the lecturers clarifies the students' comments (Kaur, 2011).

Below is an Oshikwanyama lesson that was observed. The lesson was presented by Grace to third year student teachers. Grace is professionally qualified to teach in Oshikwanyama and is an experienced and mature lecturer. She taught and also trained upper primary, junior and senior secondary teachers until recently moving to train the pre-and junior primary BEd Oshikwanyama student teachers. Grace used the lecture and discussion method. She also used Powerpoint presentations and

stood in front of the class, reading notes from her laptop screen. Grace had taught for 25 years and was qualified to teach all the levels of education including the BEd programme (year 1 to year 4) which she had joined recently. The class observed comprised 77 second year student teachers.

Lesson observed 7 April 2016 (7:30am–8:30am): A general overview.

In this lesson, Grace used a lecture-discussion method as explained. Her presentation to the third year students focused on listening and speaking as well as the use of songs to develop listening and speaking skills. During her presentation she explained the use of play and songs with children in their classrooms and encouraged the student teachers to do this with the children. She then asked student teachers to tell give reasons why songs are important in a learner's learning. She emphasised that songs help learners to learn the structure of the language and added that songs bring enjoyment to learners, including laughter and excitement. Grace related her lesson to various events when she explained the different types of songs, e.g. cultural songs and songs sang at different festivals such as weddings, funerals, birthdays, traditional beer festivals (Omaango), cow's festivals, etc.

The student teachers were given an opportunity to share their experiences and they were also asked to sing a festival song they knew. Thus, Grace gave the student teachers a chance to sing and demonstrate songs they knew that were sung at different festivities in groups. Student teachers were also asked to explain the meaning of the songs that they had sung. Grace emphasised that these types of songs were very important for children as they link cultural experiences to what is happening in the classroom. She encouraged the student teachers to link the songs or dances to the topics they would be teaching to their learners in the classroom.

The following is an evaluation of the lesson observed which was delivered by Grace on 7 March 2016 (7:30am–8:30am).

Both the classroom communication and interaction between the lecturer and the student teachers in this lesson were good. Grace would ask a question and student teachers would be given the opportunity to answer either individually or as a group. In addition, she interacted with the student teachers by inviting them teachers to join

in the discussion at all times either by relating their experiences with the topic of the discussion, by answering her questions or by asking follow up questions. She allowed student teachers to connect and link their cultural experiences with the new knowledge being presented when she asked them to narrate the stories, sing the songs and play the games they had observed at festival.

The student teachers were assessed in an effort to support and improve their listening and speaking skills with the lecturer involving them by posing questions and asking them to relate what they learned in class to their own cultural experiences. Grace demonstrated adequate curriculum and pedagogic content knowledge of the mother tongue in respect of the skill she was teaching and communicated fluently in Oshikwanyama throughout the lesson; She later gave an assignment to the student teachers, asking them prepare an activity on how to teach listening and speaking using songs.

In her lesson Grace exhibited some of the characteristics of student-centred teaching. She connected to the student teachers' prior experiences by inviting them to become involved and share their cultural songs which were sung during festivals. Grace's approach was in alignment with the constructivist learning principle outlined by Good and Brophy (1994, as cited in Bhattacharjee, 2015), namely, that, in an effort to make sense of news information, students must make connection between old knowledge and new information. This may be done through allowing students to compare, question, challenge and investigate. Accordingly, Grace linked her presentation to the student teachers' cultural experiences in order to extend their understanding and giving them an opportunity to compare and question their experiences of the songs sung at different festivals. This was a learning opportunity for many of the student teachers because it was clear that some were not acquainted with the cultural issues involved. When Grace asked the student teachers specific questions about the songs that are sung at the *Omaaongo* festival, those who knew about the songs were encouraged to share their experiences with the rest of the class. It became evident that this lesson had been interactive with the

student teachers being allowed to discuss debate and argue about the cultural stories told, songs sung and games played during the festivals. This was very valuable as it was evident that the groups understood cultural issues differently.

The classroom interaction was good because the student teachers were free to come join in even if they were not invited. The student teachers were given freedom to socialise and to share the songs with the lecturers and with others in the class. It was clear that Grace also understood that 'learning occurred as learners are actively involved in a learning process of meaning and knowledge construction' (Bhattacharjee, 2015, p. 67).

It was also observed that the lecturer stopped to ask questions, cited additional examples and re-emphasised important points in order to help the student teachers understand how to teach in the mother tongue (Filomena et al, 2004). The move from one skill to the next skill was clear as the lecturer directed, for example, she would say, 'Ok, let us move to the next point'. It was also evident that the student teachers were being time to learn from each other when they were asked to comment or relate their personal experiences.

The fact that Grace had asked the student teachers to sing and discuss cultural songs and explain how things are done differently in different cultures enabled inexperienced student teachers to learn from the others. Thus, Grace created a learning environment that gave the student teachers the opportunity to build up their knowledge base during the learning process in the class (Angula, 1993).

In conclusion, Grace was clearly aware that literacy is acquired through social interaction and thus she located her teaching within sociocultural perspectives by linking her lesson to the student teachers' cultural experiences.

7.5.3 Lecture-demonstration method

The lecture-demonstration method is a further lecture method that lecturers use to deliver literacy content. Such lessons demonstrate the characteristics of the active learning which results in student-centred learning.

Below is an example of the lecture-demonstration lesson which was presented to the Oshindonga second year student teachers on Campus B by Maria. She taught the student teachers how to plan a listening and responding focusing on listening attentively and responding correctly as per the competency prescribed in the junior primary Oshindonga school syllabus. Maria was a mature lecturer with 30 years' of experience in teaching Oshindonga and specialising in teaching Oshindonga. She was qualified to train student teachers for all the phases, namely, primary, secondary and tertiary. She had been a lecturer for these phases until starting to lecture pre- and junior primary which she had been doing for the previous six years. According to her; she was enjoying the lecturing in this phase.

Lesson observed on 6 April 2016 (9:30am–10:30am)

Maria linked her lesson to her previous lesson by inviting the student teachers to answer questions and engage into discussions related to their cultural experiences. In the lesson of the previous day she had explained how the student teachers could use stories in their teaching. On the day of the observation she asked them to plan a listening activity using stories. She divided student teachers into groups and instructed them to use the school syllabus to select appropriate competencies. The lecturer revised the components of the lesson plan and explained that, when planning a lesson, the students must think of both a context and geographical conditions. She told the students that there must always be a focus in their teaching. She constantly reminded them to plan their lessons based on a story, to choose a competency from the syllabus and to think of teaching aids to use. She moved around the groups and reminded the student teachers of important points, for example, stories stimulate learner interests. She emphasised that student teachers had to consider how to teach new knowledge and select appropriate materials that would assist them teach the learners how to listen attentively and answer questions correctly. The groups started

debating and the whole room was busy. The lecturer continued to emphasise that, although listening attentively and answering correctly may be taught using rhymes, songs, and games, the activity in which the student teachers were involved focused on teaching using only stories.

The following evaluation was made of the lesson that was observed on 6 April 2016 starting at (10:30am–11:30am).

- The classroom communication and interaction between the lecturer and the student teachers were good. The lecturer would ask a question and many of the student teachers were given an opportunity to respond and actively engage in the discussion. The majority of the student teachers in this class were given a chance to participate either through attentive listening or in group discussions. Maria invited the student teachers to join in the discussion at all times either by allowing them to share their experiences or by answering her questions
- There was a limited or no connection between the new information and the student teachers' previous experiences
- There was evidence of how the student teachers were assessed to improve their listening and speaking process because the lecturer involved the students by asking guiding questions and relating the new content to what they knew already.
- The student teachers were allowed to interact in the discussions and were actively involved in the lesson by being given the opportunity to choose appropriate stories.

Maria had extensive language teaching experience which enabled her to actively teach for any phase using different teaching and learning styles. The fact that she linked her previous lesson to the lesson that was being observed allowed the student to reflect on what they had learned and logically sequence their learning.

It is worth mentioning that, in this lesson; Maria encouraged group work and encouraged verbal participation, thus involving the student teachers in more just listening. The student teachers worked in groups to plan a lesson in Oshindonga. While they debated on the format of the lesson in their groups, learned and clarified issues to others in their groups, Maria moved around the class explaining, making sure that everyone had understood the instructions and guiding the student teachers to new discoveries.

According to Vygotsky (as cited in Chatry-Komarek, 2003), perform better under the teacher's guidance or working in groups as compared to working individually. There was evidence of a collaborative learning situation with the lecturer guiding and supporting the student teachers while they engaged in the activity, thus demonstrating some excellent teaching skills. Collaborative learning is the most effective form of learning with learners participating actively and sharing their opinions without reserve (Chatry-Komarek, 2003). It was, therefore, worth mentioning that this lesson was an interactive lesson with the student teachers participating freely, contributing generously, and producing learner-centred lesson. Maria was clearly adept at conveying content and appeared to have a sound grasp of the subject matter.

However, despite the positive aspects of her teaching, Maria appeared to lack knowledge and skills on the aspects of learners' prior learning. The way in which student teachers could consider linking new content to the learners' prior experience in their planning was not evident in this lesson.

7.5.4 Lecture- modelling method

Modelling is one of the powerful strategies that a teacher may use to scaffold learning because it involves showing rather than just telling. According to Kosnik and

Beck (2008), 'modelling is important for social constructivism because it is a manifestation of holism and integration: it link how we live and what we say' (p. 45).

The majority of the lecturers, especially those who were observed teaching emergent literacy, explained to the student teachers that they should allow learners to listen to stories, recite poems and rhymes, play games and sing songs to enable the learners to learn the language in question, stimulate their interest in the lessons and have fun. Grace further explained that the students could either make up their own stories or use stories from books. Grace emphasised that stories are very important because they stimulate learners' thinking and they foster concentration. When learners listen to a story, they relate the story to their experiences, they develop their own interpretations of good story telling and they make the story fit their situation (Grace). In relation to the pre-reading activities, both Nadia and Grace explained that pre-reading involves paging through books, discussing the pictures, holding the books properly and with care and knowing that, when reading, one has to start from left to right and from the top of the page to the bottom. These views were aligned to Irwin, Moore, Tornatore and Fowler 's (2012) suggestion that knowing about books, for example, knowing the difference between words and pictures, the front and the back of the book, and from left to right, helps to expose children to books and that these concepts may be taught through shared book reading. Some of the lecturers presented a set of pre-literacy lessons that demonstrated the details of the activities involved. Below is an example of a lesson that was presented to the third year Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga student teachers on Campus A by Nadia who modelled good reading habits.

Lesson observed on 7 March 2016 (7:30am–8:30am):

Nadia explained that the student teachers should always model what they want their learners to do. For example, if they want their learners to speak properly and listen attentively, they must demonstrate this. Nadia emphasised how stories are important to children's learning. She further explained the characteristics of children's stories, that is, the stories should be short, have pictures, have a beginning, body, and ending, be dramatic and

magical, and have a solution and a happy conclusion. Nadia first started discussing the front cover. She started reading the story to the students, and demonstrated how they should either tell or read stories to their learners. She acted out the characters, i.e. by changing the tone of the voice, she stopped and made predictions, and she discussed all the steps involved when telling a story to learners. She encouraged the student teachers to give the learners an opportunity to tell and re-tell stories.

Concerning the teaching and learning of pre-reading and writing skills, Nadia brought containers to class that were labelled in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama in their surroundings such as Oshikandela, Omaere etc. She instructed the students to encourage the learners to read road signs and labels written in Oshikwanyama/ Oshindonga. Nadia explained that much found in the environment is labelled in English and a few things only labelled in Oshikwanyama or Oshindonga. She emphasised the importance of books. She explained to the students, that as one of the first step in teaching reading, they should show the learners how to take care of books, how to hold the book and how to open the book and explain that reading is from left to right and from the top to the bottom. She asked the students to relate how they would start to teach reading. The students answered in unison and started with the letter sounds and letter names. Nadia asked the Oshikwanyama students to sound the letter in Oshikwanyama, and then later she asked the Oshindonga students to do the same. While sounding both the Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga letters the students, realised that there is no Cc and no Rr in these two dialects, while Xx is only in Oshikwanyama and Zz only is in Oshindonga. She explained that letter sounds relate to how we pronounce and sound the letters. The students practised sounding with Nadia actively observing and correcting the position of their lips to demonstrate the correct way of pronouncing the sound.

The following is an evaluation of the lesson observed on 7 March 2016 (9:30am–10:30am):

- The classroom communication and interaction between lecturer and the student teachers in this lesson were good. The student teachers actively engaged in the activities and were allowed to interact in the discussion and be actively involved in sounding the letters of the alphabet in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama.

- There was evidence of how the student teachers were assessed when Nadia asked them to sound letters in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama and took the time to correct their pronunciation.

It was evident in the lesson that Nadia employed active learning methods. She used resources such as big books to model to the student teachers good reading habits using the big books. In addition, she also used alphabet chart for the students to practise letter sounding. The student teachers learned through discovery as both the Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga student teachers found that some letters that appear in English do not appear in their languages. It was observed that Nadia modelled good teaching practices. She was observed to scaffold the student teachers' learning process. She guided the student teachers' understanding on how to use the big books to read stories to the children in the classroom and, at the same time, she modelled how she expected the student teachers to show the young learners how to handle books when reading. She started the process and allowed student teacher to take over under her guidance. Nadia used Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama to teach reading throughout the lesson. The content taught was in line with what is suggested in the literature. It is also worth mentioning that Nadia linked book handling skills to the content of the school syllabus, namely:

... follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page; demonstrate the proper way to handle books, e.g. hold book upright, recognise front and back cover, turn pages carefully" (Ministry of Education, 2015, p. 18).

Nadia asked the student teachers to sound the letters of the alphabet. The majority of the student teachers in the class were given a chance to participate because each language group (Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga) sounds the letters in their groups, thus demonstrating a link to the student teachers' prior experiences of the letter sounds. Nadia brought containers labelled in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama to the class and expanded the student teachers skills' on how to use the context- based learning to build upon the learners' prior experiences.

Although Nadia used different teaching methods and approaches to deliver the content of mother tongue literacy, her teaching approach was, nevertheless, predominantly the lecturing approach.

In conclusion, it was observed that lecturers used various teaching methods to teach mother tongue literacy in their classrooms. The methods used included the lecture/teacher talk method, lecture-discussion, lecture-demonstration and modelled methods. It was, however, evident that teacher talk dominated the mother tongue literacy teaching instructions.

7.6 Lecturers' literacy teaching approaches

In order to obtain data on the lecturers' literacy teaching approaches, classroom observations were carried out while the lecturers were teaching mother tongue literacy lessons. Below is an example of an Oshikwanyama literacy lesson. The lecturer presented the lesson to the third year students on campus B.

Lesson observed on 7 April 2016 (7:30am–8:30am):

Grace introduced the phonics method. Firstly, she explained what phonics entails and why phonics are used. Secondly, she explained that, when teaching reading using phonics; the sound of the letters must be taught first and then the letter names, syllables and words. She highlighted that it was easier for parents to assist with phonic methods as compared to other methods. She did not encourage any discussion or make corrections. She merely moved on to introduce and explain the 'look and say' method. She further explained that the 'look and say method' involves looking at the whole word with the learners looking at the word and saying it or looking at the word and sounding the letters, reading the whole word or the teacher presenting a picture and the word together and the students learning to read the word with the help of the picture. Grace explained that this latter method could be applied by using simple sentences and pictures appropriate to the sentences. She also told the students that they could use words with the learners using these words to build up a sentence. They could also mix the words up and allow learners either to read or put them in the correct order. She explained that student teachers should choose pictures that were

familiar and appropriate to the content to enable the learners to read using the pictures. Grace explained that the look and say method is important because it allows learners to read the words fluently.

Grace also introduced the 'language experienced approach' used in 'breakthrough' to literacy. She explained that this method builds on what the learners already know and adds new knowledge. She explained that, in terms of this method, learners learn in small groups and in pairs. She advised that the teacher work with one group at a time while the rest of the class is busy with other reading activities. She emphasised that learners enjoyed working together because they assist each other and learn from each other. She went on to explain how the language experience approach could be used to teach reading. She concluded by highlighting that this method is suitable for both reading and writing.

The following is an evaluation of the lesson observed on 7 April 2016 (7:30am–8:30am):

- The classroom communication and interaction between the lecturer and the student teachers in this lesson were not good. The classroom interaction was limited to interaction during the discussion while active involvement in the lesson involved the student teachers sharing their experiences.
- Grace asked questions during the lesson but only a few student teachers were given a chance to respond but not the majority of the student teachers.
- Little was done to connect the student teachers' experiences to the new knowledge.
- There was no evidence on how the student teachers were assessed to support and improve the learners' literacy learning.

As indicated in the evaluation of this lesson, Grace presented a summary of the theories and facts pertaining to literacy teaching methods and, in particular, the various approaches to teaching reading. As per the theories that informed this study

and discussed in chapter two, her explanation of teaching phonics was in line with scholars such as Street (2003, 2004) and Gillon (2004), who maintain that literacy is a technical skill that may be acquired through following a certain instructions. They assert that, cognitively, each skill needs to be taught, learned and mastered before moving to the next skill. Grace explained that, when teaching phonics; student teachers should first start with the letter sounds and then move onto the letter names, syllables, words and, finally, sentences. However, she did not follow this same pattern because she just explained and moved on to the next skill without ascertaining whether the student teachers had understood and mastered the various skills in sequence;

It was observed that Grace had endeavoured to expose the student teachers to various literacy teaching approaches, such as *phonics*, *look and say*, and *the language experience approaches* and also explained verbally how to teach using those methods. She explained that the “language experience approach” allows building on what the learners already know and expanding this to the new knowledge but she failed to link her explanation to the sociocultural aspect of learning literacy as discussed in chapter two and chapter three of this thesis.

In addition, Grace also failed to demonstrate to the student teachers how they could teach using the above mentioned methods when teaching the learners in a class and did not give them the opportunity to practise saying the sounds. Teaching using demonstration methods only does not contribute to the professional development of student teachers as it is essential that they not only hear and read about teaching, but they also experience it (Swennen & Van der Klink, 2009).

There was no agreement between the views expressed by the lecturers on literacy teaching methods, especially the teaching of reading. Nadia and Grace regarded the technical skills approach as the best approach to teaching literacy in the Bantu languages while Maria and Sara perceived value in exposing student teachers to as

many literacy teaching methods as possible to enable them to be able to cope in any environment in which they may find themselves.

7.7 Lecturers' literacy teaching strategies

As mentioned previously, the lecturers discussed different approaches to literacy teaching, including phonics, whole word or look and say methods, and the language experience approach. In addition, the lecturers also demonstrated different strategies to the teaching of literacy. The lesson below described the strategies that Sara used to prepare student teachers to teach reading and writing skills

Lesson observed on 5 April 2016 9:30am–10:30am):

It was observed that Sara presented a lesson on teaching reading and writing by using shared, guided and independent reading and writing. When Sara presented a summary of shared reading, she explained that shared reading is very important in the learners' reading because it improves their reading skills and enables them to read with understanding. She also explained that it is essential that the student teachers choose the stories to read for shared reading carefully.

Concerning guided reading and writing, Sara explained the way in which students should organise and arrange guided reading. She instructed the student teachers to sit in groups of four and read in pairs. She asked the students to create stories for the learners to read. She continued by saying that the student teachers should guide the learners by starting a sentence and then asking the learners to complete it. She told the students to use words from the stories to form sentences. She encouraged the students to plan the guided reading and writing accordingly with the student teachers arranging the learner groups according to their reading abilities.

She encouraged the student teachers to always move around and help those learners who did not understand. She explained in detail the planning of guided reading or writing. She also emphasized that the planning should include differentiated activities and that the reading could either be out loud or silent reading. In the former case one learner should read

aloud while the others follow or the teacher should give the learners the opportunity to read the text repeatedly in different ways as this would encourage the learners to enjoy reading with ease. She explained how reading with understanding could be fostered by ensuring a great deal of reading time. She further mentioned that learners should either be given enough time to relate what they have read orally or in writing. She also explained how student teachers should assess the learners' learning. She emphasised that the assessment activities should encapsulate different types of questions. She engaged the student teachers in the discussion by asking them to suggest examples of assessment activities. She further encouraged the student teachers to ask factual questions and asked them to explain why they should give questions.

Concerning independent reading, Sara explained what independent reading is and explained to the student teachers that the learners should be asked to go to the reading corner and pick the books they want to read. It is important to encourage the learners to read the books they choose although the student teacher should always check whether these books are appropriate to the learner's age. Concerning independent writing, Sara encouraged the student teachers should tell the learners what they should write about and also give the learners the opportunity to use the format of their choice such as creating booklets by drawing a picture and then write a word, or a sentence. In addition, the lecturer suggested that student teachers check the spacing and letter formation and also the ideas of their learners. Sara tried to link the theory and practice.

Below is an evaluation of the lesson observed on 5 April 2016 (9:30am–10:30am)

- There was little evidence in this lesson of the lecturer involving the student teachers in the lesson being presented.
- The lecturer explained the reading and writing strategies with the majority of student teachers in the class being given an opportunity to participate in the discussions.
- The lecturer used the lecturing methods together with a Power Point presentation.
- Little was done to link the student teachers' experiences to the new knowledge.

- There was no evidence of how students were assessed to improve their knowledge and skills of teaching reading and writing to learners.
- There was no lecturer–student interaction and neither were the student teachers invited to join in the discussion.

It was clear from the observation of this lesson that Sara had presented various types of reading strategies as outlined in the literature. As indicated in the evaluation of the lesson above, the interaction was minimal as a few student teachers only were given the chance to answer the questions posed. It was also evident that the lesson focus was more on the strategies of teaching reading and writing and not on listening and speaking. It was noted that the content of reading and writing skills was comprehensively explained to student teachers. However, Sara failed to demonstrate or model how student teachers could apply each strategy to learners in the classrooms as she was observed presenting and explaining the theory but without demonstrating how to apply it. This observation was confirmed by one student teacher earlier in this chapter when she stated that they were given only theory and that, when they went to the schools, they struggle to put the theory into practice. There was no evidence of the student teachers learning by doing because they were not given a chance either to hold discussions in pairs and in their group or to practise what they had learned during the lesson.

Despite the fact that the information was clearly presented, Sara obviously found it difficult to arrange the student teachers in pairs or groups in order to discuss and practise how to teach the information that had been presented. Instead, they would have to find out for themselves if they were to be able to convey the information to their learners when they had completed their training.

Based on the classroom observations, it was clear that the three lecturers who taught listening and speaking had explained that the learners needed to be taught how to speak and listen to enable them to understand what was being conveyed and to learn to become good listeners. All the lecturers taught the value and importance

of pre-listening activities, and they emphasised that the best way in which to teach pre-listening was to teach phonological awareness by using stories, poems, songs, rhymes, and games in teaching in order to develop listening and speaking skills. It was observed that they also taught the theories and principles of literacy teaching and learning using phonic methods, the look and say method or whole words method, and the language experience approach. This was also confirmed in a focused group discussion of Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama student teachers who had been observed teaching when the student teachers had stated that they learned several methods including look and say; whole word; top down and bottom up.

In the main this chapter aimed at answering the question on the mother tongue literacy content, methods, approaches and strategies used to prepare student teachers to teach literacy when the learners' language was used as a medium of instruction in the schools.

It was interesting to note that, although the lecturers exposed the student teachers to various types of literacy teaching strategies, they themselves expressed different views on strategies or approaches. It was clear from the interviews with two of the lecturers that they regarded the phonics method as the best approach to teaching reading. For example, Nadia stated that *"for Oshiwambo, that is Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga, and for most Bantu languages, as they say in theory, the phonic method is the best one because, actually, reading strategies depend on the structure of the language"*. Nadia continued by saying that, if you look at the structure of Oshikwanyama or Oshindonga it is actually a bottom up language as you start with small chunks such as the single sounds, the a, b, t etc and then combine the consonants and the vowels to form a syllable.

Nadia's view is in line with the findings of Akyeampong (2011) that suggest that, in African classrooms, phonics instruction is regarded as an important strategy in teaching literacy acquisition in the early years with the regularity of phoneme-grapheme correspondence helping the reader to recognise or decode new words

such as in the Bantu languages of Lunganda and Kiswahili. Akyeampong (2011) go on to suggest that 'English and French have deep orthography where 26 letters are used to represent many more different sounds as graphemes requiring a variety of word attack skills that include but are not depended on a skilled systemic understanding of phonics' (Akyeampong, 2011 p. 23).

This is probably the reason why Nadia commented that *"our languages are really not complex at all like English. In the English language, they have to do a lot of things because languages user are not transparent and they don't necessarily have to start with the phonics, they might have to start with the rhyme and so on, but we just have to start with the phonics with a lot of storytelling, songs and oral"*. In other words, Nadia is confirming the need for the teaching of phonics to be contextualised.

In the same vein Grace supported the use of phonics when she stated that the *"phonic method is the best one because the child would learn how to decode and give sounds to different letters, even if they or the child did not know the word before"*.

While Nadia and Grace preferred the use of the phonics method in the teaching of reading, Maria and Sara, however, believed that student teachers required a variety of teaching methods to enable them to assist all the learners in their classes. Maria postulated that *"it all depend on the environment, the person, the context and on the learners who are in that class"*. She also stressed the possible difference between the community and the environment.

In line with Maria, Sara maintained *"I personally am convinced that any method could be suitable to effective teaching, not only how clever the teacher is but, sometimes, it depends on the environment in which those learners live, the school, and, sometimes, it depends on the programme the person is using"*.

Nevertheless, Maria and Sara expressed different views and one is persuaded to think that this would influence both the way in which they teach and the student teachers' learning. This was observed during the student teachers' lesson presentations. It appeared that Nadia and Grace tended to favour the phonics method and ignored other teaching methods. These lecturers different views and perceptions about reading methods are in line with the debate in the literature, specifically, with the assertion of Chatry-Komarek (2003) that several teachers believe that children may acquire a basic knowledge of reading by first learning the alphabet, then syllables by associating consonant and vowels, and then words and sentences. In other words, several teachers are convinced that this is the best method – starting from the simple and moving onto the complex. The views of both Nadia and Grace are in line with this argument in the debate. The theories informing this study were the cognitive and the sociocultural theories. Nadia and Grace's thinking is in line with the cognitive perspective according to which learning how to read may occur through following a rigid order and moving from one stage to the next.

On the other hand, Maria and Sara's views were in line with the opposite argument in the debate which is supported by Snoek et al, (2011 who maintain that there is no one approach that will meet the needs of all learners. The reason for this is that children learn differently, depending on their personalities, skills and experiences (Chatry-Komarek, 2003). In line with Chatry-Komarek (2003), Smith (2009 p: 45) advises that it is important to remember that children are individuals and it is not possible to fit them into a mould of how they are supposed to act. Allowing teachers to choose the methods that suit their learners' needs and their environment, as advocated by Maria and Sara, would ensure a broader literacy learning context and one drawing on things which are familiar to the learners to assist them to make meaning of what is being taught (Westbrook et al., 2013).

On a more general note, it was evident that the lecturers regarded the teaching of phonological awareness as comprising only the teaching of songs, stories, rhymes,

and games and they demonstrated this during their teaching. However, in almost all the lecturers' lessons observed, there was no attempt made to explain in detail how phonemic/phonological awareness should be taught to learners although it is regarded as very important and, in fact, the earliest stage in the teaching of the sound system of learning to read. It is vital that the student teachers understand that *"before a child learns to read print; they need to become aware of how the sounds in words work"* (Armbruster, 2010). The approach to the teaching of reading that was observed started with phonics. However, there is clearly a misunderstanding in the literature that phonological/phonemic awareness is the same as phonic. This also appeared to be the case with the lecturers and student teachers who participated in this study.

The follows section focuses on the availability of teaching and learning resources.

7.8 Teaching materials or resources

The study found no evidence of mother tongue resources or materials to support the lecturers' teaching and the student teachers' learning with the study revealing a lack of teaching and learning materials or resources written in Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama in the entire university library. This would hinder the proper implementation of the language policy not only in respect of the student teachers of the two dialects of Oshiwambo language but also in the schools where they would eventually have to teach in these two dialects as well.

7.9 Assessment

It was clear from the observation of the lessons, as presented above, that, during the practical lessons when the student teachers were presenting their assigned activities, the lecturers did assess their presentations. The lecturers assessed the knowledge and skills of the student teachers demonstrated or sometimes they assessed the

student teachers with the specific intention of giving those marks. Sara confirmed that the aim of the practical lessons was to assess the student teachers' knowledge and skills and that, sometimes, they awarded them marks for promotional purposes

7.10 Student teachers' practical activities on the campuses

According to the UNAM Prospectus for 2016, the practical course "aims to provide student teachers with skills to compile and present various school subjects plan and develop instructional materials that support learner's engagement" (p 34). The degree programme requires student teachers to carry out practical activities through class presentations and micro teaching.

7.10.1 Practical activities

During the practical lessons the student teachers were given the opportunity to present activities and demonstrate how to teach specific mother tongue literacy content to the rest of the class. During the group presentations, some of the groups merely explained the activities while some groups presented their activities in the form of a demonstration. Below are examples and evidence of several of the practical activities that were presented by the Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga second and third year student teachers on Campus A and Campus B.

In the Oshikwanyama practical lesson on Campus B, Grace had given an assignment to the third year students to plan and prepare a presentation on pre-reading activities. The groups were expected to explain how they would go about teaching the activities they had chosen to their learners. One group explained how to teach letter sounds using phonics methods. This group further explained that the teaching of letter sounds should be contextualised and they should not be taught in isolation. For example, sound 'A' should be taught in the context of a story, sentence or word.

However, the group failed to concretely demonstrate or explain to the rest of the class how this contextualisation should take place. When the group was presenting what they had planned, some of the groups appeared not to be sure about the information they were presenting and they said some words in English. It was observed that some student teachers had not rehearsed before making their presentations to ensure that they would be able to convey the correct information and maintain eye contact with the audience.

Also on Campus B, Maria had given a similar assignment to the Oshindonga third year student teachers to plan a presentation on pre-reading. One group prepared an activity on the 'ways of sequencing letters'. The group explained that the teacher could display the word *tate* or jumble the letters in the words and ask learners to match the letters with letters in the word or to arrange them in words. The group also explained that the teacher could show the picture for two minutes and then ask the learners to describe the picture, thus encouraging the learners to remember what they have seen. As in the first group, this group also did not demonstrate or show how it should be done.

On Campus A Nadia gave an assignment to the student teachers to prepare activities on how to teach pre-reading using a big book. Both the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama student teachers were encouraged to create big books on the theme or topics and, especially, on cultural events. The student teachers created attractive and presentable books containing short stories on traditional weddings and birthdays.

It was observed that, before Nadia requested the student teachers to demonstrate the teaching of reading using big books, she had demonstrated how the student teachers should behave when reading stories using big books. Nadia had started reading her story using the book she had compiled. She modelled good reading habit including eye contact, stopping where one should stop and changing her tone of voice according to the different characters. She then gave the students the

opportunity to read their stories. She expected the students to model the good reading behaviour that they would expect of their learners when reading. Thus, everything that presented was linked to the topic in the school curriculum

It is worth mentioning that, of the eleven lessons observed, six lessons only provided evidence that the student teachers had been assigned to plan practical activities that they then presented and demonstrated during the practical lessons. It was also observed that the lecturers, especially those on Campus B, planned their teaching and practical activities together. This was also confirmed by Maria who explained that Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama are overlapping subjects.

7.10.2 Micro teaching

Micro teaching is believed to be one of the crucial components of the teacher education programme as this is the time in which student teachers improve their teaching practice as they apply and practise the content they have been given in the various subject areas.

This was confirmed by Nadia who mentioned that, during the micro teaching in Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga, they gave the student teachers the opportunity to present and practise all the Environmental studies and Mathematics contents that they had learned in English. She pointed out that they did this to ensure that the student teachers were able to articulate mathematical concepts in Oshiwambo.

7.11 Conclusion

It emerged from the study that the literacy skills and contents taught included listening and speaking: stories, songs as games as the sources of phonemic

awareness, namely, reading: phonics, fluency and comprehension, and writing, namely, drawing and copying patterns, letters, spelling, words and short text. However, the phonological/ phonemic awareness that is believed to be vitally important and also the first stage in learning to read was not properly explained by the lecturers and neither was it demonstrated to indicate how it should be taught to learners in the classrooms.

The findings from the two case studies presented in this chapter, especially the classroom observations, revealed that some of the lecturers lacked subject content as well the requisite knowledge and skill on how to engage all the student teachers in the lesson discussions and build on what the student teachers already know by discussing the songs and dances which feature in festivals and fairy tales.

It was also observed that the presentation skills of some of the lecturers were inadequate. They appeared unable to present a lesson using different teaching strategies. The main teaching method used was the teacher-talk teaching method which is dominated by the teacher just presenting the method, thus limiting the student teachers' in-depth understanding of the subject content.

It was evident from the examples of the lesson observations described in this chapter that, although four lecturers used teacher-talk methods to deliver the mother tongue literacy content, some of the lessons observed did provide evidence of good literacy practices with the lecturers presenting and discussing with the student teachers and also demonstrating and modelling to the student teachers how things should be done. In addition, they used Power Point presentations to communicate the theories, ideas and facts pertaining to literacy to the student teachers although they differed in their presentation skills.

It was also noted that all the lecturers emphasised the importance and value of stories, songs, rhymes, and games in the teaching of literacy skills to young learners. The student teachers were encouraged to use or read stories in their classrooms.

It was also evident that the lecturers had tried to expose the student teachers to the different methods and approaches in respect of mother tongue literacy teaching and, especially, reading methods such as phonics; look and say methods, whole word study, and the language experience approach. It was clear from the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama phonics lesson observations that some letters that appear in English are not in Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga.

It was also observed that literacy teaching strategies such as modelled, guided, shared and independent reading and writing were comprehensively explained. However, during the presentations when these strategies were explained, the student teachers were not given an opportunity to practise and internalise these strategies.

Despite the fact that the student teachers' cultural experience was utilised in some lessons, it is worth mentioning that, in the majority of the lessons observed, the student teachers' cultural experiences were not used to teach literacy

CHAPTER 8: HOW DO STUDENT TEACHERS TEACH MOTHER TONGUE LITERACY IN SCHOOLS?

8.1 Introduction

The data discussed in the previous chapters revealed the findings on the way in which student teachers have been prepared to teach mother tongue literacy in the university classrooms. This chapter presents the data on the student teachers' practices in their teaching of mother tongue literacy.

The study assumed that the student teachers had been prepared to teach mother tongue literacy in primary schools. In order to assess the extent to which student teachers had been prepared to teach mother tongue literacy in primary school classrooms, the following criteria were used:

- classroom interactions
- learners' responses to student teacher instruction
- literacy skills taught
- teaching strategy/method/approach student teachers used
- student teachers' acknowledgement of learners' prior experiences
- materials used to support learners' mother tongue literacy learning
- management issues that affect the teaching and learning of mother tongue literacy
- assessment of learners on mother tongue literacy learning.

The criteria were adopted from the existing literature on the classification of professional standards for preparing language teachers, as cited by Mata (2014, in Cummins, 1995; Day & Conklin, 1992; Shulman, 1986). The above mentioned criteria were used to assess how the Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga student teachers in the five schools identified practised literacy using the mother tongue with special emphasis on the knowledge and skills displayed and also the methods and strategies used to teach literacy in the two languages. The study assumed that learning to teach effectively requires the student teachers to integrate the knowledge and skills acquired in higher education classrooms with the content and knowledge presented in the classroom. In other words, the theoretical and practical aspects

have to be integrated rather than taught in isolation (Lewin, 2004). Accordingly, for the student teachers' teaching to meet the above mentioned criteria, it is essential that they are given sufficient for class observations and also to practise the theories taught during training. The language policy for schools allows learners to be taught in their own languages. The main focus of this study was the extent to which pre-and lower primary BEd student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue.

Placement schools

All the student teachers were observed teaching in urban schools located in suburbs in the towns of Windhoek, Oshakati and Ongwediva. All the schools had water facilities, electricity, internet connectivity, and photocopy machines. The school buildings were in good condition and there was enough space in the classrooms to allow the students to move about and support the learners' literacy learning. The schools in the central region of the country in Windhoek where the selected student teachers completed their teaching practice are multilingual and the learners come from different cultural and language backgrounds such as Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga, Otjiherero and Khoekhoegowab. Therefore, arrangements have to be made for them to be taught in class groups. The schools in the northern part of the country in and around the towns of Oshakati and Ongwediva towns and where the student teachers completed their teaching practices use either Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama as the language of literacy learning.

8.2 Student teachers' general teaching methodologies

It was assumed that the student teachers would teach using the learner-centred methodologies as prescribed in the ministerial policy documents and the LCE

conceptual framework. Furthermore, the teaching and learning in this junior primary phase is conducted in a thematic/integrated way. According to the Integrated Planning Manual for Grades 1–3 (2015), integrated teaching benefits both the teachers and learners in several and varied ways as it helps the learners to build on their diverse prior knowledge and experiences; it provides a better reflection of the real world and the way in which children learn at home and in the community. It places learning in context, it allows the learners to grasp the bigger picture and it also makes it easier for them to learn and remember information than may otherwise have been the case. In addition, it also enables learners to develop a unified view of the curriculum and to broaden the context of their learning beyond single subject areas. It also matches the way that learners think because the literacy activities are derived from a theme with which the learners are familiar. The theory of integrated teaching is in line with the sociocultural perspective that values the learners' prior cultural experiences as well as the context in which the learners grow up. The school curriculum is organised around the themes such as me, my family, my school, my local transport etc. Thus, from the outset, literacy for meaning is brought to the forefront (Akyeampong, 2011) with learners listening to and talking about their families, read texts about their families and writing about their families.

It was further assumed that the student teachers would plan their lessons using an integrated approach to suit the context and needs. The findings from the classroom observations indicated that the majority of the student teachers had linked their teaching to the schemes of work for the week in question, in particular, those who were observed teaching listening and responding lessons. It is worth mentioning that the majority of the student teachers had not drawn up lesson plans. Of those student teachers who did have lesson plans three had written their lesson plans in either Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama while two others had written theirs in English. Nevertheless, as confirmed by the data presented in the previous chapter, all ten of the student teachers observed conducted their lessons in either Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama. .

The focus of this chapter was to examine how the student teachers carried out teaching literacy in the language used as the medium of instruction in schools – in this case Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. A total of 36 Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama lessons were observed. It was observed that teacher directed methods dominated the teaching of literacy while there was limited mastery of content knowledge, inappropriate teaching strategies and inadequate resources. The student teachers' teaching of literacy in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama in the junior primary classrooms was characterised by teacher control, which was limited to the learners reading through chorusing and repeating after the teacher. The majority of the student teachers appeared to limited skills in respect of engaging the learners in the active participatory learning which would have facilitated learning with understanding fostered and critical thinking. In most of the classrooms observed the teaching was based on teacher-directed instruction, namely, the whole class teaching and question and answer methods, as well as student-centred. In the sub-sections below an attempt is made to find an answer to the question as to how do the student teacher practised literacy with the learners in the language used as the medium of instruction in the classrooms.

8.2.1 Teacher-directed instruction

The majority of the Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga lessons observed provided evidence of the characteristics of teacher-directed methods and inadequate teaching methods. The Oshindonga lesson to Grade 1 learners below bears witness to the use of a teacher directed method by Oletu, a student teacher

Lesson observed 01 March 2016 (7:30am–8:10am):

There was sufficient space in the classroom for the student teacher to move around and check the learners' work. There were 41 learners in the class and they were sitting in groups. There were a few posters on the wall, e.g. letters of the alphabet which were written in English. The books were properly packed in the shelves and some were in boxes. There was no reading corner in the classroom.

Oletu called all the learners to the front of the classroom and asked them to sit on a mat. She stood in front at the chalkboard and asked the learners to sound all the letters of the alphabet. She pointed to the letter 'n' and asked learners to sound it. She then wrote the word 'onane' on the chalkboard and asked one learner to point out and sound the 'n' in the word onane. She wrote down syllables by associating consonants and vowels: 'na ne ni no nu'. She then asked the learners to read the syllables as she wrote them on the chalkboard. She then asked learners to read as a class, in chorus, and repeating after her. Some of learners were looking out of the window. Oletu failed to keep all the learners busy and not all of the learners were engaged. In fact, only those who were sitting in the front were engaged while those who were sitting behind were making a noise because the group was too big. The majority of the learners were not able to concentrate. At times the student teacher had to stop and tell the learners to keep quiet. The learners continued with the choral reading of "na ne ni no nu", until the end of the 40 minute period. The student teacher then ordered the learners to back to their seats.

Evaluation of the lesson observed on 1 March 2016 (07:30am–08:10am:

- The communication and interaction between the learners and the student teacher and learner to learner were not encouraged. The student teacher asked questions and only few learners were given a chance to answer. Oletu, the student teacher, used the whole class teaching method and relied on the chalkboard as a teaching medium. She stood in front of the chalkboard and pointed to the word which the learners had to read or wrote up the activities the learners had to do on the chalkboard.
- Little or nothing was done to connect what the learners already knew to the new information. The letter sounds, syllables and words learned were not placed in any context.
- Maintaining control of the class took up much of the teaching time. The student teacher appeared to be more concerned about discipline and order rather than providing the learners with an opportunity for interactive discussion and active involvement in the lesson. This affected the learners' reading and learning experience.

- There was no evidence of how the student teacher assessed the learners' phonics learning in order to support and improve their learning of how to read because the student teacher merely asked learners to read and repeat after her as a whole class, thus involving a few learners only. The questions asked were direct and required one direct answer only, thus limiting the learners' critical thinking.

In other words, the lesson presented, Oletu, a student teacher, did not meet the criteria for good literacy practice. The interaction between the student teacher and the learners and between the learners themselves was poor because the learners were not given the opportunity to talk and were expected to remain even when they had nothing to do. Oletu's method of teaching reading was not in line with findings in the literature in respect of the sociocultural approach to language teaching which views language an important tool for communication in the classroom. Learners use language in order to construct meaning (Darling-Hammond, 2010). However, Oletu did not involve all the learners in the class discussions nor in the reading activities. Interactive discussion during which learners may ask for clarification or contribute to the discussion did not take place. In addition, the learners were not given a chance to practise reading among themselves or ask one another questions.

The student teacher used the whole class teaching and phonics methods to teach reading and used the question and answer method to invite discussion. The student teacher was following Street's (2006) advice by using the cognitive approach, which has been described as a process that learned, taught and understood. In this lesson the learners responded to the student teacher's instructions by first sounding letters and then reading the syllables and words which written on the chalkboard. However, the learners were supposed to be learning merely by reading and repeating after the student teacher; chorusing; drilling and memorisation. This appeared to confirm the findings in the literature review that teachers who lack adequate training in how to use and teach in the mother tongue language tend to revert back to teacher control

by asking the learners to repeat after the teacher and not giving the learners the chance to ask questions. They were sometimes asked to read individually which did give them a little time in which to practise their reading. Although drilling, repetition and memorisation may be regarded as aspects of a teacher-centred approach, the study by Akyeampong (2011) revealed that, as a pedagogical approach, the drilling and repetition approaches were supported by tutors in Kenya, Ghana and Tanzania and were regarded as an important way to ensure that pupils were engaged and memorised letters and words.

The learners' responses were not followed up and neither were their incorrect answers corrected, especially during the reading activities. Oletu asked the learners to sound or read words and, even if the learners did this incorrectly, she just moved on to another learner without correcting the previous learner's mistake. This was contrary to the findings of Rai et al. (2011) who suggest that mother tongue teaching in teacher preparation is crucial as it involves the facilitation of the use of effective learner-centred teaching practice that encourages the learners to be active and become involved in the subject matter of the curriculum as advocated by the learner-centred approach.

In the majority of the various lessons observed the same pattern was noted, namely, that the student teachers used whole class teaching methods and did little to build on the knowledge the learners had brought to school and that derived from their personal and cultural experiences. Many of the lessons overlooked this wealth of experiences and denied the learners the opportunity for knowledge construction (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This limited any teaching for understanding and real-life applications. The majority of the student teachers appeared to be unable to initiate activities that involved all the learners and were not sufficiently skilled to assist the learners to connect to and build on the knowledge they had acquired from the community and link this knowledge to the new content to be learned in school in order to construct new knowledge and make meaning. The phonics lesson taught was not linked to any context and was taught in isolation. This approach is not in line

with Villegas and Lucas (2002), who point out that in order to support learners to construct knowledge, it is vital that student teachers assist the learners to link what they know about the topic they are learning to the new information. In order to do this, learners must be engaged to question, interpret and analyse information.

The whole class teaching method was not used only by the student teacher whose lesson is presented above, but by most of the student teachers in the various schools. In line with the data presented in Chapter 7 on how the student teachers had been prepared to teach mother tongue literacy, it was evident that, in most cases, the lecturers had used lecture methods to deliver the literacy content to the whole class and thus the majority of the student teachers were using the teacher talk method, teaching as they had been taught.

8.2.2 Student-directed instruction

Although there were differences between the approaches and strategies the student teachers used to teach mother tongue literacy to the learners, only four of the ten student students observed presented lessons that showed evidence of active mother tongue literacy learning by promoting classroom interaction, involving all the learners in the learning activities, offering feedback, correcting mistakes, connecting their teaching with what the learners already knew and using different types of teaching strategies and methods. These four student teachers ensured that all the learners remained focused on the task at hand all the time and listened to each learner. They allowed the learners to discuss in the groups and related their teaching to the learners' experiences. One of these student teachers was teaching at the Kaoma Primary School, one at the Khorixas Primary School, one at the Kasikili Primary School and one at the Etale Primary School. Below is one of the lessons taught by one of these four teachers – a Oshindonga listening and responding lesson.

Lesson observed 3 March 2016 (10:40am–11:20am):

Maggy called all the learners to the front of the class and asked them to sit on the mat to ensure that each learner would listen attentively to what she had to say. Maggy put up a poster depicting Nangula's (a Namibian name) birthday on the chalkboard. The poster included a well-decorated cake, sweets and a picture of Nangula's family surrounded by colourful balloons. She asked the learners to describe to her what they saw on the poster. Maggy asked questions that required the learners to relate to their personal experiences. After a lengthy birthday poster discussion, the student teacher asked the learners to share with each other in their groups how they spent their birthday. Two of the learners asked to share their experiences with the rest of the class. The student teacher then asked learners to make birthday cards. The learners were engaged and enthusiastic and they talked to the other learners sitting at the same table and also to their teacher.

Based on the researcher's observation the following is an evaluation of the above lesson presented on 3 March 2016 (10:40am–11:20am):

- The classroom communication and interaction between the student teacher and the learners were relatively good because learners were given the opportunity to ask the student teacher questions if they did not understand while they also had the chance to ask each other questions at their tables.
- The lecturer asked questions and ensured that several learners in the class were given the opportunity to respond and share their views.
- The student teacher used a teaching method which presents the student teacher as the one who knows everything, with the learners having to be filled with knowledge from the student teacher.
- There was evidence of how the learners were assessed to support and improve the literacy learning.
- The learners had a chance to engage and to be actively involved in the lesson. This promoted an effective learner literacy learning experience
- The connection between what learners already knew and what was new was evident.

Based on the evaluation of the lesson above, it was clear that Maggy used teaching strategies that involved all the learners. The activities which the learners shared with the others at their tables and the birthday cards they created promoted critical thinking and creativity. This is in agreement with Bhattacharjee (2015, p. 71), who suggests that “learners actively construct their own knowledge by connecting new ideas to existing ideas on the basis of the materials/activities presented to them”. In this case, the student teacher allowed the learners to ask questions relating to the activities they were doing. She also gave them a chance to relate their how they spent their birthdays to others in the class. Maggy placed her lesson in a sociocultural perspective and indicated that she understood that learners had not come to school empty-handed but that they had also had some life experiences and discussing their own birthdays would help them to internalise the new knowledge and create birthday cards reflecting how birthdays were celebrated in their community (Akyeampong et al., 2011). In other words, the student teacher had framed her lesson within the sociocultural perspective when she had asked learners to share their experiences about how they spent their birthdays with others, first with those sitting at the same table and later with the rest of the class. This alone indicated that Maggy was aware of Vygotsky’s notion that learning through language happens by drawing on a context familiar to the learners in order to construct meaning (Westbrook, 2013).

In this lesson the student teacher created an atmosphere that enabled the learners to interact with one another during the group work discussions. She also demonstrated that better learning takes place if the teacher shows both care and confidence in the learners and in the subject matter. It was clear from both this lesson, as well as from other similar lessons observed, that the student teachers presenting the lessons had been well prepared to teach literacy because they had managed to initiate challenging activities that involved all the learners thus demonstrating the sound good characteristics of good literacy teachers.

8.3 Student teachers' mother tongue literacy teaching practices

This section attempts to answer the central question as the way in which the student teachers practised listening, speaking, reading and writing in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. The literature on effective literacy teaching suggests several literacy-teaching methods that may improve learners' progress. It was assumed that the good teachers of literacy would, in all likelihood, employ such methods with the purpose of linking those methods to the identified needs of learners. However, the study found that most of the student teachers were limited in terms of their use of a variety of teaching methods. They did not provide the learners with enough opportunities to show their understanding by responding to class instructions. The data below provides examples of the teaching of the various language skills to the learners in the classrooms and the methods of teaching literacy that were used.

8.3.1 The teaching of listening and responding

Listening is a language skill that children “develop first and it is the most dominant communication skill in the classroom and in everyday life” (Oduolowu and Oluwakemi 2014 p.100). It may be developed through exposing learners to numerous opportunities to listen to stories, recite rhymes, sing songs and make up stories, rhymes and songs themselves (Bloch, 2005; Ministry of Education, 2014).

As far as the teaching of listening and responding skills were concerned, it was noted that the majority of the student teachers did read the stories to their learners but they did not employ effective listening skills methods. Most of the student teachers read the stories aloud to their learners as if they were reading to grown-ups. In addition, they did not display good reading habits. Many of the student teachers read stories from the small readers while some wrote the text on the chalkboard and asked the learners to read from the chalkboard. This contradicts Irwin, Moore, Tornatore and Fowler (2012, p. 21) who are of the opinion that reading stories in

large print and with big pictures should capture the attention of the learners, improve their listening and comprehension skills and also help them to connect speech and print.

During the storytelling sessions the learners were always instructed to remain quiet and to listen very carefully because, after the stories had been, they would be expected to answer questions on the stories in order to demonstrate their understanding of what had been read to them. This revealed a lack of understanding on the part of the student teachers that children acquire language through active participation and, therefore, it is essential that teachers encourage active participation during the story telling time (Isbell, 2002). In the main, the listening skill was taught through story telling with the student teachers reading a story to the learners and then asking a few of the learners to re-tell the story to the entire class. In addition, after they had narrated the story, the majority of the student teachers asked the learners some questions. The observations of the listening skill competencies, as noted in the syllabus and demonstrated above, revealed certain other competencies that student teachers could have also used to improve the listening skills of the learners. These competencies included listening and responding to verbal instructions, messages, announcements and information as well as listening and then responding by drawing, miming and role playing as provided for in the policy document, Namibia Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (2015). Below is an example of an Oshindonga listening and responding lesson presented to Grade 1 learners.

Lesson observation on 3 March 2016 (08:10am–08:50am):

The classroom was full as it accommodated 41 learners. The learners were sitting in groups. There were no posters on the wall. The learners' books were properly packed on the shelves and some were in boxes. There was no reading corner and inadequate materials for Oshindonga.

The student teacher asked the learners to sing a birthday song that they sang in English. After the song she informed the learners that she was going to tell them a story and that the learners were to listen very carefully. The story was about 'Birthdays'. She started reading the story from a small reader. She read the story aloud while standing. She read as if she was singing. When she started reading the whole class was quiet. She read the story once and, when she had finished, she asked the learner, 'Do you follow'? The learners answered 'yes and then she started asking them questions. A few of the learners only managed answer the questions as the rest were not paying attention; and appeared bored. Seemingly, they had not followed when the student teacher had read to them because she read the story only once and, in addition, she had read the story very quickly.

Evaluation of the lesson observed on 3 March 2016 (08:10am–08:50am):

- The communication and interaction between the learners and the student teacher and between the learners were good at all because the learners were not given a chance to talk to each other nor to talk to the student teacher.
- The student teacher used the whole class teaching methods and used a small reader to read the story to the learners who were sitting in a big group.
- Learners responded to the student teacher's instruction by answering questions. A few of the learners only were given a chance to answer her questions while the rest of the class seemed to be bored.
- Little or nothing was done to connect to what learners already knew to what was new.
- Learners were not given time in which to re-tell the story or to relate to their experiences. In addition, they were expected to remain quiet despite the fact that they had nothing to do.
- The student teacher was more concerned about discipline and order rather than allowing the learners to interactively and be actively involved in effective listening activities.
- The questions asked were at a low level and required one direct answer, thus limiting the learners' critical thinking.

- Little was done to support the learners' listening skills development.

It is evident from this lesson that the student teacher did not display a good quality of teaching the listening skill. This example was typical of most of the lessons observed in the five primary schools where the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama student teachers were practising literacy teaching. The teaching of listening and responding was poor. The student teacher giving the lesson discussed above did not allow the learners to listen and engage in either telling their own stories or re-telling the story which had been read to them. In most cases, learners only listened to the student teacher reading stories to them. It was clear that the student teachers perceived teaching listening skills as only involving reading stories to the learners. The learners took part only when they were asked to answer the questions which, in most cases, they required factual answer. The student teacher failed to give the learners an opportunity to re-tell the stories, they were not allowed to demonstrate their understanding through role play, and they were not encouraged to make up their own stories. This is contrary to Isbell (2002, p. 28) who maintains that 'retelling stories encourages children to use their imagination, expand their ideas, and create visual images as they transfer the plot to a new setting, include different characters, or add new voices'. The student teacher above did not model good story reading habits, and neither did she show the learners how to behave when telling or reading a story to others.

When reading a story to children, the teachers should model good story reading habits, thus modelling what the learners should do when reading or telling the story to others. In other words, student teachers should use facial expressions to capture the learners' interest, change their tone of voice according to the characters in the story, and stop to ask the learners to predict what may happen next. However, this did not happen during the lesson presentation above, thus indicating that the student teacher in question was not applying effective teaching listening methods. In most cases the focus of the story telling was not always clear. Irwin et al, (2012) is of the view that storytelling may be of help to most teachers but that it is important to

decide exactly what information the children should learn to enable the teacher concerned to model the activity or skill and provide ample opportunity for the children to practise what they learned and give feedback. The student teacher above appeared to have little knowledge of the fact that learners learn a language through speaking the language and they learn through socialising and listening to stories.

Nevertheless, there was one student teacher who did model good story reading habits. The classroom in question was large and accommodated 41 learners easily. There was nothing on the walls. The books were properly packed on the shelves and in boxes. There was also no reading corner where readers could be kept from which the learners could select what they wanted to read. Below is the lesson this student teacher presented to Grade 2 learners on 17 March 2016.

Lesson observed on 17 March 2016 (8:50am–9:10am):

The student teacher used a big book which she had created herself. She started by telling the learners that they were going to listen to a story. The student teacher and the learners discussed the first page of the big book with the student teacher asking the learners to discuss the pictures. The topic of the story was 'Transport'. She read the story aloud, stopped where there was a full stop, changed her tone of voice according to the characters in the story, and sometimes stopped to ask the learners to predict what they thought would happen next. The learners did this. They all appeared to listen very carefully and seemed to enjoy the story. The student teacher then asked inferential and higher order thinking skill questions that required the learners to think. All the learners raised their hands to answer the questions although only one learner could answer at a time. It was interesting to note that one learner stood up and said; "Excuse me", I did not talk today, can I have a chance"? The student teacher gave her a chance to re-tell the story. She then divided the learners into four groups (bicycle, donkey cart, taxi and a bus) and asked them to discuss in their groups how the mode of transport allocated to each group was used in their community and then to report to the whole class.

Evaluation of the lesson observed on 17 March 2016 (8:50am–9:10am):

- The classroom communication and interaction between the student teacher and the learners were relatively good because the learners were given the opportunity to ask the student teacher questions if they had not understood something. In addition, they also had the chance to ask others at their table questions.
- The lecturer asked questions and ensured that as many learners in the classroom as possible were given a chance to respond and share their views.
- There was evidence of how the learners were assessed to support and improve the literacy learning.
- The learners had a chance to engage and be actively involved in the lesson. This promoted effective learner literacy learning experiences.
- The connection between what learners already knew and what was new was evident.

It was evident that this student teacher had done everything she could to involve the majority of the learners in the lesson and to listen to them. She used a story which she linked with the topic of integration from Environmental Studies to teach a listening and responding lesson. This student teachers' teaching style was in line with Rahim and Rahiem's (2012) findings in a study conducted in several kindergartens in South Tangerang in south west Jakarta and which had revealed that 47% of the schools integrated storytelling and story reading activities with other school subjects such as science and religious education. The integration of the subjects with the teaching of language skills is advocated by the Ministry of Education, (2015). In the lesson discussed the student teacher had played an important role in helping the learners to understand both the story and its message (Rahim and Rahiem, 2012).

The story which the student teacher had devised included all the transport systems used in the community and assisted the learners to become actively involved and

take ownership of what was happening. As Isbell (2002, p. 27) states, 'children from different backgrounds and diverse cultures can share their interpretations of the story and relate them to their experiences'. In accordance with the sociocultural perspective, the learners interpreted their relationships with others and the world around them (Hossain, 2013).

It was clear from this lesson observation that, as was taught during the training, the student teacher had modelled good story reading habits as she had changed the tone of voice according to the characters in the story and she sometimes stopped to ask the learners to predict what they thought would happen next. The follow-up discussion she initiated provided opportunities for the learners to express their own ideas, relate their experiences and listen to what others had to say (Isbell, 2002).

8.3.2 The teaching of speaking and communication skills

Concerning the teaching of speaking and communication skills it emerged from most of the classes observed that speaking was taught as a follow up to what had been done during the listening and responding lessons. In other words, it was done either in terms of answering to the student teacher's questions, in discussions about a topic or in re-telling a story the student teacher had told. However, the majority of the student teachers failed to initiate activities that encouraged the learners to develop their speaking skills, for example, telling a story using simple sentences; recounting/recalling personal experiences; reciting rhymes, singing songs; describing an item, object, animal, or event/experience and inquiring by asking questions in order to elicit information (Bloch, 2005). Encouraging learners to relate the daily news, as advocated in the junior primary phase syllabus, was clearly not taking place.

Speaking is the foundation of thinking. In order to ensure that learners become effective speakers it is incumbent on teachers to give the learners a variety of activities to carry out to help them to learn to speak in different situations. With the

above in mind, a lesson involving an Oshikwanyama speaking activity given to Grade 2 learners is discussed below.

Classroom observations conducted on 31 March 2016 (07:30am–08:10am):

The class was large. The learners were sitting in groups. The materials were neatly packed in the shelves. There were posters written in both Oshikwanyama and English and made by the teacher on the walls. A few of the student teachers had also put some material up on the wall.

Jo, a student teacher, asked the learners to relate the types of communication they had learned about the previous day. The learners responded by mentioning cellphones, radios, landlines, letters, newspapers, computers, etc. The student teacher asked each learner to write the word he/she had mentioned on the chalkboard. It was observed that the learner who had mentioned the word 'cellphone' found it difficult to write this word in Oshikwanyama. The student teacher tried to assist the learner but also failed, thus implying that the word for cellphone did not exist in Oshikwanyama and thus could not be written. There was a lengthy discussion with the whole class about the types of communication and how we use these communication systems in order to communicate. However, it was a question and answer session and not all the learners were given a chance to say something. In other words, the quiet learners were neither recognised nor were they invited to participate and they were left on their own

Evaluation of the lesson observed on 31 March 2016 (7:30am and 8:10am):

- The communication and interaction between the learners and the student teachers and between the learners were not good.
- Few of the learners participated in the class discussion while the rest appeared bored and withdrawn because they were not given an opportunity to answer to the student teacher's questions. In other words, they were not involved in the class activities.
- The learners were not given time to narrate their experiences of how they used these types of communication in their community.

- Little was done to support learners to develop their speaking skills.

Jo did not teach speaking skill effectively during this lesson. The learners were not given a chance to talk despite the fact that it was a speaking skills lesson. The student teacher did not initiate various activities that would have required all the learners to speak and communicate their opinions. She failed to involve all the learners in the class discussion. The learners were simply asked to name the communication systems available in their community.

It was observed in the lesson presented that the learners were not given an opportunity to play games, sing songs, tell stories, say rhymes, recite poems and chant in order to develop their speaking skills and learn the language structure. In other words, they were not encouraged to communicate confidently as suggested by Bloch (2005). The student teacher did not give the learners time in which to practise, role-play and dramatise in order to learn to speak.

It was clear that the majority of the student teachers perceived teaching speaking as merely asking learners to re-tell a story or answer questions. This may be attributed to the way in which the student teachers had been prepared to teach speaking to learners. It was thus concluded that the student teacher had not consulted the syllabus properly despite the fact that the teaching in the junior primary phase thematic teaching. Each subject syllabus encapsulates particular skills that must be taught and developed using specific competencies and approaches.

In most of the classes observed it was the question and answer method used that resulted in some learners not doing anything as the dominant learners answered all the questions. On the other hand, the dominant learners were instructed to say a word and then write it on the chalkboard while the others were watching and waiting – a waste of time. Instead the student teacher should have planned activities that would have involved all the learners.

One may safely conclude that the teaching of the speaking skill remains a challenge for many of the student teachers. In all the lessons observed it was evident that the teaching of the speaking skill was highly ineffective.

8.3.3 The teaching of reading and viewing

The teaching of reading was clearly a significant challenge to most of the student teachers observed. Many of the student teachers lacked the knowledge and skills required to teach reading effectively. In addition, it became clear that the student teachers were also not skilled enough to assist the learners to learn how to read. The majority of the student teachers employed the phonics method which is a vital aspect of the teaching of reading. However, although many of the student teachers preferred to use the phonics method, they did not demonstrate either an in-depth understanding of the subject content or of pedagogical content knowledge. It was observed that the teaching methodology of many of the student teachers was inadequate. This could be attributed to the way in which they were trained. It had emerged from the interviews that some of the lecturers strongly supported the phonics method of teaching reading. The lecturers classroom observation above in last chapter also revealed that various types of literacy teaching methods had been introduced to the student teachers but that little had been done to demonstrate how this could be done in practice.

Below is an Oshikwanyama lesson that was presented by Lemphie, a student teacher, to Grade 1 learners. The providence of what was described above.

Lesson observed on 3 March 2016 (8:50am–9:30am):

The class had sufficient space to allow the student teacher to move around and reach every learner. The learners were sitting in groups although, in most cases, group work strategy was not utilised. There were 35 learners in the class. There were posters on the wall of which several were ready-made. The letters of the alphabet, sight words, months of the year and days of the week were all written in English. Nevertheless, there were also materials

that had made by the class teacher, such as reading texts written in Oshindonga, although they appeared to be few. This particular classroom had a reading corner with a collection of readers (11) but only one single reader in Oshikwanyama. The rest were all in English.

Lemphie, a student teacher, wrote up vowels on the chalkboard and asked the learners to read them after her over and over. She then wrote up the consonants and added the vowels to form– see example below:

Table 8.1: Grade 1 phonics teaching at Hanova Primary School

<i>a – ma</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>pa</i>	<i>ta</i>
<i>e – me</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>ke</i>	<i>pe</i>	<i>te</i>
<i>i – mi</i>	<i>li</i>	<i>ki</i>	<i>pi</i>	<i>ti</i>
<i>o – mo</i>	<i>lo</i>	<i>ko</i>	<i>po</i>	<i>to</i>
<i>u – mu</i>	<i>lu</i>	<i>ku</i>	<i>pu</i>	<i>tu</i>

Oletu asked the learners to read the vowels while she pointed to them on the chalkboard. The learners read the vowels through drilling and memorisation. After a while she asked learners to read the syllables as a group. She used a stick/cane to point to the syllables on the chalkboard that the learners were reading. She pointed to the different syllables that make up words, for example.

<i>ta – te</i>	<i>tate</i>
<i>me – me</i>	<i>meme</i>
<i>tu – ka</i>	<i>tuka</i>
<i>te – ma</i>	<i>tema</i>

She then wrote the words the learners had formed on the other side of the chalkboard and asked learners to read them again. However, not all the learners

were involved as some were playing with the counting sticks which were on the table whilst other learners were discussing other things at their table.

Evaluation of the lesson observed on 1 March 2016 (07:30am–08:10am).

- The learners responded to the student teacher's instruction by question and answer and reading, repeating what the student teacher had said.
- The student teacher used whole class teaching in terms of which the learners were asked to sound or read letters, syllables and words through chorusing, drilling and memorising. However, this limits the learners' active participation because not everybody become involved in the discussion or in the reading activities.
- Little or nothing was done to connect what the learners already knew to what was new because the lesson activities were not contextualised.
- The student relied on the chalkboard as a teaching medium. She stood close to the chalkboard for most of the time and pointed to the word the learners either had to read or wrote down the activities the learners had to carry out.
- The questions asked were directed, factual and required one answer only, thus which limiting the learners' critical thinking

The lesson presented above demonstrated that the phonics method had been utilised by the student teacher to teach reading and that it was done with the whole class. Lemphie asked the learners first to sound the letters of the alphabet, and then introduced the syllables by associating them with vowels and later words. The learners spent most of the time segmenting and blending the words into syllables and syllables into words as a class. This lesson is in line with the belief expressed by Nadia, a lecturer, that the best approach to teaching reading in an African language is the phonics methods. The cognitive approach is referred to it as a bottom up approach because the process starts with letter knowledge, moves onto consonants and then blending into syllables (Davidson, 2010). It was observed that, when the student teachers present reading lessons to a whole class, they find it difficult to contextualise their teaching. The teaching of phonics was usually taught in isolation

and not linked it to the learners' personal experiences or to the story which had been read in the class. It is suggested in the literature reviewed that phonics should be taught sequentially and in context. If phonics is taught in isolation (e.g. not connected to reading in a meaningful way), several children will fail to apply their phonics knowledge when they are reading (Ministry of Education, 2014). This is the reason why this study drew on two perspectives, namely, the cognitive and the sociocultural, as these two approaches may support each other in the acquisition of literacy in the mother tongue. In other words, when teaching literacy and applying a cognitive approach, the teacher put the learning in a context by starting with what is known to learners and building from there.

It was also observed that many of the student teachers demonstrated inadequate teaching reading methods, and also that they found it difficult to integrate their literacy teaching methods such as reading short stories so that learners may identify words, syllables, and letters and combine them with words (Chatry-Komarek, 2003). Skills development in context rather than in isolation is an effective way of teaching mother tongue literacy (Bainbridge and Mary, 2008).

In order to teach phonics successfully it is vital that the teachers possess a sound knowledge of the letter-sound relationships in their first language. It was observed that some of the student teachers lack knowledge of the letter-sounds. For example, one student teacher sounded the letter 'l' incorrectly and thus the learners sounded it as she had said it. An HOD, who was passing by, heard them and quickly came into the class and corrected the sound.

Nevertheless, three of the student teachers did contextualise their literacy teaching. These three student teachers based the reading and writing activities on the story they had read to their learners and they allowed the learners relate and share their personal experiences to what was to be learned. They also allowed the learners to read in pairs and in groups. In other words, these three student teachers combined various teaching methods.

In line with the discussion above, the following lesson is an example of a lesson that revealed that Fennie, a student teacher, had link or integrate her reading lesson with the story she had read to her learners on the previous day. It was an Oshindonga lesson that presented to a Grade 2 class of 45 learners. Despite the fact that the classroom was somewhat crowded the student teacher managed to move around and assist learners who were having problems. Thus, this lesson was a follow up activity to the story she had read to her learners in the previous lesson.

Lesson observed on 16 March 2016 (7:30am–8:10am):

The topic was 'Local Transport' – the integrated topic for the week. Fennie, a student teacher, discussed the transport with her learners and allowed the learners to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the local transport in their groups. She made a list of all the names and keywords associated with transport as the learners mentioned them. She asked the learners to practise reading the list of words as a class, then in their groups and individually. In the following lesson the student teacher asked learners to complete a puzzle. Before she gave out the puzzle to the learners to complete individually, she drew another puzzle on the chalkboard that she used to explain and demonstrate to the learners how to complete it. The student teacher encouraged the learners to use their phonic knowledge to read the words. It was observed that the learners concentrated and enjoyed the task with the whole class being busy.

Evaluation of the lesson observed on 16 March 2016 (07:30am–08:10am).

- The classroom communication and interaction between the student teacher and the learners were not that good because the learners were not allowed to talk. They did not even have the opportunity to ask each other questions at their table.
- The student teacher explained the instructions and demonstrated solving a puzzle which she drew on the chalkboard.
- Some of the learners were called to the chalkboard to write the words in the empty spaces.

- There was evidence of how the learners were assessed to support and improve their reading skills. Each learner completed the puzzle individually. The words in the puzzle referred to various modes of transport. The learners were warned not to copy from each another
- The learners were given a chance to engage and to be actively involved in the lesson
- There was a connection to what learners already knew because the words they used to fill in the puzzle were transport word.

However, although this student teacher did not give the learners a chance to talk; she made every effort hard to keep every learner involved as she moved around and assisted those learners who were finding the task difficult. Fennie had based the reading activity on the story as an integrated approach. The findings in the literature have shown that learners learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process through participation and contribution (Westbrook et al., 2013). This student teacher, Fennie, made an effort to give learners an activity to do that would allow them to read while completing a puzzle.

It is worth mentioning that Fennie used different approaches to teach literacy. In line with the findings in the literature, she applied the whole language approach, which involved the integration of all language skills (Amankwa & Brew-Hammond, 2010). According to Amankwa and Brew-Hammond (2010), the whole language approach is linked to the sociocultural approach which perceives learning as a social practice that take place within a social context. As indicated above, this lesson was a follow up activity to what Fennie had read to her learners the previous day. When the learners where busy completing the puzzle, she encouraged them to use their phonics knowledge to read words that were difficult; for example ombasikela (bicycle). This illustrated why the notion of contextualising the teaching of phonics encourages meaning making. Fennie's approach was support by the views of two of the lecturers (Maria and Sara) who believed in exposing the student teachers to as

many methods of teaching literacy as possible so as to ensure that they would be able to use them should the need arise.

Although many of student teachers displayed a limited knowledge and skills in relation to teaching literacy, there were, nevertheless, a few who managed to use a variety of teaching methods and who involved learners with learning difficulties. It is widely known that learners do not follow a single, neat order when developing an understanding of reading. In order to ensure that the student teachers taught and developed reading skills, it was incumbent on them to employ a variety of interesting activities and to find opportunities during the day to consolidate what the learners had learned, thus providing evidence of effective teaching reading methods (Chatry-Komarek, 2003).

It was evident that the majority of the student teachers used the phonic method when teaching literacy to their learners in the class, especially when they were teaching reading. This was a clear indication that the student teachers realised that, when teaching young learners to read, the phonics method would be the best. The method was used in a traditional way with the letters sounds being taught first. When the letter sounds have been mastered the teacher moves onto syllables. In the main, the phonics teaching was done in isolation except in a few cases where the student teachers based reading activities on a story they had read to their learners. In conclusion, it was clear that the teaching of reading was a challenge to most of the student teachers.

8.3.3 The teaching of writing skills

As far as writing is concerned, the pattern observed in the teaching of writing involved copying, tracing and dictation. In most of the classes the learners were asked to copy or trace patterns, letters, syllables and words from the chalkboard. In several of the classes observed, what the learners wrote was what they were reading during

the reading period. It was also observed that the learners were often given worksheets on which to trace patterns and also the letters related to the particular pattern.

Thus, the copying and tracing of patterns, letters and words from the chalkboard was a dominant pattern that occurred in most of the classes observed. The emphasis was on information related to the formation of letters and spacing. This meant that the writing pattern observed in most of the classes tended to focus on 'handwriting'. Below is an observation of the activity carried out by Grade 1 learners.

Classroom observations on the 1st of March 2016 between 08:10am and 08:50am
The student teacher wrote the letter pattern on the chalkboard, the letter 'n', and different words in which the letter 'n' appeared, for the learners to copy. She instructed the learners to copy the date into their exercise books. The student teacher moved around checking whether learners had copied correctly and whether they had written on the correct lines. Although the learners were sitting in groups they worked individually. They were not allowed to talk. The whole class was quiet with everyone busy copying. The student teacher moved around checking if anybody was having problems with tracing so that she could help any such learners. She told them to sit properly and write neatly. The learners were kept busy copying until the 40 minute lesson was over. Below are examples of what was done in one of the writing lessons

Table 8.2: Grade 1 writing activity at the Hanova Primary School

chalkboard. The learners were not allowed to discuss anything and nor were they allowed to look at each other's books. When one learner was caught looking at another learner's book, the class teacher called her to sit with her at the teacher's table until the dictation was over.

- The classroom communication and interaction between the student teacher and the learners were fairly good because learners had a chance to ask the student teacher questions if they did not understand and they also had a chance to ask each other questions at their table.
- The lecturer asked questions and ensured that several learners in the class were given an opportunity to respond and share their views.
- The student teacher used a teaching method which presents the student teacher as the one who knows everything with the learners having to be filled with knowledge from the student teacher
- There was evidence of how the learners were assessed to support and improve the literacy learning.
- The learners were able to engage and be actively involved in the lesson, thus promoting an effective learner literacy learning experience
- The connection to what learners already know to what was new was evident.

This lesson provided evidence that Linekela had failed to set tasks that would promote creative writing – similar to most of the other lessons observed. In the majority of the classes the learners were not encouraged to practise writing by creating pictures and stories (UNESCO, 2006). The learners were not given an opportunity to write different types of texts such as short and simple stories, and write about their own personal experiences, thus promoting creativity and enhancing good literacy learning behaviour (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2003). This had an adverse impact on the learners' progress in learning how to write.

In almost all the writing lessons observed, the classroom interaction was not good with the learners not being allowed either to talk to the student teacher or to talk and

discuss their views with others in their groups. A group working together is usually able to construct knowledge more effectively than an individual. This refers to what Vygotsky (1989) terms the gap between what a learner is able to do in collaboration with others and what he/she is able to do alone (Wray, 1999). This is the reason why Darling-Hammond and Brandford (2005) suggest that classroom interaction requires supervision, coaching and feedback to enable student teachers to apply various types of knowledge of the subject content in classroom.

8.4 Student teachers' literacy teaching strategies

It was observed that the most common strategy used in the majority of classes was the whole class teaching method with the learners usually being instructed in a big group and the student teachers expecting them to respond either in chorus or individually. This happened during the listening, speaking and reading lessons because the learners were sitting in front of the classroom in a big group. In the writing lessons, almost all the student teachers asked learners to go to their tables and complete the activities individually. It was observed that the learners were not allowed to talk even if they were sitting in groups. Many of the student teachers failed to design co-operative and collaborative learning activities that allowed the learners to work effectively either in groups or in pairs. However, this often means the learners will not see any value in sitting together. Learners learn best when working in groups because they learn from each other. Vygotsky (1989) suggests that student teachers also perform better when they work in groups rather than on their own. He claims that people's cognitive process function differently when working individually and working with others in groups.

In many cases the student teachers did not use a variety of teaching methods/strategies and, instead, they used the whole class teaching strategy which limits the learners' active participation, involvement and cooperative learning – a central principle of good mother tongue literacy practice (Bainbridge and Macy 2008).

It was evident that many student teachers did not include activities that catered for the different abilities in their classes. In addition, the student teachers did not model good reading habits and neither did they allow the learners to read independently – a good practice to enhance the learners’ reading to enable them to correct their mistakes (Ministry of Education, 2014).

8.5 Classroom instructional materials

It was suggested in the literature reviewed that, in order for a mother tongue programme to succeed, it is essential that materials and/or resources are available and also used appropriately (Amissah, 2001). It was observed that, in most of the classrooms visited, there were no materials written in either Oshikwanyama or Oshindonga. In some of the classes the student teachers were forced to use out-dated textbooks that were not in line with the current syllabi. In addition, in cases where there were some materials, they were not enough for all the learners in the class. Accordingly, two or three learners often had to share one book and this made it difficult for the learners to do self-correction, to pause and re-read again in order to help them to understand (Namibia Ministry of Education, 2014).

It was evident that the student teachers had failed to improvise, although this had been emphasised during their training, and also to use the local available materials in their teaching. They tended to use either the chalkboard or small reader booklets. It has been suggested that teacher education programmes should equip student teachers with knowledge on how to develop teaching and learning materials in the local languages to enable them to prepare their own material and use such material when they taught literacy in the schools (Amissah, 2001).

It was also observed that, in most of the classrooms where the student teachers were teaching, there were no reading corners to which the learners could go to

choose the books they wanted to read. Two classrooms only were found to have reading corners that were, in any case, filled with the English versions of books. The Namibia (Ministry of Education, 2014) suggests that the classroom must be a language- and print-rich environment. Thus, every classroom should have a reading corner with published readers and local stories, the learners' own creative writing and annotated posters. These should then be used to trigger discussions and role-play.

It was observed that some of the classrooms were colourful with well-decorated posters that had been created by the class teachers. The words on these posters were usually written in either Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama. However, sadly, this was found in a few classrooms only. It is, nevertheless, crucial to mention that some textbooks had been received in certain of the schools during the time the researcher was carrying out this study.

8.6 What did the student teachers have to say about their teaching practice/SBS?

Teaching practice is very important component in the pre-service teacher education programme because this is the time student teacher put into practice the theories they acquired during their preparation time. As Smith & Vaux, 2003 mentioned teaching practice does not only connect theory and practice together, but it is the time when student teachers improve their teaching competencies. As a result, student teachers were asked to shed light on their experiences of being in school, and whether teaching practice has contributed to their mother tongue literacy teaching improvement. Student teachers were also asked to compare whether they found difference between what they learned in the programme.

8.6.1 The incongruence between what student teachers learned at the University and what they practice in the primary classrooms

It should also be highlighted that the student teachers experienced much during their school based studies, including learner-centred teaching and being with children during the teaching and learning process. The student teachers also realised the disparities between the BETD serving teachers and those teachers who had graduated from UNAM with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education (BEd). These disparities resulted in certain contradictions as well as an inability to implement new methodologies and strategies in education such the mother tongue literacy policy

The majority of the student teachers expressed concerns of the way in which mother tongue literacy is planned, taught and managed in the schools and that some of what they encountered in the schools differed radically from how their training had prepared them. A typical example mentioned was lesson planning. The student teachers mentioned that they had been trained to prepare a detailed and explanatory lesson plan that anyone could use. However, the lesson plan format in the schools was too short and not of any assistance to the student teachers. One of the student teachers had the following to say about the lesson plan format.

... the lesson preparation form of UNAM is more detailed ... if am absent they will be able to teach because it is more detailed in showing what I must do and what activities I must give and what instructions I must give and so on. Whereas the one in the school is more like a draft of a few words (Kaana).

It was also pointed that the student teachers appeared to be approaching the teaching of literacy inappropriately, for example, they were not reading stories to the children and nor were they playing games with them. The sociocultural background of the learners plays an important role in their learning at school. Children enter school with both knowledge and a variety of skills that they will have acquired through living in their own communities (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2004). They will also

have participated in and observed most of the cultural activities that they see happening around them. They will have listened to their language being spoken, they will have learned to take turns in order to respond and they will have learned that a skill may be acquired by repeating it and through demonstration (Obanya, 2010). However, it emerged from the discussions with the student teachers that there no value being attached to the social and cultural experiences of the children. This had emerged from the lecturers' lesson presentation as well as from the student teachers.

8.6.2 The student teachers' views of their own competencies regarding mother tongue literacy teaching

As indicated previously, the lecturers were convinced of the value of teaching the mother tongue especially in relation to the teaching of the literacy modules in the lower grades. In addition, they clearly fully supported the student mother tongue teaching policy although the student teachers' views appeared to contradict this. Despite the effort the lecturers were putting in to support the language policy, the student teachers felt they were not being adequately prepared to teach using Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama as the mediums of instruction in schools. The answers given in the interviews held with the fourth year student teachers on the language used in their training and whether the student teachers felt adequately prepared to teach in the mother tongue as per the junior primary teaching policy of mother tongue instruction, varied. Some of them indicated that they felt ready to teach literacy in the learners' mother tongue while others felt they were not yet ready. These varying answers could have been the result of different interpretations and understandings of mother tongue teaching. According to Tila;

I think I can do it, I am a fluent speaker of Oshindonga ... it is easy for me to teach them in their mother tongue which is Oshindonga ... I can teach'

Tila was clearly under the impression that the fact that she was an Oshindonga speaker enabled to teach in the language with confidence. However, being a

speaker of the language does not necessarily mean that the individual concerned is able to teach in the language in question. This is in line with Gacheche (2010) who claimed that there is an assumption that, if teachers are able to speak a child's L1, they are also able to teach in the language.

On the other hand, Bili, a student teacher, stated that the lecturers had made it clear that, although they were teaching the student teachers in English they would have to teach in the language used as the medium of instruction in the schools. She further indicated that the lecturers had told them to make friends with the teachers in schools so that they would assist the student teachers with their teaching in the mother tongue. As a result, Bili said she felt prepared and did not think she would have any problems with teaching using the mother tongue. On the other hand, Bili also expressed the view that it would be appreciated if UNAM brought in two or three lecturers who could train them to teach other subjects in the mother tongue. This clearly indicated that although Bili felt the teachers in school would help her to teach using the mother tongue, she did see the need for training in mother tongue. This suggests that Tila and Bili's comments showed that they did not have a clear understanding of how adequate their preparation for mother tongue teaching and practice had actually been.

The study findings also revealed that some of the student teachers felt that they had not been properly prepared to teach literacy in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. Kaana maintained that;

We are not well prepared to teach in Oshiwambo ... we are given theory only and, when we go out, we try by ourselves to do it practically ... they only teach us verbally but not giving us opportunities like preparing a lesson plan and presenting it as you will present it to the learners in class. They are not teaching us to prepare a lesson plan because that is the difficult part with mother tongue ... until now I am in fourth year and I am still struggling to draw up a lesson plan for Oshiwambo ... even though I am about to go out.

The fact that the training tended to focus on theory rather than practice was resulting in the student teachers experiencing problems when they went to the schools. The fact that they had not practised certain aspects of teaching during their training made their teaching practice in the schools very difficult. Kaana felt that had she been given the opportunity to prepare a lesson and present it to the other student teachers as if she were presenting it to the learners in her class could have really helped her. She expressed her concern that she was in her fourth year of training but was still struggling with Oshiwambo preparation. Kaana's concern was similar to that of Mensia who said;

I haven't mastered my native language so far because I was never taught in my mother tongue, I was taught in Afrikaans. Coming to the university I realised I want to teach in my mother tongue ... I have captured quite a few but I am not ready ... I think. As time goes on and with practice, I will be more ready but I am not ready at this moment.

It was clear from Mensia's view above that, since her school language was Afrikaans; she had expected to be trained at university to be able to teach in her mother tongue. However, according to her, she had not learnt enough although she was confident that, with practice in her class, she would succeed.

... we are trained in English but, when we go in the field, it's mother tongue ... the lecturers need to teach us in our mother tongue for us to be able to use it ... sometimes the concepts are hard for us (Mensia).

It was clear that the student teachers felt that their entire training should be offered in their mother tongue to enable them to implement the language policy effectively. However, because this was not the case they encountered challenges during their SBS when they were in the classroom teaching in the mother tongue.

It is also important to note that the majority of the student teachers had mentioned that they had not had the chance to practise what they had learnt, as the class

teachers had chosen what they should teach and how they had to teach it. It was also clear from the findings that the school community has an impact on the students' literacy practice.

8.7 Conclusion

The findings revealed that all the student teachers observed had presented their lessons in either Oshikwanyama or Oshindonga, the languages used as the medium of instructions in the schools which the researcher visited.

The data from the classroom observation revealed that the teaching of literacy was dominated by teacher directed methods, limited mastery of content knowledge, inappropriate teaching strategies and inadequate resources.

It was also clear from the classroom observations showed that student teachers lacked skills in the following aspects:

- building on what the learners already knew and connecting this to the new knowledge
- involving the learners in the teaching and learning activities
- using a variety of teaching methods
- engaging learners in classroom dialogues
- using a variety of teaching mediums or resources and ensuring classroom interaction.

As stated above the findings revealed that the majority of the student teachers used teacher- centred method and learner control limiting the learners' active participation.

It was evident that the teaching methods and strategies the student teachers had used to present the listening, speaking, reading and writing lessons to the learners were inadequate. They had failed to contextualise their teaching to suit the levels

and needs of the learners and this had limited the process of learning and impacted adversely on the learners' understanding.

It was also clear that the majority of the student teachers had insufficient skills to organise their classrooms with a view to allowing the learners to interact socially, to talk and discuss matters at their tables and to learn how to take turns in order to be able to listen and respond effectively.

The findings also showed that the majority of the student teachers did not employ effective listening skill methods. In most cases listening was taught through storytelling with the stories being read from the small booklets or written on the chalkboards. It was clear that the student teachers regarded storytelling as the only way in which to teach and develop listening skills. The question thus arose as to whether they were even aware of the other methods for teaching listening.

It was noted that the majority of the student teachers appeared to have difficulties with the teaching of speaking skills. Speaking was taught either through re-telling a story which had been read in the class or by the learners having to answer the question about the story which had been read to them.

It was evident that many of the student teachers found the teaching of reading challenging. They tended to use the phonics method with the learners first having to sound the letters and then read the syllables, words and sentences which were written on the chalkboard. This was done through the learners repeating what the student teacher had said and by chorusing, drilling and memorisation. This may be concluded that the cognitive approach was dominating the teaching of reading.

The findings also revealed that it appeared that the student teachers in Namibia had not yet fully grasped the sociocultural view of literacy learning because the learners' personal and cultural experiences seemed not to have been considered in most of the lessons observed.

It may also be concluded that student teachers did not use effective methods to teach writing skills. The teaching of writing was done through copying what had had been done in the reading lesson and tracing patterns, letters, syllables and words from the chalkboard.

CHAPTER 9: SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Introduction

Several countries globally have advocated a policy of mother tongue teaching in the early years. Given this reality, it is assumed that teacher education programmes should equip teachers with the necessary skills to be able to teach literacy using the

mother tongue effectively. However, limited research has been conducted on the way in which teachers are prepared to teach literacy using the mother tongue of the learners. Accordingly, this chapter synthesises the main findings of the study and the conclusions drawn from the case studies used in this study into the way in which teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue in Namibia. In addition, this chapter discusses the contribution of this study to the on-going debate in the literature about how teachers are prepared language skills, in particular, in the mother tongue. The limitations of the study and also the recommendations for both future research and ways to improve the preparation of mother tongue literacy teachers are also contained in the chapter.

9.2 Main findings and conclusions of the study

This study examined how literacy teachers are prepared to teach literacy using the mother tongue of the learners. This sub-section discusses the main findings of the study and the conclusions drawn in relation to the existing knowledge on mother tongue literacy teachers' preparation. It was evident from the study that the qualitative case study conducted provided an in-depth understanding of both the implementation of language policy in teacher education in the Namibian context and also how student teachers are prepared to mother tongue literacy. As indicated in Figure 9.1, four key conclusions were drawn from the study findings, namely, the lack of an institutional language policy, inadequate preparation of mother tongue literacy teachers, the management and the teaching of mother tongue literacy, and support from the school. These key conclusions are discussed in-depth in the sections below

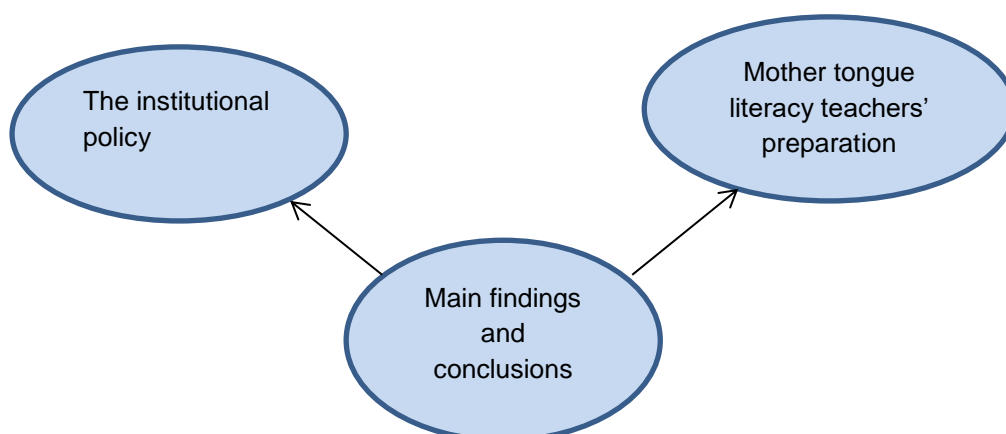




Figure 9.1: *The synthesis and conclusion of the study.*

9.2.1. The institutional language policy

The national language policy for schools in Namibia provides for learners to be instructed in their mother tongue from Grades 1 to 3. Both the lecturers and student teachers of this study regarded mother tongue teaching as important in children's learning. They maintained that the mother tongue links the home and the school because the language used at home is then the same as the language used at school. They further argued that, by mastering their first language, learners would be able to use the skills acquired to learn a second language. While the advocates of mother tongue-based teaching assume that teachers would perform their literacy teaching better if they were adequately prepared to teach using the mother tongue, the national language policy makers expect teacher education programmes to be aligned with the national policies and support the implementation of these policies. It is also assumed that teacher education institutions would have internal policies in place for preparing student teachers to be able to implement the national language policy in schools. The UNAM lecturers clearly value the importance of mother tongue literacy teaching because the African language modules are translated into the Namibian local languages while the teaching and instruction of mother tongue literacy is conducted in the student teachers' mother tongues which are in fact the languages used as mediums of instruction in schools. Unfortunately, this study revealed that there is no institutional language policy at UNAM that prescribed how

student teachers specialising in pre and lower primary are to be prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue.

Although it was observed that the preparation of the mother tongue literacy teachers was happening in the languages of the student teachers, it was only in the Namibian languages modules that teaching was in the mother tongue. In other words, it was only in the Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga lessons that the student teachers practised their mother tongue listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. The medium of learning in the University of Namibia is English and this may prevent the student teachers from the necessary vocabulary in the mother tongue language. This challenge may, however, be overcome if the university would implement an institutional language policy, especially for the pre-and lower primary BEd programme.

The study also revealed that only two hours per week were to practical and micro teaching lessons. This may be one of the contributing factors to the inadequate mother tongue teacher preparation as well as the poor mother tongue literacy practice in the classrooms.

9.2.2. Mother tongue literacy teachers' preparation

Although the lecturers tried their level best to convey the content of mother tongue literacy to Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga student teachers, the study revealed that the majority of the lecturers in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama were not trained for pre and lower primary grade teaching nor did they have experience in pre and lower primary grade teaching. Even for those lecturers who were trained for Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama, their training was aimed at senior classes. The pre and lower primary department's interventions in the form of crash courses, workshops and training for the lecturers were appreciated to improve the lecturers' knowledge and skills in respect of teaching mother tongue literacy.

The researcher observed that the majority of the lectures on teaching took place in the lecture rooms as it appeared that there were no model classrooms on campus to enable student teachers relating the theory they had been taught to practice, especially on Campus B. The lecture rooms were not suitable for training the student teachers who would teach the pre and lower primary grades because these lecture rooms did not have any of characteristics of a lower primary classroom. It was thus argued that this practice may have been one of the causes of the incongruence between the campus based training and school based teaching.

It was clear from the findings of the observations of the lecturers' mother tongue literacy classroom lessons that there was little or no consistency between the methods and strategies and actual teaching used to prepare student teachers to teach literacy in the mother tongue. Although the preparation of the student teachers in the teaching of literacy was conducted in Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama, the lecture 'teacher talk' method tended to dominate the lecturers' mother tongue literacy presentations rather than student-centred teaching. It is thus argued that, to ensure active learner participation and cooperative efforts such as teamwork, group work, whole class interaction, higher order questioning, teacher modelling, and demonstration, a different mode of teacher preparation had to be implemented. The lecturers were not demonstrating sufficient skills in their lecturing methods and the lecturers were not using strategies that ensured that the student teachers were learning with understanding. It is argued that lecturing methods do not necessarily mean just telling but should include design strategies that may help the student teachers to connect their experiences to the new knowledge (Filomena et al, 2004).

As indicated previously, the constructivist approach works best in a classroom social setting with the learners being given the opportunity to compare and share their ideas with others. There were sufficient evidence of good facilitation skills and high training quality among some lecturers. The data from the study revealed that some of the lecturers appear to have limited knowledge and skills in relation to engaging all

the student teachers in the lesson discussions as they clearly found it difficult to gain and hold the attention of all the student teachers.

The advocates of the sociocultural approach see knowledge as socially constructed and learning to teach as a social process mediated through language and facilitated by drawing on contexts familiar to the learners so that meaning making is realised. There was, however, one lecturer who used the aspect culture in the lesson by demonstrating to the student teachers they should teach literacy using songs. Most of the lecturers demonstrated limited knowledge and skills in relation to building on what the student teachers already knew as a way in which to activate their beliefs and knowledge. Classroom interaction, as a way of social practice, has significant influence on the students as it affects their ability to absorb new information. The study found that the lecturers showed limited skills in setting up group work and whole class interaction, and facilitating higher order questioning.

The training did expose the student teachers to various methods of teaching mother tongue literacy, especially in respect of reading methods such as phonics; look and say methods, whole language, and the language experience approach. However, the findings revealed that these methods were not being practically demonstrated to show how the student teachers would implement them in practices them in classrooms. With the exception of one lecturer who modelled reading using the big book, the majority of the lecturers did not present either literacy lessons or modelled lessons.

The study indicated that there appeared to no consensus between the lectures on the literacy teaching methods. Although all the lecturers used phonics method to prepare student teachers teach mother tongue literacy, two of the lecturers regarded the phonics approach as the best method of teaching reading, especially when teaching Bantu languages while the other two lecturers believed that one method alone would not be suitable for all the learners who would have different learning needs. These differing views may be attributed to the varying training and

professional experiences of the lecturers and may have impacted significantly on the student teachers' mother tongue literacy practice.

The lecturers presented considerable information on the teaching of the mother tongue literacy content and the importance and value of stories and songs in the teaching of mother tongue literacy skills to young learners. However, it appeared that little was being done to practically demonstrate and show how these would be presented to learners in the classroom. Some of the lecturers perceived that the aim of studying at the university was to be equipped with sufficient theory to ensure that would be able the student teachers to teach literacy content in the local languages.

Although strategies such as modelled, guided, shared and independent reading and writing were comprehensively taught, the student teachers were not given an opportunity to practise and internalise these strategies during their presentation. Accordingly, the study found that the majority of the student teachers were not able to apply these strategies during their teaching practice.

Mother tongue literacy teaching is assumed to be successful if sufficient materials in the local languages are available and are used appropriately. The findings of the case studies showed that there were insufficient teaching and learning materials in Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga in the university. There was only one grammar book written in Oshikwanyama but it was for the upper grades and not for the pre and lower primary grades. This made it difficult for the lecturers to prepare the student teachers effectively to teach literacy in the mother tongue. However, despite the scarcity of instructional materials, the lecturers were to be doing all they could to facilitate their mother tongue literacy teaching by translating information from English into the two dialects of the Oshiwambo language, namely, Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama.

9.2.3 Management and the teaching of mother tongue literacy

As mentioned in the previous chapters in the thesis, the advocates of mother tongue based teaching argue that the development of initial literacy is best achieved when taught in the dominant language of the child's home. The evidence from the study indicated that all the student teachers who were observed teaching used Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga to teach literacy to the learners in the classrooms. Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga are dialects of the Oshiwambo language that used as the medium of instruction in the schools visited.

As indicated in chapter 8, only four of the ten student teachers observed met the criteria for effective presentation skills. In other words, the majority of the student teachers did not meet the criteria for effective presentation skills. Most of the student teachers shared that their training was not helping them teach literacy in the mother tongue. They maintained their training equipped them with extensive theory but did not provide sufficient practice.

As already mentioned the study revealed that most of the student teachers did not meet the criteria for effective teaching as their literacy teaching was dominated by teacher-talk methods and limited learner active participation. Their teaching tended to focus more on whole class teaching, and question and answer methods. In addition, the student teachers demonstrated ineffective skills in relation to organising their classrooms with a view to enabling the learners to interact socially talk and discuss things at their tables and learn how to take turns in order to be able to listen and respond. The study indicated that only four of the student teachers' teaching strategies promoted active participation by the learners while the other six student teachers clearly had limited skills on building on what the learners already knew and connecting this to new knowledge; involving the learners in the teaching and learning activities; using a variety of teaching methodologies and approaches; classroom interaction as a way in which to engage learners in the classroom dialogues and the

use of a variety of teaching and learning medias or resources. The student teachers mother tongue literacy practice could be attributed to how they had been prepared to teach.

The data from the study also revealed that the majority of the student teachers had implemented inadequate teaching methodologies and strategies to present the listening, speaking, reading and writing lessons to the learners. They failed to contextualise their teaching to suit the levels and needs of the learners and this limited the process of learning with understanding on the part of the learners.

While it is argued that listening skills may be developed by exposing learners to several opportunities to listen to stories, recite rhymes, sing songs, and make up stories, rhymes and songs themselves, the findings from the student teacher classroom observation clearly showed that most of the student teachers did not employ effective listening skill methods. In most cases listening was taught through storytelling with the stories being read to the learners. Most of the student teachers clearly regarded teaching listening as entailing telling or reading stories to the learners as the only way in which to teach and develop listening skills. As indicated in the study, listening skills may be improved through listening and responding to verbal instructions, messages, announcements and information as well as by listening and then responding by drawing, miming and role playing. It could thus be concluded that the student teachers lacked in-depth understanding of the fact that children develop listening skills through active listening and participation.

While the literature argued that children need to first listen to people speaking and understand what is being said in order to be able to speak themselves, it appeared that it was in the teaching of speaking skills that the majority of the student teachers appeared to experience the most difficulties. In most of the student teachers' lessons speaking was taught either through re-telling a story which had been read in the class or the learners had to answer question on the story which had been read to

them. It was only in few lessons that the student teachers had planned activities that fostered speaking skills.

It was evident that the teaching of reading was also a challenge to many of the student teachers. The approach adapted to the teaching of reading was primarily the phonics method, whereby the learners had to first sound the letters and then read the syllables, words and sentences that were written on the chalkboard. This was done through repeating what the student teacher had said and choring, drilling and memorisation. It would appear that, at the time of the study, the use of phonics was considered to be the main way of teaching children how to read although the literature does cite some reading programmes which use elements of holistic approaches. This was, therefore, concluded that the cognitive approach dominated the teaching of reading in most of the classes visited.

The sociocultural view of literacy learning has clearly not yet been fully grasped by student teachers in Namibia because the learners' personal and cultural experiences were not taken into account in most of the lessons observed. The few student teachers who did link their lessons to the learners' experiences were those who used stories to develop the learners' literacy skills and thus used the whole language approach that is connected to socio-cultural approach which perceives learning as a process of social interaction that takes place within a cultural context (Opoku-Amankwa & Brew-Hammond, 2011). These student teachers based the reading activities on the stories they discussed with the learners and clearly understood that, when children come to school, they bring their cultural experiences and their knowledge of letters, words and text to the interpretation of written language (Hammond & Bransford, 2005). For example, the learners associated what they read with the word used to describe transport in their community. It was thus concluded that the majority of the student teachers favoured and used the cognitive approach to teaching reading and that a socio-cultural approach needed to be reinforced.

It was also concluded that the student teachers did not use effective methods to teach writing skills, as the teaching of writing was done through the learners copying what had been covered in the reading lesson and copy tracing patterns, letters, syllables and words from the chalkboard

9.2 .4 Support from the schools

The majority of student teachers teaching indicated that their experience was broadened during their school based studies, for example, learner-centred teaching, being with children during the teaching and learning process, and the influence of the support teachers on the student teachers' mother tongue literacy practice with some reporting that the school based studies/teaching practice had improve their teaching because of the support they had received from their mentor teachers. On the other hand, some of them reported that their teaching practice had not helped them to improve their teaching practice because they had not received any help from the schools.

Regarding the high quality lessons described in Chapter 8, three of the lessons were presented by student teachers who claimed that they had received support from their mentor teachers and the other lesson was presented by one of the student teacher who reported not receiving any support from the school. It may, therefore, be concluded that the presentation skills of the student teachers who reported that they had received support from their mentor teachers differed the rest of the student teachers who had been observed teaching. These students had demonstrated good presentation skills and had also used various teaching methodologies and approaches that catered for the varying learning abilities of the learners.

The study found that, instead of the student teachers going to the schools to practise what they had learnt during their training, their services were often used in other ways not necessarily connected to their training. The student teachers were often

asked to rendered their services to the schools whenever a need arose, including supervising a class when the teacher was unavailable, whether they had prepared for that lesson or not. It may thus be concluded that the understanding of the school community of the purpose of the student teachers' teaching practice was deficient.

The study revealed that some of the student teachers tended to avoid teaching certain subjects due to a lack of knowledge of the subject content while some of them did not have the freedom to plan and try out things which they had learned during their training with the class teachers controlling and deciding what and how the student teachers had to teach.

The evidence also revealed that there was insufficient Oshikwanyama and/or Oshindonga teaching material available in schools. The syllabi had been translated but there were no textbooks and learners' books available. In some classes the student teachers were found using out-dated textbooks that were not in line with the current syllabi. In cases where there was some material it was often not sufficient for all the learners in the class with two or three learners having to share one book. This made it difficult for the learners to do self-correction. It was also evident that the student teachers were not able to improvise although this had been emphasised during their training as had the use of the local, available materials in their teaching. They tended used either the chalkboard or small reader booklets.

In summary, this study revealed a number of deficiencies in the mother tongue literacy teachers' preparation and mother tongue literacy practice as a result of the training lacking the following: an institutional language policy; lecturers qualified to train mother tongue literacy teachers; effective methods for and approaches to teaching mother tongue literacy; not enough time allocated to practical and micro teaching lessons; and a lack of teaching and learning materials.

9.3 Contribution of the present study

This study responded to the gap in the literature on mother tongue literacy teacher preparation in the developing context by researching all the language skills required by mother tongue literacy teachers. It contributed to the way in which student teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue in the developing countries as grounded within the sociocultural perspective. The study argued that it is vital that teachers possess an adequate knowledge of the language(s) used as a medium of instruction in the schools. The study attempted to contribute to the existing body of knowledge based by providing an in-depth understanding on how student teachers are prepared to practise mother tongue literacy in schools in Namibia.

9.3.1 Contributions to the existing knowledge base on mother tongue literacy teachers' preparation as regards the institutional language policy

The study established that research into mother tongue based teaching tends to focus more on examining the implementation of the language policy and the challenges encountered but did little to assess how pre-service teachers are prepared to teach in the mother tongue. This study established that mother tongue teaching requires teachers who are trained in the language in which they are going to teach. It argues that it is essential student teachers have an understanding of the language policies and are confident to use them (Amisshah, 2001; Karan & Morren, 2013). The study proposes that institutions of higher learning should align their documents to the national policies; and develop their own institutional policy. The findings of the study revealed that an institutional language policy that makes provision to guide the preparation of mother tongue literacy teachers was not available.

While the national language policy in Namibia makes provision for learners to learn in their mother tongue in all the learning areas except English, which is taught as a subject, the teaching and practice in the university contradicts this ideal as only the Namibian languages are taught in the mother tongue and all other modules are taught in English. Mother tongue literacy teaching is assumed to promote learning with understanding and cultural identity. Adequate mother tongue literacy teacher preparation facilitates the effective mother tongue teaching in schools.

9.3.2 Contributions to the existing knowledge base on adequate mother tongue literacy preparation

The literature on mother tongue teacher preparation has tended to focus more on the impact of the training programme on the new teachers, but has done little in respect of assessing how pre-service teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue. The advocates of mother tongue teacher preparation argue that teachers who are well prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue will have a positive impact on learning outcome in the schools and that they must demonstrate adequate knowledge of and competence in the language used as a medium of instruction in schools (Amisshah, 2001; Karan & Morren, 2013). In this context knowledge of pedagogical content is vital as it bridges the content knowledge and teaching practice in the classroom (Ball, Thames & Phelps, 2008).

The study revealed that the BEd programme did not provide for sufficient knowledge and skills in respect of teaching literacy in mother tongue because the information was given without a practical demonstration of good mother tongue literacy practice. Merely providing information without any demonstration of good practice provides no guarantee that the student teachers will acquire the requisite new teaching skills. In the interests of good mother tongue literacy practice it is essential that a demonstration is given to the student teachings of the way in which literacy teaching in the mother tongue should be approached.

The advocates of mother tongue teaching assume that good literacy development occurs when teachers are adequately prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue of the learners and resources in the local language are available and appropriately used (Amissah, 2001; Benson, 2004). The evidence from this study showed a lack of knowledge and skills on the part of the student teachers regarding ensuring active participation by the learners in lesson activities, learner interaction with one another in their groups and learners working in groups to complete tasks. It is clear from the literature that learners learn best when they are actively involved in the lesson activities and also that they learn best when working in groups with their peers. It was noted that the lecturers did little to involve all the student teachers in the lesson activities, primarily because the method and approaches used did not allow student teacher interaction and active participation.

9.3.3 Contributions to the existing knowledge base on mother tongue literacy preparation as regards all the language skills

The literature on mother tongue literacy teacher preparation has focused more on the teaching of reading and writing skills but has neglected to examine how teachers are prepared to teach the four skills of language. Language theorists argue that all aspects of language are interrelated and interwoven (Aydođan & Akbarov, 2014), and thus should be taught as a 'whole' (Zhang, 2011). It is assumed that early progress in reading depends on oral language development and that, before children may begin to learn to associate the written form with speech, they need to learn the vocabulary, grammar and sound system of the oral language (Pang, Muaka, Bernhardt, & Kamil, 2003). It is argued that there is a strong relationship between phonemic awareness and literacy development (Gillon, 2004) and that listening and speaking provide a foundation for the synthetic approach to blending phonemes and segmenting words into their essential parts (Condy, Chigona, Chetty, & Thornhill, 2010). This argument goes on to state that reading and writing occur because of the ability to listen and speak the language in question (Li, Zhao, & Yeung, 2012). This study established that the mother tongue literacy preparation was offered in separate

modules which may not allow student teachers to realise and obtain a full picture of mother tongue literacy teaching in schools as the mother tongues modules were presented in compartments and in isolation. It is suggested that this type of practice would hinder the further development and practice of mother tongue literacy teaching in Namibia. To ensure an in-depth understanding of literacy teaching, the teaching of the literacy modules should be integrated and should be taught in context, with real-life experiences being applied.

As indicated in the literature, the teaching of listening and speaking skills generally tends to be ignored whereas much attention is paid to the writing and reading skills (Saeed, Khaksari, Eng, & Ghani, 2016). This study also found that, on the whole, the student teachers showed limited skills and a lack of understanding of how speaking skills may be taught and developed. If these skills were taught it was not properly done. Although speaking is regarded as an important skill as the learners feel that if they are able to speak well, they will be able to find good jobs in the future (Saeed et al., 2016), there was the least focus on speaking skills as compared to the other skills (see Appendix O).

9.3.4 Contributions to the existing knowledge base on adequate mother tongue literacy preparation using the sociocultural perspective

Vygotsky's view is that knowledge is socially constructed rather than received. Thus, instead of transmitting knowledge to the students, teachers collaborate with them to create meaning and understanding (Zhang, 2011). The evidence from the two case studies revealed that the lecturers had failed to create a good mother tongue literacy learning environment. It is argued that prospective teachers do not come to teacher training as clean slates empty-headed as they come with experiences and views that they may have developed over years of observation. Despite the fact that schools operate within the social and cultural context of the learners, the study found that both the lecturers and student teachers had insufficient skills in respect of tapping

into the knowledge which student teachers and learners bring with them, be it their language or literacy experiences.

Although language is culture and the mother tongue is crafted against the socio-cultural background of a context, it appeared that the training and preparation of the teachers provided little evidence skills in terms of building on the experiences brought to the training institution. It is important to note that the crucial aspect of mother tongue literacy as a social practice is clearly not yet realised in Namibia.

9.4 Limitation of the present study

The data used in this study was collected from two case studies only. This limits the generalisations of the study findings to all UNAM campuses.

In addition, the study focused on Namibia only, and not on other African countries, thus making it impossible to generalise the findings of the way in which teachers in other countries are prepared to teach listening, speaking, reading and writing in the mother tongue.

The study assessed how future teachers are prepared to teach literacy in Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga and therefore did not provide information on the other Namibian language groups.

The study was not able to collect sufficient data on how student teachers are prepared to teach mother tongue literacy from the focus group discussion as the discussion was plagued by absenteeism as well as a marked lack of commitment on the part of the student teachers.

9.5 Recommendations for future research

Research into the preparation of mother tongue literacy teachers is limited because most of these studies have been done in the context of the developed countries. As mentioned earlier, a mother tongue teaching policy has been introduced in the developing countries in order to promote literacy development in these countries.

It is still not yet clear whether the poor performance of learners in schools may be the result of inadequate teacher preparation and a lack of resources. If this is, in fact, true then it is essential that research into the impact of the pre and lower primary BEd programme on the graduates is conducted within the Namibian context.

The following are suggested as topics for future research on the way in which teachers are prepared to teach literacy in the mother tongue.

1. An investigation into how teachers are prepared to teach all the pre and lower primary curriculum modules with a view to improving the practice of the language policy.
2. In investigation into the impact of the pre and lower primary programme on the practice of the BEd graduates

9.6 Recommendations for improving mother tongue literacy teaching in a developing context such as Namibia

It has been established that mother tongue instruction enables young learners to learn with understanding because they understand what they are learning. The ideology for both teaching and learning is always to start with what the learners already know, as this promotes cultural identity, social acceptance and the children's thinking capacity. This study revealed that lecturers and student teachers appear to

ignore acknowledging the learners' prior knowledge and thus that they continued to teach as the transmitters of knowledge who regard their learners as being without any knowledge and ready to be filled with knowledge. The change from the English methods of instruction to mother tongue instruction requires further investigation, especially regarding its benefits for the learning of young learners. In addition, teacher education institutions, schools and parents should be provided with support to assist them to understand and support the government's language policy for schools in Namibia

This study also revealed that the implementation of the mother tongue teaching policy is a daunting task. The study found that the local language modules at UNAM are the only modules that are taught in the mother tongue of the student teachers and that all the other modules are offered in English. The study also revealed that not all the lecturers have been professionally trained for teaching the pre and lower primary phase. If the lecturers are to improve their implementation of mother tongue teaching, then a review of the professional development of the existing lecturers should be carried out. The study recommends the following:

- A teacher education institutional language policy be developed to strengthen the use and provision of mother tongue literacy teaching. This policy should clearly articulate the language which is involved and how mother tongue teaching will be accommodated in the teaching and practice of teacher education in Namibia;
- The university provide teacher training that focuses on mother tongue teaching in the interests of implementing the mother tongue policy for junior primary school learners;

- Both the institutions that train teachers and the teacher educators themselves be given extensive support to ensure the smooth transition to the bilingual programme that supports mother tongue literacy teacher preparation;
- A training needs assessment is conducted to determine the competencies and skills required to improve the mother tongue teaching practices of teacher educators.

The evidence from the study also revealed that the presentation methods used by lecturers are ineffective in improving the student teachers' mother tongue literacy practices. Accordingly, an examination of the existing mode of content delivery is needed and, thus, the following recommendation is made: On-going professional development is implemented that focuses on improving the teacher educators' methods, approaches and strategies in respect of mother tongue literacy teaching.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Interview Schedule for Teacher Educators

The purpose of this guide is to elicit teacher educators' views of their experiences of teaching students how to teach their mother tongue.

Name:

Language:

Professional qualification:

UNAM campus:

Date:

1. How long have you been a Junior Primary lecturer?
2. What have been your most memorable experiences of being a Junior Primary lecturer?
3. What are your understandings of the language policy for schools? Please explain.
4. How is language policy integrated into the curriculum? Please explain.
5. What language do you use when teaching student teachers? Why?
6. What are your views on mother tongue teaching?
7. What are the advantages and disadvantages of mother tongue teaching?
8. Have you been trained to teach in the mother tongue? How? Was the training effective?
9. What literacy skills do you teach?
10. What strategies do you use to teach literacy skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the mother tongue?
11. How do you teach listening skills?
12. How do you teach speaking skills?
13. How do you teach reading skills?

14. How do you teach writing skills?
15. What do you think are the best strategies for teaching literacy skills?
16. What challenges have you experienced when teaching literacy (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the mother tongue?
17. Why do you consider these to have been be challenges?
18. How do you overcome these challenges?
19. Why do you think it is important to teach in the mother tongue in the Junior Primary Phase (Pre-primary to Grade 3)?
20. Do you have a specific programme that you follow when teaching mother tongue literacy? Please explain.
21. Are there materials available in the language that is used as the medium of instruction?
22. Are they adequate? If not, how could they be improved?
23. Do you have any other concluding comments?

Appendix B: Interview Schedule for Student Teachers

The purpose of this guide is to obtain the views of student teachers on how they are being prepared to become mother tongue literacy teachers.

Student teacher's name: ----- Gender: -----

Age: ----- Language: -----

UNAM campus: -----

Date: -----

1. What have been your overall experiences of the Junior Primary teacher training programme?
2. Do you think the programme could be improved? If so, how?
3. Which language do your lecturers use when teaching you?
4. What do you know about the language policy for schools?
5. Do you think your lecturers support the language policy for schools in their teaching?
6. Do you think you are well prepared to implement the language policy for schools?
7. What strategies do your lecturers use to teach literacy skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the mother tongue?
8. Do you think you have learned useful techniques for teaching mother tongue literacy? Please explain.
9. What are the main elements of a good mother tongue literacy lesson? Please explain.
10. What challenges do you foresee in teaching literacy skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the mother tongue?
11. What were the most useful lessons you have learned during your teaching practice?
12. Do you think that what you learned from the class teacher when you doing your practical teaching has changed the way in which you teach? Please explain.

13. Why do you think it is important for Junior Primary learners to learn in their mother tongue?
14. What are your views on teaching in the mother tongue? What are the advantages? Disadvantages?
15. Is there any difference between what you learnt at UNAM and what you experienced during your practical teaching?
16. Does the school have a specific programme that is followed in the teaching of mother tongue literacy?
17. Are there materials available in the language used as the medium of instruction?
18. Are they adequate? If not, how could they be improved?
19. Do you have any concluding comments?

Appendix C: Interview Schedule for Student Teachers

The purpose of this guide is to obtain the views of student teachers on how they are being prepared to become mother tongue literacy teachers.

Student teacher's name: ----- Gender: -----

Age: ----- Language: -----

UNAM campus: -----

Date: -----

1. What have been your overall experiences of the Junior Primary teacher training programme?
2. Do you think the programme could be improved? If so, how?
3. Which language do your lecturers use when teaching you?
4. What do you know about the language policy for schools?
5. Do you think your lecturers support the language policy for schools in their teaching?
6. Do you think you have been well prepared to implement the language policy for schools?
7. What strategies do your lecturers use to teach literacy skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the mother tongue?
8. Do you think you have learned useful techniques for teaching mother tongue literacy? Please explain.
9. What are the main elements of a good mother tongue literacy lesson? Please explain.
10. What challenges do you foresee when teaching literacy skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the mother tongue?
11. What were the most useful lessons you learned during your teaching practice?
12. Do you think that what you learned from the class teacher when you were doing your practical teaching has changed the way in which you teach? Please explain.

13. Why do you think it is important for Junior Primary learners to learn in their mother tongue?
14. What are your views on teaching in the mother tongue? What are the advantages? Disadvantages?
15. Is there any difference between what you learnt at UNAM and what you experienced during your practical teaching?
16. Does the school have a specific programme that is followed in the teaching of mother tongue literacy?
17. Are materials available in the language used as the medium of instruction?
18. Are they adequate? If not, how could they be improved?
19. Do you have any concluding comments?

Appendix D: Document Analysis Guide

The following documents will be analysed

1. Official syllabuses/curricula
2. Language Policy
3. Teacher Education Policy
4. Assessment Policy

The following were some of the guiding questions for the document study:

1. What is the theory underpinning mother tongue teaching?
2. What do the documents say about mother tongue instruction/teaching?
3. What is the relationship between the policies and the curriculum?
4. What literacy strategies for JP learners are promoted during teacher training?
5. Do staff members minute their meetings in Oshikwanyama/Oshindonga?
6. Does UNAM have its own internal policy that promotes mother tongue teaching?
7. Does UNAM comply with the National Standard for Teachers in Schools

Appendix E: Classroom Observation Guide for Teacher Educators

The purpose of this guide is to obtain first-hand data on what lecturers practise in the classroom when preparing future teachers to teach mother tongue literacy.

UNAM campus: -----
Lecturer: -----
Language: -----
Date of visit: -----
Topic: -----
No. of students: -----

1. How does the lecturer interact with the student teachers by way of a social practice?
2. How does the lecturer assist student teachers to translate the mother tongue policy into practice?
3. What are the literacy skills that are being taught?
4. What teaching strategies does the lecturer use to enhance mother tongue literacy?
5. What strategies and materials does the lecturer use to support the student teachers' understanding of the content of literacy skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the mother tongue?
6. How does the lecturer assist the student teachers to connect what they already know with the new information they receive?
7. What teaching materials and resources does the lecturer use to support literacy learning in the mother tongue?
8. How does the lecturer assess the student teachers' literacy learning?
9. Is the lecturer proficient in the language used as the medium of instruction?
10. Anything striking about the lesson?
11. Strengths and/or weaknesses of the lesson

Appendix F: Classroom Observation Guide for Student Teachers

The purpose of this guide is to obtain first-hand information on what student teachers practise in the classroom in relation to what they have learnt during their training.

UNAM campus: -----
School: ----- Rural: -----
Grade: ----- Urban: -----
Student teacher: ----- No. of learners: -----
Language: ----- Topics/Skill: -----
Date of visit: ----- Visit no: -----

A. School General Observations

B. Classroom Observations

1. Lesson planning
2. How does the student teacher interact with the learners in the classroom?
3. How do the learners respond to the student teacher's instructions?
4. What literacy skills (listening, speaking reading and writing skills) are covered?
5. What strategies does the student teacher use to teach literacy (listening, speaking, reading and writing skills) in the mother tongue?
6. What strategies and materials does the student teacher use to support the learners' literacy learning in the mother tongue?
7. Is the student teacher comfortable teaching in the mother tongue?
8. What are the classrooms and management issues that are affecting the use of the mother tongue?
9. How does the student teacher assess the learners' literacy learning?
10. Does the student teacher teach literacy as he/she was taught during training or is there a disjuncture?
11. Anything striking about the lesson?

12. Strengths and/or weaknesses of the lesson



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

Appendix G: Consent and Assent: Letter to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

Ms Sanet Steenkamp
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture
Private Bag 13186
WINDHOEK

Dear Ms Steenkamp

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE SCHOOLS

I am a doctoral student studying at the University of Pretoria. I hereby wish to apply for permission to conduct research in the schools in the Khomas, Oshana and Ohangwena regions. The focus of the study is on mother tongue teaching, in this case, the Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga languages. There are two phases in the study: phase one will take place at the University of Namibia (UNAM) campuses, and phase two at some of the placement schools in Windhoek, Ongwediva and Oshakati where the student teachers will be carrying out their teaching practice. The study will focus only on the student teachers during teaching practice and will comply with the timetable of the school.

My research topic is: "From policy to practice: Preparing Namibian student teachers to teach mother-tongue literacy". The Namibian language policy for schools states that the medium of instruction in the lower grades (1–3) should be in the mother tongue or the first language of the learners. As a result, teacher education institutions in Namibia should ensure that student teachers who graduate are well- trained and prepared to teach in the language used

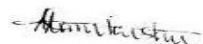
as the medium of instruction in the schools. I wish to study teacher education in Namibia in respect of mother tongue teacher training.

This research project will use different methods to collect data: semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and a document study. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the lecturers responsible for Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama, as well as twenty student teachers who are being trained to become future mother tongue teachers. The research project will also involve classroom observations of the lecturers and a document analysis of the course outline, curriculum content, language policy, and other policy documents.

The names of the schools will not be revealed in the thesis, or in other academic publications. Pseudonyms will be used. The information provided by the participants will be used for academic purposes only. Participation in this project will be voluntary. Any lecturer, student teacher, school, or student, who does not wish to participate in this study will be free to do so. I believe that this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on mother tongue teaching, policies and practice in both teacher education and in schools. All the data collected using public funding may be made available in an open repository for public and scientific use.

Attached please find a letter signed by my supervisor requesting the assent and consent of the participants.

Yours sincerely



Alina Amukushu-Niipare (Researcher)

Supervisor's signature



Professor KE Weber

Date: 28 October 2015



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Tel: (061) 2933286
Fax: (061) 2933922
Enquiries: Ms. C. Dentlinger
Email: C.Dentlinger@moe.gov.na

Luther Street, Govt. Office Park
P/Bag 13186
WINDHOEK

To: Ms. Alina Amkushu-Niipare
Cell: 0812722825
aniipare@yahoo.com

Dear Ms. Amukushu-Niipare

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SOME SCHOOLS IN KHOMAS, OSHANA AND OHANGWENA REGIONS: "FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE: PREPARING NAMIBIAN STUDENT TEACHERS TO TEACH MOTHER-TONGUE LITERACY".

Your letter dated 16 December 2015 requesting permission to conduct research in education bears reference:

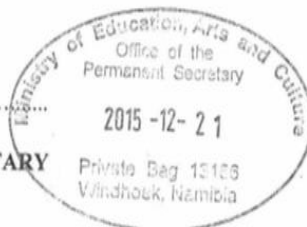
Kindly be informed that permission to conduct research study for your doctorate in schools in Khomas, Oshana and Ohangwena Regions resorting under the Directorate: Education, Arts and Culture is herewith granted. You are further requested to present this letter of approval to the Regional Director and engage with the Inspectors of Education of the selected schools just to ensure that research ethics are adhered to and disruption of curriculum delivery is avoided.

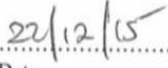
Furthermore, we humbly request you to share your research findings with the Ministry. You may contact Mr. C. Muchila at the Directorate: Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA) for provision of summary of your research findings.

Accompanying this permission are best wishes for your endeavor and that the Ministry is looking forward to the outcome of your research.

Sincerely yours,


Sanet L. Steenkamp
PERMANENT SECRETARY




Date

All official correspondence must be addressed to the Permanent Secretary



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

Appendix H: Consent and Assent: Letter to the Dean of the Faculty of Education

The Dean
Faculty of Education
University of Namibia

10 October 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

I am a doctoral student studying at the University of Pretoria. I hereby wish to apply for permission to conduct research in the Faculty of Education. My research will involve the junior primary lecturers and the student teachers responsible for teaching in **Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama**. The research sites will be the Hifikepunye Pohamba and Khomasdal campuses, and some of the placement schools in Windhoek, Ongwediva and Oshakati where the student teachers will be carrying out their teaching practice.

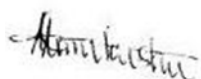
My research topic is: "**From policy to practice: Preparing Namibian student teachers to teach mother-tongue literacy**". The Namibian language policy for schools states that the medium of instruction in the lower grades (1–3) should be in the mother tongue or the first language of the learners. As a result, teacher education institutions in Namibia should ensure that student teachers who graduate are well-trained and prepared to teach in the language used as the medium of instruction in schools. I wish to study teacher education in Namibia in respect of mother tongue teacher training

This research project will use different methods to collect data: semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and a document study. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the lecturers responsible for Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama, as well as twenty student teachers who are being trained to become future mother-tongue teachers. The research project will also involve classroom observations of the lecturers and a document analysis of the course outline, curriculum content, language policy, and other policy documents.

The names of the lecturers and the student teachers, who will take part in this study, as well as the names of the placement schools, will not be revealed in the thesis, or in other academic publications. Pseudonyms will be used. The information provided by the participants will be used for academic purposes only. Participation in this project will be entirely voluntary.

I believe that this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on mother tongue teaching, policies and practice in both teacher education and in schools. All the data collected using public funding may be made available in an open repository for public and scientific use.

Yours sincerely



Alina Niipare

Date: 11 March 2016

Supervisor's signature



Professor KE Weber

Date: 28 October 2015



CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor: Research Innovation and Development

UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA, Private Bag, 13301 Windhoek, Namibia

340 Mandume Ndemufayo Avenue, Pioneers Park, Office D090 ☎ +264-61-2064624 ☐ research@unam.na Fax+264-61-206 4624

24 February, 2016

Dear Ms. Aline Niipare

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA (UNAM)

Your application to conduct research at UNAM entitled : '*From Policy to Practice: Preparing Namibian Teachers to Teach Mother Tongue Literacy*' was evaluated . Permission is hereby granted with the following conditions:

1. During the course of your research activities at UNAM's Hifikepunye Pohamba and Khomasdal Campuses, you will observe the required procedures, norms and ethical conduct in accordance with the relevant Research Policies and Guidelines. If unsure, please consult with the *Centre for Research and Publications* at UNAM for guidance. Any deviations and amendments to the original documents submitted (i.e. research proposal, interview guide, consent forms, etc.) must be submitted again for approval, before the research activities can commence.
2. **The results of the findings will be shared with the PVC: Research Innovation and Development, and the Centre of Research and Publications, before they are disseminated or published in the public domain.**
3. Upon completion, a copy of the Research Report must be lodged with the UNAM Library for our records.
4. Proper, full acknowledgements of the University of Namibia and all participants /respondents shall be done in the Research Report and any subsequent publications arising from this research.
5. If you are agreeable to the above conditions, please sign and date a copy of this letter and return it the Centre for Research and Publications. If you have any queries, do not hesitate to contact the Centre for Research and Publications.

Wishing you all the best with your research!

Yours faithfully

Dr. H.M. Kapenda

I accept and agree to all the conditions



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

Appendix I: Consent and Assent: Letter to the Lecturer

Dear Colleague,

I am a student studying at the University of Pretoria. I am currently enrolled for my PhD in the Faculty of Education. In order to complete my study I am required to conduct research and write a thesis and academic publications on my work. I would like to ask you whether you would be willing to participate in this research.

The topic of my research is: **From policy to practice: Preparing Namibian student teachers to teach mother tongue literacy.** The Namibian language policy for schools states that the medium of instruction in the lower grades (1–3) should be the mother tongue or the first language of the learners. Although some research has been done on this topic overseas, I would like to study teacher education in Namibia regarding mother tongue training.

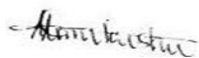
If you agree to participate, you will be interviewed about preparing teachers to teach literacy in **Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama**. The interview will be audio taped and transcribed for analytical purposes. I would also like to observe you while you are teaching **Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama**. With your assistance I would then like to select ten student teachers from the class to observe during their teaching practice. They will receive a separate letter informing them about the research and requesting their participation.

Both your identity and the identity of the students will be protected. Only my supervisor and I will know the real names. Pseudonyms will be used during the data collection and data analysis. Your campus will not be identified and the information you give will be used for academic purposes only. In my thesis and in any other academic publications pseudonyms will be used and no other identifying information will be provided.

I believe that this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on mother tongue teaching, policies and practice in both teacher education and in schools. All the data collected using public funding may be made available in an open repository for public and scientific use.

If you agree to participate in this research, please fill in the consent form provided below. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Alina Niipare

Date: 11 March 2016

Supervisor's signature



Professor KE Weber

Date: 28 October 2015



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

Appendix J : Consent and Assent: Letter to Student Teacher

Dear student teacher

I am a student studying at the University of Pretoria. I am currently enrolled for my PhD in the Faculty of Education. In order to complete my study I am required to conduct research and write a thesis on my work. I would like to ask you whether you would be willing to participate in this research project.

The topic of my research is: **From policy to practice: Preparing Namibian student teachers to teach mother tongue literacy.** The Namibian language policy for schools states that the medium of instruction in the lower grades (1–3) should be the mother tongue or the first language of the learners. I wish to study teacher education in Namibia regarding mother-tongue training.

If you agree to participate, you will be interviewed about this topic and you will be observed teaching in **Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama**. The interview will be audio taped and transcribed for analytical purposes. I would also like to observe you teaching during teaching practice. The learners will not form part of the research although they will be present in the class. Parents/guardians will be sent a separate letter that will inform them about the research and request their permission to allow their children to be in the class.

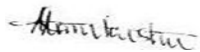
Your identity will be protected. Only my supervisor and I will know your real name. Pseudonyms will be used. In addition, neither your campus nor the school at which you carry

out your teaching practice will be identified. The information you provide will be used for academic purposes only. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary.

I believe that this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on mother tongue teaching, policies and practice in both teacher education and in schools. All the data collected using public funding may be made available in an open repository for public and scientific use.

If you agree to take part in this research, please fill in the consent form provided below. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Alina Niipare

Date: 25 October 2015



Supervisor's signature

Professor KE Weber

Date: 28 October 2015



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

Appendix K: Consent and Assent: Letter to the Teacher

Dear Colleague

I would like to thank you sincerely for allowing me to conduct my research project in your classroom with the student teachers. My research topic is: **“From policy to practice: Preparing Namibian student teachers to teach mother tongue literacy”**. This research project will involve semi-structured interviews and classroom observations with student teachers while they are teaching **Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama**. The information obtained will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be used solely for the purposes of this research. I would like to observe the mother tongue lessons over a period of six weeks. During this time I would also like to peruse the learners’ mother-tongue books, prescribed mother tongue textbooks and any other policy documents that are used in the teaching of **Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama** in the junior primary classrooms.

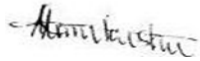
Before commencing with any data collection exercise I will visit you and explain how I will go about the research. Although this project is primarily about student teachers, I shall also request the signed consent of the parents of the learners who will be in the classes I observe and whose books I wish to peruse.

I would like to thank you for assisting me in this research and I hope that the information obtained will be of benefit to you by identifying different strategies and methods for strengthening mother tongue teaching. All the data collected using public funding may be made available in an open repository for public and scientific use.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter as a declaration of your consent, i.e. that you participate in this project willingly and that you understand that you

may withdraw from the research project at any time. Under no circumstances will the identity of the interview participants be made known to any parties/organisations that may be involved in the research process.

Yours sincerely



Alina Niipare

Date: 11 March 2016

Supervisor's signature



Professor KE Weber

Date: 28 October 2015



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

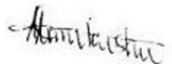
Appendix L: Consent and Assent: Letter to the Principals

Dear Colleagues

I would like to thank you sincerely for volunteering your kind assistance with the research being undertaken at your school. I would like to conduct my project at your school with the student teachers during their teaching practice. **My research topic is: “From policy to practice: Preparing Namibian student teachers to teach mother tongue literacy”**. This research will involve semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and classroom observations of the student teachers. The information obtained will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be used for the purposes of this research only. This study will involve the observation of student teachers while they are teaching **Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama**. I will make audio recordings and take field notes while the student teacher and the learners are busy in class. I would like to observe these mother tongue lessons over a period of about six weeks. During this period, I would also like to peruse the learners’ mother-tongue books, prescribed mother-tongue textbooks, and any other policy documents that are used in the teaching of **Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama** in the junior primary classrooms.

Before commencing with any data collection exercise I will visit to the school and explain the project to you. Although this project is primarily about student teachers, I shall also request the signed consent of the parents of the learners who will be in the classes I observe and whose books I wish to peruse. I hope that the information obtained from this research will be of benefit to you by identifying different strategies and methods for improving mother tongue teaching. All the data collected using public funding may be made available in an open repository for public and scientific use.

Yours sincerely



Alina Niipare

Date: 11 March 2016

Supervisor's signature



Professor KE Weber

Date: 28 October 2015



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

Appendix M: Consent and Assent: Letter to Parents

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to ask you to give consent for your child to participate in my research study which is to be undertaken at the school your child attends. My research topic is: "From policy to practice: Preparing Namibian student teachers to teach mother tongue literacy". This research will entail the observation of your child in the classroom during the teaching of mother tongue lessons and the perusal of his/her writing books.

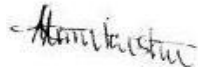
Your child will be part of the class that I will be observing for a period of approximately six weeks. I will not be teaching your child but I will be present in the classroom while the student teacher teaches. I would like to assure you that the information obtained from this study will be treated in the strictest confidence and it will be used for the purposes of this research only. Your name, your child's name, the names of the school and those of any of the teachers will not be revealed. Pseudonyms will be used. The information obtained from this research will be made available to your child's school and may be used by the teacher to help your child become proficient in either **Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama**.

If you do not wish your child to participate in this study, I will make arrangements with the class teacher and the school management for your child to be placed in another class during those periods when I will be observing the student teacher. Your child will not be disadvantaged in any way should you choose not to give your consent.

In conclusion I would like to thank you again most sincerely for your assistance in this research, and I hope that it will make a valuable contribution to helping teachers teach

mother tongue as the medium of instruction in schools. All the data collected using public funding may be made available in an open repository for public and scientific use.

Researcher's signature



Date: 11 March 2016

Supervisor's signature



Professor KE Weber

Date: 28 October 2015

Appendix N: Consent and Assent: Regional Directors



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

KHOMAS REGIONAL COUNCIL

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Tel: [09 264 61] 293 4356

Fax: [09 264 61] 231 367/248 251

Enquiries: Ms AA Steenkamp

Private Bag 13236

WINDHOEK

File No: 12/3/10/1

Ms Alina Amukushu-Niipare


Contact 061 – 223201 or 0812722828

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE SCHOOLS IN KHOMAS REGION

Your request to do research at the schools specifically offering Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga where student teachers are placed in Khomas Region with the aim of improving mother tongue teaching is approved on condition that:

- The Principals of the school to be visited must be contacted before the visit and agreement should be reached between you and the principal.
- School programmes should not be interrupted
- Teachers who will take part in the study should do so voluntarily
- Khomas Education Directorate must be informed of the outcome/results of the study

Yours sincerely


Ms Angeline A Steenkamp
ACTING DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE
2016

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
ARTS AND CULTURE
PRIVATE BAG 13236 WINDHOEK
DIRECTOR
KHOMAS REGION



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



OSHANA REGIONAL COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE
Aspiring to Excellence in Education for All

Tel: 065-230057
Fax: 065 - 230035
E-mail: otrc_physical_science@yahoo.co.uk
Enquiries: Maria Udjombala
Ref 12/2/1

Private Bag 5518
Oshakati, NAMIBIA

2 March 2016

To: Mrs Alina Amukushu-Niipare
081 2722828

Dear Mrs Amukushu-Niipare

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SCHOOLS IN OSHANA REGION: "FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE: PREPARING NAMIBIAN STUDENT TEACHERS TO TEACH MOTHER-TONGUE LITERACY".


Your correspondence dated 16 December 2015 regarding the above mentioned subject bears reference.

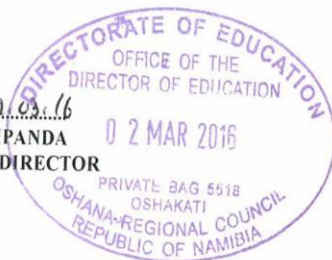
The Office of the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has granted you permission to conduct research study for your doctorate at schools in Oshana Region.

However, please kindly take note that the research activities should not interfere with the normal programmes of the schools and the participation should be on a voluntary basis. Please present this letter to the principals of the listed schools.

We wish you the best of luck with your research and hoping that your findings will be shared with other stakeholders in the Region and beyond.

Yours Sincerely


MR IMMANUEL S. AIPANDA
ACTING REGIONAL DIRECTOR



Appendix O: Lecturers classroom observation dates and times

	Name	Skill	Date	Time	Gender
1	Nadia	pre-reading and phonological awareness	March 07,2016	7h30 - 930	F
2	Nadia	Pre-writing activities	March 08, 2016	7h30 – 9h30	F
3	Nadia	Process of writing	Sept 13, 2016	9h00 – 10h00	F
4	Nadia	Practical activity	Sept 13, 2016	14h00 -13h00	F
5	Grace	Listening	April 05, 2016	7h30 – 8h30	F
6	Saara	Reading	April 05, 2016	8h30 – 9h30	F
7	Grace	Practical lesson	April 05, 2016	14h00 – 15h00	F
8	Saara	Practical lesson	April 05, 2016	15h00 -14h00	F
9	Maria	Using school syllabus to plan a lesson	April 06, 2016	10h00 -12h00	F
9	Grace	Reading	April 07, 2016	7h30 - 9h30	F
10	Grace	Teaching using songs	April 12, 2016	10h00 -12h00	F
11	Saara	Reading	April 12, 2016	12h00 -13h00	F
12	Maria	Reading & writing	April 13, 2016	9h00 - 11h00	F

Appendix O:: Student teachers observation dates and times

	Name	Skill	Date	Time	Gender
1	Maggy	R & W	Monday, March 01, 2016	7h10-8h30	F
2	Agness	W	Monday, March 01, 2016	8h30-9h10	F
3	Maggy	R	Tuesday, March 02, 2016	7h10-7h50	F
4	Agnes	R& W	Tuesday, March 02, 2016	7h50-9h10	F
5	Lemphie	R	Tuesday, March 02, 2016	9h50-10h30	F
6	Leana	R	Tuesday, March 02, 2016	11h10-11h40	F
7	Kiito	R & W	Tuesday, March 02, 2016	2h00-3h10	F
8	Maggy	L	Wednesday, March 03, 2016	7h10-7h50	F
9	Agnes	L	Wednesday, March 03, 2016	7h50-830	F
10	Lemphie	R & W	Wednesday, March 03, 2016	8h30-9h50	F
11	Leena	R & W	Wednesday, March 03, 2016	9h50-10h30	F
12	Kiito	S	Wednesday, March 03, 2016	2h00-2h40	F
13	Lemphie	R	Thursday, March 04, 2016	7h10-7h40	F
14	Leena	S	Thursday, March 04, 2016	7h40-8h10	F
15	Fennie	L&S	Wednesday, March16, 2016	7h10-8h30	F
16	Fennie	R & W	Thursday, March 17, 2016	7h10-8h30	F
17	Linekela	L	Thursday, March 17, 2016	9h30-10h30	F
18	Eunice	R	Thursday, March 17, 2016	11h10-12h30	F
19	Linekela	L & R	Friday, March 18, 2016	7h10-8h30	F
20	Eunice	L	Friday, March 18, 2016	8h30-9h40	F
21	Oletu	L & W	Thursday, March 31, 2016	7h10-8h30	F
22	Jo	S & W	Thursday, March 31, 2016	8h30-9h40	F
23	Oletu	R	Friday, April 01, 2016	7h10-8h30	F
24	Jo	S	Thursday, April 07, 2017	8h30-940	F

L – Listening S – Speaking R – Reading W - Writing

ANNEXUTURE

Annexure 1: A sample of lecturers transcripts

Interview with Lecture: Nadia

Done by Ms. Allina Niipare

Interviewer: Good morning Nadia, how are you

Interviewee: Good morning, I'm fine thank you, how are you?

Interviewer: Fine thank you, welcome to our interview we have already done the classroom observation this is actually another way of collecting data, it might be that during our observation I could not capture everything, but it might happen that during the interview something's will be clearer. Thank you very much and you are a lecturer for Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama

Interviewee: That's right.

Interviewer: And I would like to learn more about the challenges you are facing handling two languages at the same time.

Interviewee: The challenges there are really there the fact that actually you have to teach two languages at the same time to students who comes from two language groups and it is really a challenge, although our languages are conversant, we understand each other, the challenge is more on the students' side not so much on me as a lecturer. When I try to teach, I normally switch from one language to the other and being Oshikwanyama speaking by birth it is natural that I will most probably speak more in my dialect than in Oshindonga, but I think I try by all means also to speak in Oshindonga, which I think my Oshikwanyama students picked up, like "Ms. are you more catering for the Oshindonga than for us". So sometimes, it's just that kind of balance that I struggle to deal with, but I must say that it interferes just a little bit with their own speaking not so much with their understanding; they understand whether I am speaking Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama, I think it kind of confuses them in their writing, when they write I see that they are mixing languages and that is not good from a language point of view because for me you either write one language straight forward or the other. On my side like I said it is not so much a challenge it is mostly a challenge when I have to prepare notes, because I have to make sure that I expose them to notes in both languages, I cannot always do it, but I try to do it as much as I can. So if I have notes for sounds or the sound system then I will have notes in Oshikwanyama and I will translate them in Oshindonga, so that when I put on the portal I cater for all the students.

Interviewer: Ok, I was more curious as that's not part of the interview questions, but I am more curious on how do you handle this and you are now a junior primary lecturer, have you been a junior primary lecturer before?

Interviewee: Actually no, do you mean my training or experience?

Interviewer: Your qualifications and experience.

Interviewee: That is actually an area that I've never been trained for. I studied for a senior secondary diploma first than a degree later, and my first years of teaching were at junior secondary level, the first four years junior secondary and then the next four years at senior secondary and then after that I came to teach at the teachers' college which was at training for primary students, but it was also upper primary.

Interviewer: Now when you say you were trained for junior secondary, were you to teach at languages?

Interviewee: Yes, I was trained as an English teacher I was actually trained a senior secondary, but I had the opportunity to teach at both phases. When I came, I came the junior primary phase after the college merged with the university, there was some reshuffling here and there, and of course there was shortages and new programmes the early childhood programme was one of those programmes and some of us were then filtered there and in the beginning I looked clueless in the beginning, because I never had experience to teach young children neither was I trained for that.

Interviewer: Ok, for how long have you been a junior primary lecturer now?

Interviewee: It must be five and a half years now, because I started in 2011.

Interviewer: I think that you have touched a bit on what have been your most memorable experience of being a junior primary lecturer.

Interviewee: Most memorable experience, many experiences I must say and every day I think I have a new experience not necessarily that I, it is distinct that I can point it out, but I think ever since when I came to the junior primary phase although I appeared clueless at first I realized I was in the most important phase and I was so excited and I think that is what kept me here. I was so enthusiastic and excited although I didn't know much about it, I had the drive and it was eye opening just to see that my goodness this is the most important phase that one has to make a difference so I must say my experiences in the classroom telling stories, making stories with the students, singing in the classroom, teaching through songs you know and rhymes so those are some of my memorable experiences.

Interviewer: Now you say you didn't have experience of junior primary, have you gone on any training?

Interviewee: Yes, we went through various capacity building experiences not courses per say, but I would say attending workshops, trainings and think the first thing that we did actually was when, because we joined some of the people who are in that department have been there before like our HOD, she really took us by the hand and the first thing she did was to and the others also who had experience of lower primary and so on, was to give us kind of a crash course in a form of a one day workshop or information sharing, what is lower primary teaching all about, what is the philosophy of teaching young children teaching through songs and handwriting those kind of nitty gritty of teaching children. So we had a lot of that among ourselves, sharing between those who had experience before and those of us and I think also the other thing that also really strengthened me was co-teaching, because

we started co-teaching, yes so the lecturers who had experience of lower primary before had to co-teach with us and we learned so much, I learned so much from that.

Interviewer: Why I posed this question is because yourself, Maria and Grace, you almost have the same experience that during the observation it seems as if you are trained to teach junior primary. You know at school we are having the language policy that is guiding us, how about your understanding about it?

Interviewee: Ok, my understanding is that children have to be taught in the mother tongue in their first years of school and that is also what our country proposes since independence; my understanding is really that it is the most important or it's the right thing to do that a person has to be taught, has to be introduced to education in the language they are most comfortable with and that is their mother tongue and I have a strong believe in that, because I have read about the subject and I have also attended a lot of conferences or deliberations on the language policy and which one is the best language and I know that or I believe in African reading they say that it has also a connection with cognitive transfer the way the child thinks and the way their thoughts are translated in the mind and also what they are learning at that time so it has a lot of impact on that, it also has a lot of impact on learning itself understanding participation in class and so on and I actually try also, it's one of our topics also in our modules to make them understand the importance of the mother tongue, but like many people in our country our students are not so always convinced about that, because they want you to provide evidence for them and they are telling you about the children who have never been taught in the mother tongue but they still pass school, so they are talking about these single cases that they have seen at home and so on. So they are not so convinced and I realize that we have a big challenge in terms of understanding, because I think that is, understanding the importance is the first thing we have to do and that is what we are trying to instill in the students, because the students are the future parents also. We must have that understanding to choose wisely when they send children to different schools.

Interviewer: Ok, now we talked about the language policy and how important it is. How is this language policy integrated into the teacher education curriculum? Maybe you can deliberate on it, because you mentioned that it is one of the topics.

Interviewee: Yes, we put it in our modules. In most of our modules I think from the first year we have a topic on the importance of the mother tongue. And throughout the years we tough on it and we also integrate it in our teaching, because in our programme we have kind of a bilingual programme that means that the student has to take a mother tongue and English. So it's compulsory that each and every student will be doing a mother tongue at the university in our programme. And this means that we teach them in the mother tongue as well. We teach them in the mother tongue, all the concepts and topics we discuss it in the mother tongue, I teach in the mother tongue, I give notes in the mother tongue, they respond in the mother tongue, we tell stories in the mother tongue, we read books in the mother tongue and also when they go for school based studies they are expected to teach in the mother tongue also the shorts comings is when it comes to the other subjects, because when I say we teach in the mother tongue it's mostly just me who is teaching Oshindonga or my colleague who is teaching Khoekhoegowab or Otjiherero, but other subjects like numeracy, environmental education, religious and moral education we are challenged there, because we teach those subjects in English, because the lecturers that are teaching them are not necessarily or let me just say that we have a shortcoming there, that we might have

for example environmental studies the lecturer might not be a Oshiwambo speaker or Otjiherero speaker and so on. In that case we are challenged and our students complain a lot about that, because they want to be taught in environmental studies in Oshiwambo or Otjiherero or numeracy in Otjiherero and so on. And that is the most ideal way, but it's a little bit complexed if you look at it you will have I think to segregate people to say ok all Oshiwambo speakers maybe go to the campus where we will have teachers who will only be speaking that language. So that is the complexity that we don't really know how to address, but we try to address it by letting them also like in Oshiwambo lessons we have some micro presentations where I expect them to present an environmental education lesson in Oshiwambo or a maths lesson in Oshiwambo or something like that just to make sure that they can articulate themselves in mathematical concepts in Oshiwambo and also just to add to that in one of our modules also we have I think in the second year we have an ELO an objective a learning outcome that where we have to teach the vocabulary of the different lower primary subjects in the mother tongues for example I have to teach all the words the Mathematics concepts to them in Oshiwambo as vocabulary and all the Enviromental Studies concepts yes so that they have to know that ok shapes in Oshiwambo, omalupe ombine onkuvundatu (triangle) number concepts in Oshiwambo.

Interviewer: And you said you are teaching them during the vocabulary.

Interviewee: I teach them during Oshindonga we have a learning outcome a specific learning outcome that says we must teach them vocabulary of mathematics in Oshiwambo or vocabulary of environmental studies in Oshiwambo just as a learning outcome so we cover that and we also let them at least present one lesson per year in maths in Oshiwambo or like that.

Interviewer: Ok, now this is not her what I have observed you have a practical period and in the prospectors there is actually this practical is not appearing only the micro teaching, so I wanted to see or maybe learn more about the practical, but what I can find is only the micro teaching.

Interviewee: There is actually a practical period for example every subject per week I have two theory lessons in one practical lesson every week. What happens is that mostly, sometimes maybe it is integrated but other times I try for example to have the theory classes first the first two days in the week and then the last week we do the practical, what they do in the practical for example would be I think that lesson you observed was a practical. Where they had to read out their written pieces or sometimes a practical would be a story telling session or it would be a phonic session where we have to learn phonics or handwriting on the chalkboard so that is, or sometimes we will be maybe doing songs they will be maybe doing songs and rhymes in groups coming up with songs about the letters of the alphabet something like that.

Interviewer: You have mentioned about the advantages of learners learning in mother tongue, any disadvantages?

Interviewee: Any disadvantages of learning in the mother tongue, I can't think of any because when you learn in the mother tongue really especially in the first years it kind of connects and like they say it builds up the foundation even for other things like the second language for you to acquire the second language even helps with numeracy acquisition and also with reading acquisition if you are good in the mother tongue and that also links with the

research finding that those children who's oral language is good in their mother tongue is has benefits for reading acquisition as well so I have to think of disadvantages I can't think of any.

Interviewer: Ok, did I get you well you say you tend to teach in English language not the mother tongue.

Interviewee: That's right; I was trained to do that.

Interviewer: What are the actual literacy skills do you teach.

Interviewee: We teach all skills, we teach listening and speaking, reading and writing and then the grammar as well and actually that forms up our modules, because in the first year our first year modules is a half semester course it's kind of on grammar, basic grammar which also starts with sounds, the sound system in the mother tongue and then where you have to learn about sounds phonetic and also morphology in that module the later it come to the language part of spelling, spelling rules and also lesson presentations later on and then in the second year we focus on listening and speaking where we really emphasize on story telling when it comes to listening we emphasize on storytelling and songs and rhymes and when it comes to speaking we emphasize on developing oral skills in young children dialogic teaching how do you teach dialogically to develop children's skills in dialog doing dialog we use a lot of puppet also in teaching them speaking skills and of course lesson presentations where they have to do a speaking lesson in the third year we emphasize on reading and writing which we might do a bit separately and also integrate where we talk about the theories of reading hence the reading strategies and also how to teach reading skills to the children and then when it comes to writing we also talk about a lot on the stages of writing development the different writing texts or genres of writing descriptive narrative and so on and how to teach those skills lesson presentation and so on so those are the skills, we try overall actually and in the fourth year is when we look at sentence analysis its most centered in the fourth year.

Interviewer: Ok, I have also noticed that the course is divided into modules per year and having school experience that whereby a teacher is teaching in a week touching all these skills together so how do a student cope, let's say when they go for SPS and they will be second year students and that time reading is not yet done.

Interviewee: Yes that is a good point you are raising, but from the beginning of the year we introduce them already to integration of skills when we introduce the lesson plan to them we introduce to them that language skills are taught in integration not in isolation and we tough a little bit already in the first year there is something about reading, acquisition of reading or the link between reading and oral skills and literacy there is a chapter already on literacy in the first year just as an introduction. Yes not really how to teach, but already in the first year we have started with phonics with sounds so they can already teach something on reading like phonics they just don't yet have the theoretical and the strategies we might also have to look at that when we revise so that maybe we just have an integrated something from the first year up to the fourth year, because that is a valid point that you have talked about.

Interviewer: I was also looking at it and said maybe in the first year they have this portion of listening a portion of writing and reading.

Interviewee: It is possible, but I think at university you want to give them in depth theory about each skill and things like that so sometimes, but it is something that I have also thought about.

Interviewer: Ok I think we have covered most of the points in one, but what is remaining is what strategies you use to teach listening, speaking and writing.

Interviewee: Ok with listening mostly we expose them to strategies such as a TPR (total physical response) we introduce them to, when we try to introduce them to strategies for early, for young children, when you are teaching young children language and TPR is one of the, ok it is a second language strategy but we also try to introduce them to it because that is when you give instructions and the children have to respond by with the body or whatever; sit down, stand up or turn around things like that, but mostly the strategy that we use mostly is really storytelling and listening as storytelling and singing because that is the heart of listening at that age to pre-primary and lower primary so we, that is what I demonstrate to them telling stories and really just telling them how to do it. Putting them in front on the mat in the lecture hall and showing them how to read a story with the right voices and intonation and prosody and so on and then we also use songs and rhymes we also use that a lot and sometimes in the second year I ask them to record rhymes when they go in the classrooms for SBS. It is a task they have to come up with five rhymes or five songs something like that.

When it comes to speaking we use mostly dialog we try to dialog and try to do pairs you know putting them in pairs and using that and also in groups we use puppets a lot in speaking in a speaking lesson and then when it comes to reading we use a lot of strategies such as shared reading mostly we do that with the big book where I show them how to do shared reading in the big book where they have to come around and we read together, the teacher read the students reads and so on and focus on certain phonics and then also guided reading where they have to be in groups let's say, because guided reading can be done, can be arranged in different ways where maybe you have children according to abilities of reading then you help them or you mix them up those who can read and those who cannot read so I just tried to demonstrate that to them, because they can read already although yes we have also to do a lot of reading aloud, because actually they cannot read properly the students themselves so in the practical sometimes like in the first year we had a reading aloud and I have a rubric to giving marks whether the voice and intonation is fine are they using punctuation correctly are they reading with interpretation with emotion you know those type of things and in writing we normally use the same strategies as in reading because we are also use shared writing I can maybe have pictures just put them in order not in order, but I just put them there arrange them there and then everyone has to write something a sentence by the picture we all have to write something about the picture and in the end we have a written piece so it's all shared writing or guided writing where they have to be in groups and one have to help them with their writing and then also a strategy that we use also a lot is KWL it's what I know what I want to know KWL and what I have learned and we use that mostly with reading comprehension when we want to practice reading comprehension skills or strategies. Before they read a certain passage or story maybe we just take a topic if it's about mice maybe topics about mice or rats whatever then we first have to talk about rats what do I know about rats, it's small it stays in the kitchen and it is a mammal I think so and it has small eyes whatever they know about it just before we even read the text and the teacher notes down what the children already know about the topic of reading and then they also discuss with the teacher, the teacher asks what do you want to know about the rats or the mice. Oh no I want to know how many, what does it eat, I want to

know how many babies does it have as yet, I want to know how long does it live things like that and then we jot down what they want to know and then we read the story or the text and then later we have now what I have learned then we fill in that, it's like a table. Then we fill in what they have learned some of the things would have been what they know already or what they wanted to know some information would be new information that they did not even think about or didn't know so in the end really when you look at that strategy you will not even have to ask comprehension questions, because the topic is already dealt with the children were able to connect what they know to what they want to know and what they have to learn.

Interviewer: Is it maybe also had to do with language experience approach.

Interviewee: Exactly, exactly it also has to do with the language experience approach, because that is when you ask the children to talk about something that they know already and then you write about it and then it becomes the topic of writing or whatever so when they read it, it actually came from them from their experience yes.

Interviewer: Ok now what do you think is the best strategy for teaching literacy?

Interviewee: The best strategy for literacy is...

Interviewer: Because this is going to be your sixth year training teachers really find out this one, and when you go for SPS oh I taught this, but is this really working.

Interviewee: Actually for Oshiwambo that is Oshikwanyama or Oshindonga and for most Bantu languages as they say in theory I also learned in practice that the phonic method the one, because actually reading strategies depend on the structure of the language, because our language if you look at the structure of Oshikwanyama or Oshindonga it's actually a bottom up language where you start with the small chunks like the single sounds, the a, p, t and so on and you put the consonant and the vowel and you make a syllable as in ta or me and then you put the syllables together and they become tate and meme and then you have a word and then you put the words together and you have a sentence and so on. Our languages are really not complex at all the way I have, because my research is also partly on that, I'm also looking for the best reading model for Oshikwanyama, which will automatically also be most valid for Oshindonga I realize that there is not any new strategy that we can try to come up with in our languages, because it has to do with the structure of our language. The English language here is they have to do a lot of things there, because languages operant is not transparent and they don't necessarily have to start with the phonics they might have to start with the rhyme ends and so on, but we just have to start with the phonics, with the single phonics put them and make up syllables and make words and like that and of course and reach that with a lot of storytelling, songs and oral.

Interviewer: Why I ask this question is because in literature they are debating about the strategies of teaching reading some are saying phonics, but learners have to read what, I mean what they say what they know or whatever, while this phonics they say no it has to be learned if I say this sound a you have to know it you have to see this is a. Yes what you say is also really valid, because they are debating on the perspective of what they know there.

Interviewee: Maybe they are talking about the English language, because that is really what confuses. A lot of debates is about the English language and that is the confusion that

sometimes we try to copy the strategies of the English language forgetting that these two languages are different in structure their approaches of cannot be the same, their approaches of teaching cannot be the same you have to look at what strategies is compatible with what language.

Interviewer: Ok what do I have here, do you experience any challenge teaching literacy in general?

Interviewee: Yes a lot, I think literacy is not easy to teach, because you just really every, and I realize the most difficult module for me to teach is still the reading module and it's especially the reading component. The writing component I think is quite easy for me, but the reading component every year I sit down and say goodness me what should I do differently this year about this module and a realize that every year is just a challenge, I don't know whether it's in the head that it is difficult to teach it and students sometimes you think that you have really started explaining first the of theories of reading how different people believe about how reading is acquired and things you have given that understanding thoroughly and then you come now to the strategies of teaching reading and you discuss it in class and you let the students, you demonstrate a little bit and let them also demonstrate the reading strategies. But the students will still give you that impression that they don't know how to do it and as a lecturer you are always reflecting, what is the best way to make this simple to the students. So it's like always we are swimming every year trying to although we seem to know that this is the way. It's just phonics we just need to know the right sounds the right phonics how they are represented in writing and how to put, to decode to start with decoding skills you know if there is a word here how does the child decode the letters and recognise and for the mind to recognise that this sound is a, t and this is e and so the word is tate and so on. And then also how to train automaticity, but it is a lot I understand it is a lot of it's a complex thing that we have to, yes. So what I actually want to do and I always say I must do it I want to kind of maybe compile a kit like a reading kit for my students from the sequence of what they must know first and second, yes something like that but I never got to do it.

Interviewer: I wanted to come in when you mentioned that every year is a challenge and you felt you have done the best and yet students are complaining, is it not hard to do with maybe the timing cause during my observation I found out that the time you are having is too short and you know anyone myself, yourself the students can learn when they are learning by doing, so if you are having for example time enough so you can allow them also to sit with others sometimes students these are just like learners in the class sometimes one would not get anything from what you say. But I realize you are lesson one you are catering for year one, year two, year three, year four the time also its really and the classes also too big. So like in Ongwediva classes are too big there will be a group of people talking there making noise.

Interviewee: Yes we have so many challenges and sometimes I think maybe we have maybe too much content I think that is another thing we want to teach them everything instead of letting them maybe discover.

Interviewer: You are having a huge responsibility of conveying this theory, the theory because if it at least could be practiced a lot. You are having too many things this has to do with time. I think we have covered most of the things. What I wanted to, maybe the last one

which is on the programme, do you have any programme here in the college that you are following like a literacy programme like previously we had Molteno.

Interviewee: Maybe I can just say that we focus on phonics. I can't say it's a problem, but we just really strive to focus on phonics, because that is what we do in the schools. But we try to focus on the two aspects of phonics the letter sounds and the letter names, because we realize that there is a gap the children in the schools don't know the letter names anymore they just know the sounds we try to do that.

Interviewer: Because you know in the syllabus there is a debate actually, but in the syllabus we say letter names and sounds letter sounds and now they say no letter names cannot actually let learners read.

Interviewee: They can actually, because they say it helps with spelling.

Interviewer: Ok now being a junior primary lecturer and having that world experience do you actually have materials that support your content delivery.

Interviewee: That is our biggest challenge actually I should have mentioned in the beginning, when it comes to content delivery because we are now teaching at the academic level let's say we are teaching about co-switching we are talking about multi-grade teaching or we are talking about, ok the sound system we have a book, we have grammar book which also covers the sound system we rely on that a lot and sentences analysis, but pure academic knowledge about Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga language how it is acquired.

Interviewer: Sometimes you present a can I say theory or a concept or an idea and now you say ok fine in groups go to the library or go and prepare a reading lesson for example so this student may know, may want to find a book in our mother tongue where they can see any strategies just to guide them.

Interviewee: They will not find it so that is our challenge, they will not find that book they will have to rely on the English books that are talking about strategies and now they have to kind of translate things like that and things are not always compatible like that from one language to another. So that is really our biggest challenge and that is I think that gap that we as academicians have to look into. Writing academic books in the mother tongues or researches done in the mother tongue, writing in Oshikwanyama or Oshindonga.

Interviewer: Now when you prepare your notes they have to be in the mother tongue Oshindonga, Oshikwanyama

Interviewee: That's right.

Interviewer: How do you manage, translate yourself?

Interviewee: You translate yourself, yes sometimes you try to get information from English if it's really relevant and then you translate, but other times really you cannot even go to the internet you just have to sit down or maybe you get an Oshiwambo book like that, grammar Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga and then you try to compile some notes if you are teaching about figures of speech for example than you can compile some notes like that.

Interviewer: Ok I think we have come to the end of our interview, do you have comment?

Interviewee: The other thing that I have maybe just left out is concepts of song that is also one of our challenges, academic concepts when we are teaching. When I have to say for example effective learning if I am teaching them or if I am talking about if I say for example or evaluation or let me say go to a research concept and say maybe hypothesis or I am saying now maybe even any academic concept really we struggle with that, even then with the concepts that are in our phase like lower primary phase if I have to talk about a mathematical concept maybe capacity and so on, but the syllabus has now there are concepts in the syllabus you will find some words there, but everyday teaching academic concepts is a big problem we have been trying and I am hoping we can finish this book, this big book at the end of the year. Trying to collect concepts in English and put them in Oshiwambo so that we maybe make it available for our students. But it is just the timing factor, the timing is really not there but I am hoping, because we've been collecting since our programme started and it's now five and a half years so we must actually have the concept from the first year to the fourth year. So it is actually our main challenge again otherwise what I can also say is that we are really happy to be teaching our mother tongue we are enjoying it, it is really fun I didn't know that it is really fun to teach the mother tongue and it's so rich because the students are so very free to express themselves it's not like when you are teaching them in English there is a big difference.

Interviewer: I remember a follow up question on micro teaching and practical, because I did not attend one of the micro teachings as I am writing now I really need.

Interviewee: Actually I have some videos where the students did some micro teaching I think I have the second year videos and the fourth year videos they also were presenting something, the third year I did not take videos, but they also did the micro teaching

Interviewer: I attended the practical lessons and the micro teaching, maybe we can conclude and I have to thank you maybe you can observe that I did not follow the sequence of my questions and you have really clarified my....

Annexure 2: A sample of student teachers semi-structured interview

Student Teachers Interview: Mensia

Interviewer: Good morning Kula, how are you?

Interviewee: I am very well, how are you ma'am?

Interviewer: Fine Thank you. So you are a fourth year student?

Interviewee: I am a fourth year student.

Interviewer: Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama?

Interviewee: Actually, I am doing Oshidonga but my home language is Oshikwamyama.

Interviewer: Ok, now welcome to the interview and in the first place I would like to thank you for making time for this, I know it is really challenging for you to accommodate it in your program but I thank you. I want you to be free and where you don't understand feel free to ask.

Interviewee: I will do so.

Interviewer: This is actually not a formal thing this is a kind of a informal interview, you know I have conducted already the classroom observation with some fourth year students but what I want here now is a kind of conducting this interview in a form of triangulation meaning it might be that during the observation I didn't capture some of the information and during the interview I think it will come out clearer.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: Welcome once again, so have you been a teacher before?

Interviewee: Actually I did relief teaching before but it was not a paid teaching thing.

Interviewer: Okay now you are becoming a junior primary teacher, only a few months for your graduation?

Interviewee: Yes (laughs)

Interviewer: What are your experiences of becoming a junior primary teacher?

Interviewee: Actually the experience that I have is that, it is not easy working with children and you learn through practice. It is like the more you teach, it's like you are becoming better and it is like there is no body behind who helps you. Like okay you need help, you are struggling with this; I will help you here unless you ask? But if you are just in your own classroom it's like you are on your own. Then you have to keep knocking on other peoples doors that is the experience that I had.

Interviewer: Okay, which language do your lecturers use when they are preparing you to become a teacher?

Interviewee: Actually, unfortunately most lectures are taught in English, they are using English as a medium of instruction except for the mother tongue, the mother tongue that is the only time that we get to speak our own languages, ja that is the only time. But the rest is in English even if it's mathematics but we are expected to teach in our mother tongue.

Interviewer: Okay what do you know about the language policy for schools?

Interviewee: what I know about the language policy is just that the medium of instruction must be of the child's own native language. If the child is Oshiwambo he needs to be taught in Oshiwambo like in Oshidonga, Oshikwanyama and so on. And you have to teach everything in that language except English. The English lesson is the only lesson that is not taught in mother tongue.

Interviewer: Ok but now you said some of the lectures are training you in English; they are using English like in environmental studies, Mathematics I mean they use English. How do you cope? Like you are from SBS now, how do you cope when you go to the school where mother tongue is dominant?

Interviewee: Yes, let me say I haven't really cope well because actually I am born here where I am so used to English and so on. And going to the schools you have to struggle to put English terms in your native language. Meaning you use so much time to translate. You might know a concept in English but putting it in your mother tongue is very difficult especially even giving instruction, is very tough because sometime you think okay the way I am giving my instruction now is clear but you will find that the learners are maybe just quite, they don't understand what you are trying to say. You are thinking that the concept that you are using is correct but it's not. Because the language structures the way you translated is like upside down. The language structure is not straight and learners do not understand what you are trying saying.

Interviewer: Okay now you have elaborated more on what the language policy for schools says. Do you think your lecturers support the language policy for schools when they prepare you?

Interviewee: Yes, they do but they just don't implement it. If I was maybe to change the way they are preparing student teachers, I maybe have it like all the students need to be trained in their mother tongue because that is the only way students can capture the concepts of their own mother tongue especially when it comes to Mathematics and Environmental. Some of those concepts are easy in English but in mother tongue is very difficult to get a concept that really means what the other concept in English says. It's not easy.

Interviewer: Okay do you think you are well prepared to implement the language policy for schools?

Interviewee: I would say, am I a bit not really, I haven't mastered my native language so far because I was never taught in my mother tongue, I was taught in Afrikaans. Coming to the university, I realized I want to teach in my mother tongue meaning. I have captured quite a few but I am not ready. I think as times goes on and with practice I will be more readily but not at this moment.

Interviewer: What have you been taught in preparation for teaching literacy, by this I mean what have you been taught to teach listening, reading, writing or speaking?

Interviewee: Oh we did quite a few things, quite a lot not a few because when we were training in our fourth year period we were doing all those things in mother tongue lets say in the first year we were more on grammar and how to construct sentences like how to and so on. And then in the second year we talked about listening and speaking how we can stimulate learners to listen, how do we stimulate them to talk, how can we engage learners to talk to each other, how can they put their oral language into writing and so on. And then in our third year we looked at reading and writing, meaning from speaking, we went to reading and writing and this year again we looked at actually this year was more of a revision how we integrate all of them, let's say how we balance literacy. How can we incorporate all those things so that it can form one? And so that we can enhance the learning of the child

Interviewer: And what strategy do your lecturers use when they are teaching literacy skills?

Interviewee: Actually most of the strategy that I can remember is just presentations are very much strong. It just really coming out strong for me, presentation skills is very important to them and group work meaning, you have to work in groups where you discuss, and you elaborate and so on. And you have to present it back to the class and that can also enhance the literacy skills because you speak and they also listen to the audience. I see that is actually a good way to train teachers to be open and to be presentable. When you come there as a teacher you don't have to look okay is somebody is coming or I cannot say this you just do it. Which is really good?

Interviewer: Okay you say more about the presentation, they were more on presentation, what are you referring to?

Interviewee: I am referring to like most of presentation; the lecturers themselves are presenters, meaning they want to cultivate that culture of presentation in students, meaning most of their things are presentation based. The lecturers gave a topic, if I have to narrow it down, they first give a topic and then learners/ students have to prepare power points, they come in groups, they discuss first, and create a power point. In that power point there must be introduction, a presentation, and then a conclusion. In most cases because it's a group activity, it is not just one person saying everything, it's a group thing. Meaning one student will start the introduction, the other one will continue and then, the other student will make a conclusion. When they talk about presentation they want more ICT because they also want it to come out strong. We know now we are moving to a world of technology and in our school technology is very rare. So when it comes to presentation, lecturers want to see those components and the body language as well. I cannot just stand and present as if I am a stick, I need to be moving around and make eye contact.

Interviewer: Okay and what methods of teaching literacy do your lecturers use?

Interviewee: Of teaching literacy?

Interviewer: Yes. What methods do they use to teach for example reading?

Interviewee: Okay reading, actually we didn't do a lot of practical things. It was more theoretical like we did more on what does this theory say about reading? How do learners develop reading? How can we help them master reading? We did a lot in Oshindonga. We read stories and we have to present back to the class what was the story all about or look at the characters and so on. In English language actually this year we didn't a lot of practical work, we were given topics, we search in the net on what other people are saying about reading, we goggle things. Actually it was like the other part was more theoretical, while here we read a few books. I think last year we had to collect some books brought to class and we read them out so that by the end as teachers, we need to know how to read story books to children. So that children would imitate what you read to them and they can apply to their own real life. It must also give opportunity for learners to stimulate them to like reading

Interviewer: Okay, now let's say, when you have your class let us take grade 1, how do you start teaching reading for example, did they show you, how you should start or what methods do you use to teach this young ones how to read?

Interviewee: I remember in the first year, when we were doing those methodologies things, phonetics, I didn't know that those are the basics foundations for teaching reading but as times goes by as we were building the content on top of each other, I realized that when you teach a grade 1 child to read, you first have to start with the vowel sounds, and then you teach phonics like the sounds the letter and later on blending, until you come to the methodology where you put together few words, a few sounds to make a meaningful sound and then now you move to semantics. Learners can put the words together to form words like see/sea at lease they know it's a (making sounds) to understand. From there we move to segmentation were we put those words together to form a sentence. After that for them to understand they need to have developed the pragmatics. If they don't know and understand pragmatics because they will not know what it is all about, they might put sounds together but they might not understand what is going on.

Interviewer: Okay, in your view did you learn enough that can make you teach literacy in Oshindonga better?

Interviewee: I cannot really say because I know being a teacher is just like you don't have enough, there is nothing like enough, is like each year that you teach you learn something new and every time you teach and every time you interact with others colleagues you learn something new. So, I think for now it sufficient because I know the basics and when I go out there, I will just add on to the basics and expand it because the more I listen, the more I am in my class, the more I reflect and I pick up a lot of things that I didn't know before. There is no teacher that knows everything and education system is not reliable but demanding, it's changing, and it's continuously changing so you cannot say now I know everything.

Interviewer: Okay, what are the main elements of good mother tongue lesson?

Interviewee: The main elements of a good mother tongue lesson are where let us say vocabulary, the learners must learn a few vocabulary, and they must understand the language structure. It must be rich and not just translated version from the other languages and so on. And they must also have the basics like the writing where the learners to write a lot. And they must be able to listen and respond, they must be able to speak and they must also be able to communicate, be able to read and view things. They must read when the teacher asks them to, but it must be indirect reading like incidental reading and they must also learn incidental things not just reading. They must be able to think ahead to predict

things. When I teach I say grandmother they can also say grandfather because they know this two if it's a man it's a grandfather and if it's a woman it's a grandmother. They must be able to link content with their concept. Where they are coming from other knowledge is also important because they must be able to take what they already know to the classroom and add on what they are about to know.

Interviewer: Okay, what challenges do you foresee in teaching literacy in mother tongue?

Interviewee: The challenge is just that, the training is actually in English. There is gap because the language at the university is very down and in the schools the language is very up. The native language is very above, you understand. Meaning it's not actually enough to say that the language policy will be implemented correctly. Because the training itself was not in the mother tongue. Which will also make it difficult for the teachers to apply it because some of the context will be that they might not understand it in mother tongue but they might have understood it in English, which will not really give that standard, that level which is needed?

Interviewer: What did you learn during your teaching practice, what you regard as strength?

Interviewee: I was very lucky because my first SBS I went in a grade Head teacher. She was the head and she was very skillful, and actually she was competent in her teaching. That means I have learned a lot of things and that have shaped me and shape the way I teach. In my second SBS it was also the same it was another Head of department but at a different school. My teaching was based on leadership because I got to see how she was teaching and interacting with the learners, and how she was doing the things proper. Not just those teachers that say okay it fine, as long as I teach as long as I am there you understand and that and I regarded that as foundation because when I went there to this SBS I was put as grade head and I was like I am just here for SBS but they could see how behave and how I interact with other and how I handle my class and that have earned me my position and for the previous 7 months.

Interviewer: Okay and any weakness?

Interviewee: The weakness were just that most of the teachers that I have interacted with was BETD holders and that was the old system and that means that they were really not updated with the new information, new things of education. I am not saying they are not skillful but you can just see that there was a gap. When you try to say this they always have to contradict it. Sometimes they resist things this because they don't understand but I won't blame them because they didn't understand that the education system has updated, has changed. That was the biggest weakness. And the other weakness is the language barriers most teachers when they teach the English language the marginalize it, they were more in the native language now and they pick it up and the learners were really good but when it comes to the English language it was really down if you say a word in that class in English the learners will look at you as if you are foreign so you understand that was one of the negative things that I picked up.

Interviewer: Okay do you think what you have learned from the class teacher has changed the way you teach now why do you think it is important for the junior primary learners to learn in their mother tongue?

Interviewee: Actually that one I have two views, I think learning in their tongue is to engage them more in the learning because they understand what is going on. They are familiar with the language; they understand what you are trying to say and so on. That's one of the benefits of teaching in mother tongue. But on the other hand teaching mother tongue only and knowing that English is a formal language in Namibia it is also putting the learners learning of English down because remember most timetable I have seen English is only plotted as a subject once in a day and speaking English for that minute just for that 40 minutes. That will create a gap where learners will not really learn adequate English. That is why you see most learners are so much in mother tongue and they cannot speak English. They might understand a few words in English but they might not have adequate vocabulary. Grade 4 is now the transitional year that they have to teach in English and do code-switching, learners in English lesson struggle with grammar, they struggle with writing; they struggle with spelling they struggle with speaking and understanding which is actually to me not so good.

Interviewer: Okay, this actually is the same what are your views in teaching in mother tongue what the advantages are there any difference in what you learn here and what you learn at schools?

Interviewee: Yes! Just a few differences like the lesson preparation form; the lesson preparation form of UNAM is more detailed. It is really giving you an indication if am absent for example, someone will be able to teach or take over because the lesson is detailed to what you must do here and what activities you must give and what instructions you must give and so on. Whereas the lesson plan format in school is more draft, it's simpler. Like you just write a few words and that is it, and the rest it depends how the teacher will do it. Even though the curriculum is really straight, the mother tongue is well implemented, and the scheme of work is well in place. The other challenge is that teachers don't like to read or create things or they don't have time to read because you will find that when it comes to preparing lessons, they look at you. The teachers say writing all this is rubbish, why can't you just write maybe counting instead of specifying like now we are counting in 2s or we are counting with hands or we are counting mentally. I feel the schools lesson preparations are quite simple and not really giving enough information.

Interviewer: Okay, to the school you did your practice do they have a specific program just for teaching reading?

Interviewee: A program like, you mean a program like teachers come together?

Interviewer: No a program which is implemented in that school that is there specifically to teach reading. Like previously there was Molten project which was for teaching literacy (all the four skills). It was a program which was implemented in many schools but is now faded. To the school you were do they have any program?

Interviewee: knowing that the very last school that I was it was a new school, it was a project school and everything was just like a testing thing and there was really not a program like that. Except from learning support, ja there was really nothing.

Interviewer: Okay are there materials available in school like in Oshindonga the materials that support the implementation?

Interviewee: as I have already said the school is quite new and we had a lot of unqualified teachers. Let's say out of 40 teachers there were only 5 qualified teachers which is really a pity. There was a few materials but there was not really much I remember like the Oshindonga there was only this (name mentioned in Oshindonga). I remember only that book for the Oshindonga class there was only that green book and for Oshinkwanyama let me say only I think that one because the environmental studies that I had in my class was in English and not Oshikwanyama.

Interviewer: Do you have any idea how we should improve this? The issue of lack of teaching resources do you has any advice or any suggestions on how to improve this?

Interviewee: Okay, looking at all this thing maybe the people at the university or the people in our schools like the authors of books they must narrow it down to books for small kids because there are a lot of literature written in mother tongue but it is just novels and it is for more mature people. Maybe they need to bring more competition of writing books especially books for small children and then those books can be reviewed, and we can see which one fits more on our level. We can narrow it down on our lower primary because most of the books are just in English. And they are really wonderful books in English. If that will take a bit time than maybe we can take reading books that are already there, and then ask for permission from the writers to get people who are competent and master the language for more formal structure language instead of just taking any. I have seen a book that was directly translated from English and when you read it you can just see that this person doesn't have that language structure the correct language structure was not use the grammatical way.

Interviewer: okay do you have anything to say a question a comment or maybe a contribution?

Interviewee: To mother tongue instruction?

Interviewer: No to the whole discussion, do you have any comments?

Interviewee: No, actually this interview was informative it made me to remember what I have learned (laughs). Yes it really makes me to see classroom situation itself and UNAM and knowing that now there is only three months to exit and actually it makes me feel am saying good bye to UNAM. I want to say what I have picked up. In the four years time. I think this is one of the good interviews. Laughs

Interviewer: Thank you very much, really thank you and I think the report will be compiled and it will be shared with UNAM and now we know each other you will also be given the opportunity to read it.

Annexure 3: A sample of Focus Group Discussion: Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama

Interviewer: You were in school, doing your teaching practice and I am sure you have really gained a lot of knowledge and skills on how to teach JP that is grade 1-3 mother tongue, which is Oshikwanyama or Oshindonga. Ok, now being gathering all those information. What are your experiences of becoming a JP teacher? How do you like JP?

Interviewee: What did we gained there or what have we being experienced?

Interviewer: Because when you were there, sometimes when you go for teaching profession, sometimes you go because that is the only opportunity, but when you go to school, you learn and maybe your interest, your desire start coming. So I want you now to discuss about how do you like JP? How do you like being a teacher?

Interviewee: Okay, I am saying it is more enjoyable and you also learn through your own teaching. There were like something that you do not know before, but you just open your eyes that okay that is the best thing you do when you are teaching better than the time you are not even starting with teaching.

Interviewee: Okay, and then I think you learn a lot how to be with the kids. You know kids are sometimes they are problematic, and then may be notice that one of the kid is making noise, so you even go and then ask like how can if tomorrow I am teaching again the same thing and this kids start behave like this . We got support from our support teachers. On how to be with kids... I learn that you should not use hash language, you should always be polite. Otherwise if you get angry, they also do the same.

Interviewee: For me, I gained confidence to stand in front of the class and just teach them because sometimes you stand in front and but you are not really communicating anything to them. You are just teaching but I have learned strategies on getting things in their brains and getting their attention. Just by doing different activities and learned how plan a lesson like a weekly plan and a daily lesson plan like the one at school, not the one at UNAM.

Interviewee: To add on her, it is as if kids learn step by step. It is not just, like here you are being taught the whole topic just on one day. There you take it one-step at a time. For example different types of transport, which is when you may be, introduce them to the types of transport. So you should not rush.

Interviewee: And I realised that poems and songs put kids in the mood of listening. Especially if you start with a poem or a song, they become more live. Patient, patient, they taught us to be patient, like I was teaching them about money. The first day, they did not understand anything; I told them okay a dolla is made up of two fifty cents. You ask them how many fifty cents in a dolla is made up of, they won't tell you and then as time goes on it takes a while but they taught me to be patient.

Interviewee: It is not easier for you; you have most a higher standard of a language and all those experiences. So the way you are is not the way they are. So, when we started we think they will know things easier. But it will take time for them to know what it is exactly. So always, you have to lower yourself so that you act, as you do not know. Take yourself at lower level so that they understand you.

Interviewer: Just a follow up question, you mentioned that you learned that lesson plan or weekly plan is not like how you are doing it at UNAM. So do you mean you have different format?

Interviewee: For UNAM nee, they have many things you have to include there. But for the school one is simple. This one is more in detail, may be because we have to be taught how to write a lesson plan but the school one is simple.

Interviewer: Have you heard about the language policy for schools? What is it saying?

Interviewee: I did not get any document.

Interviewee: I only heard about assessment policy, they told us that the medium of instruction in junior primary should be mother tongue

Interviewer: Anyone who can add?

Interviewee: Okay, and then I think you will learn a lot on how to be with kids, sometimes they are problematic and then yaah one day maybe the kid makes noise so you will even go and ask how can if now tomorrow I am teaching and then this kid is making noise again, so we also get support from our support teachers on how to deal with kids so now yeah we are developing we come now aware of how to be with the kids, and then, you should not use a harsh language to kids you should always be polite otherwise if you get angry they will also do the same.

Interviewee: For me, I gained that confidence to stand in front of the class and just teach them because sometimes you can be standing in the front but you are not really communicating anything to them you are just teaching but I have learned strategies in getting things in their brains and getting their attention and just by doing different activities and also how to plan a lesson, like a weekly lesson and daily ones like at the schools now, not the ones here at UNAM. And then to add on her, like kids learn step by step, is not just like her you are been taught she whole topic just one day. There you take kids step by step how can I say now, for example there are different types of transport, you are only going to introduce them to one type of transport not all of them at the same time.

Interviewee: So you should not rush them, and I realised that poem and songs put kids in the mood of listening, especially if you start with the poem or a song and then you again end with a song or a poem and they become more like patience, they are teaching you patience you must be patience, like I was teaching them about money, the first day they do not understand anything. You tell them a dollar is made up of two 50 cents you ask how many 50 cents a dollar is made up of? They won't tell you, but then as time goes on, it takes a while but they are just teaching you. They taught me patience yah. And it's not easier for you, you have mos a high standard of a language and all those experience so the way you are is not the way they are.

Interviewee: So when you started with things they will know it easier but it takes time for them to know what is this exactly, so always you have to lowering yourself so that you can start. It's even make you like you do not know, so that they start there with you, if you start with the high then they won't and they will never. So always you have to take yourself at the lower level so that they will understand you.

Interviewer: Uhm, it's just a follow up question you said that you learned how to make lesson plan, weekly plans not like how you are doing here. So do you have a different format?

Interviewee: Like aah, for UNAM neah, they have lot of things that you have to include but for the school one, you are just straight to eth point, like this is what I did this is what I did. Especially, like the weekly plan that we did in Oshindonga, it's so different from the one we did at school.

Interviewee: This one is more in detail (the UNAM one) maybe its because we are being taught how to do it we have to do it more in detail. But at school you just, just down, it's just simple.

Interviewer: Okay, and I think have been exposed to different documents during the training like assessment policy, what do you actually know about the language policy for the school?

Interviewee: No for me I did not even get any document, saying that not even the one for the tic I only heard about it but in the class in grade 3, I only saw the kinotic.....

Interviewee: Only the assessment policy

Interviewer: Did not hear anything about what language to be used in this classes you were teaching grade one to three?

Interviewee. We were taught but I did not get a policy that is saying so.

Interviewer: Oo, okay, but actually you were told?

Interviewees: Language policy,
The matter of
No only environmental studies
Not environmental but Oshindonga and English in the that talk about policy
We just speak about it

Interviewer: Eeeye but what did them say?

Interviewee: At school?

Interviewer: No here, what did they mention about?

Interviewee: The medium of instruction in lower primary must be done in mother tongue.

Interviewer: Okay, that is actually the main, the key component on the language policy for the school like you say grade 1 to 3 mother tongue instruction I just wanted to know whether you are going to teach, you have to be full understand of the language policy for schools, because, we are guided by the policy so you really have to know what policy is guiding language, which policy guiding planning, which policy guiding assessment and so on. Okay now here, when you are with your lectures in the class, which language do they use, when they are prepare you teach literacy. Aahm listening, speaking, and reading and writing? As a preparation to go and teach, at the lower primary or junior primary.

Interviewee: All the Lectures are just English expect the Oshindonga

Interviewer: Uhnum, Okay, do you think your lectures support the language policy when they teach? Do you think you are well prepared to teach literacy in mother tongue?

Interviewee: Ahnm aa

Interviewer: Do you think you are well prepared?

Interviewee: Not really but maybe within that next semester because they still have to train us for literacy.

Interviewee. Because they are not yet started the module.

Interviewer: you know literacy is a broader thing it can even bring in numeracy.

Group together: Yeah

Interviewer: But for this stud, it's focusing on listening, speaking, reading and writing and when I say literacy I am referring to this four. So now the question is do you think you are well prepared to teach listening to young ones, or speaking or reading or writing to young ones?

Interviewee: Listening yes, speaking No

Interviewee. Speaking yes

Interviewee. Writing no ahm which one again

Interviewer: Reading

Interviewee: reading yes, speaking and writing it is because ehm most of the lecturers at this campus they don't really focus on details like even Oshindonga the only time we are taught writing like how to divide words and what it is only maybe two periods and that is it. And it is a bit difficult because we must know how to write the word. We must know how to do the things, but we are more taught on just theory things like that it is no practical, it is not really practical.

Interviewer: When I say, do you think you are well prepared to teach young ones listening to develop their listening skills, to develop their speaking skills, their writing and reading. I mean are you in that position?

Group together: Yes

Interviewer: Are you well prepared

Group together: Uhm, yes

Interviewer: Listening and reading

Interviewee: Yes, it is that means we are having all the strategies that can attract learners to speaking and to know how to read, we are trained because there are times when we are having that presentation how to create that attraction yeah, that we are at least ready for that.

Interviewer: In all the spelling

Interviewee: Reading, writing, listening and speaking, but as for writing, we only get that document the letter formation how the letters should be written in two lines.

Interviewer: Okay now a follow up question, and this is from the observation a third year, student and a second year student because there is a because this listening and speaking is not taught.

Interviewee: At the same year

Interviewer: Yaah, some skills, second year, third year fourth year they are telling you explaining how what should be done orally.

Group: Uhm

Interviewer: How do you cope because some then you are given an activity like go and prepare an activity on phonemical awareness but yet the lecture was just lecturing? How do you cope? How do you really gather that information of this is how I have to start and come to the next step, this so that you will be able to teach them.

Interviewee: Normally we just use to google how exactly people teach those phonemic awareness so that you can see revision that okay if you want to teach this , this is how you can do like this and this and this so that you can form up an activity that you can teach.

Interviewer: Who want to add?

Interviewee: but that time in Oshindonga, our lecturer told us that at our level he use to do examples ngaa, like she send us to do an assignment, you have to go prepare something so you have to go and do it so that later you have to come and present your assignment again.

Interviewer: And again a follow up question from the observation Okay you are now given an assignment to prepare to come present, so do you get feedback that you are I a group, like I think your group did well but you need to improve here.

Group together: Yaa in Oshindonga, so the group gets comments

Interviewer: Okay, uhm, what have you been taught in preparation to teaching literacy? I mean yaa lets take skills by skill, what have you been taught in preparation to teach listening?

Interviewee: Oka, firstly you have to come up with a story where learners will listen to you, and you have to ask some questions to see whether, they are going to respond, that show that they are listening

Interviewee: Meaning if they are not answering you they are, there was no any listening so mostly it is a story that can tell you that learners were listening.

Interviewer: What else?

Interviewee: And then, they say you can also use the video then they watch then afterwards you ask the questions about what they were listening to the video

Interviewee: And their vocabulary is, must be at their level, you have to read the story like twice for them to catch up.

Interviewer: Okay, only Stories?

Interviewee: You can also let them sing a song when after singing you can ask them questions from the class, what we did in class as it was a hymn song we listened then she gave us question papers to answer while we were listening. So it is another way of teaching listening.

Interviewer: Okay speaking

Interviewee: Speaking, okay we talked about group discussion and then we were taught to tell them a story and then we ask them to retell the story.

Interviewer: What else?

Interviewee: You can also give a topic like okay now I want you to discuss about this topic then you can let them speak you can even grouping them then they can speak, speak, speak, they are communicating with one another one can also stand up and tare with the class about what they were speaking.

Interviewee: And then like the paper show, how can I say ahmm they shy, shy, shy you tell the story like this is the mother and then they talk so how are you yaah.

Interviewer: Okay, and what strategies do you use, did your lecture use to teach this, to teach speaking, listening, reading and writing, the strategies?

Interviewee: I do not know if I understand it

Interviewer: Omikalo dhini omulongi gweni halongitha mokulonga?

Interviewee: So together or we ca like

Interviewee: For writing, sometimes you have to come up with a story and then us students like we are going to write it on the board, one write the first sentence and then the next, we do shared writing.

Interviewer: Shared writing

Interviewee: And for reading you have to take a textbook and read, and there's that reading that you can use to, you can read while this one is noting which one she is not understanding or she cannot able to read then after she will ask you I do not know what that mean and they do not know how to read it so you can correct it.

Interviewee: And modeling reading that you can read loud then the others are following, then you read, where we stand then the other one is timing to check how many words you read.

Interviewer: Okay, literature, modeling, shared and group whatever, okay

Interviewee: For speaking, they can just let us speak whatever topic came up and she will ask us questions.

Interviewer: Okay, now being exposed to all that strategies do you think you have, your teacher have exposed you to ahm, enough techniques to teach literacy like now you are almost to be graduated? Do you think you have gathered, you have got enough techniques on how to teach literacy?

Interviewee: Yaa, theoretically she gave us paper where we can give them, so we have a summary that will guide us to do that.

Interviewer: What are the elements of a good mother tongue lesson?

Interviewee: Elements?

Interviewer: yaah what are good things, what are the main things in a good mother tongue lesson? When you say that lesson was excellent, what are they?

Group: The language, in terms of language or?

Interviewer: No when you say no this lesson of mine was good, or maybe you are from teaching practice you say that, that teacher presented well / good, what makes you say that?

Interviewee: Mostly when you are using the facial expression, punctuations and learner also responding in that was of following what you are saying so the communication in between, confidence.

Interviewee: I feel is the usage of if you have used, or like if its listening lesson you do not just do listening, it's a good lesson if you have use all the things in one like you let them listen, let them write, let them speak I think it will be a good lesson if all the things are included and you can see that the learners are really responding to what you are teaching them I will count that as a good lesson if you have integrated all the skills at once.

Interviewer: Anything else? Okay, think about what you have included in lesson also. In your lesson plan because sometimes when you have a plan, that lesson plan can also be, can compose elements that will actually bring good results to your lesson. Because your lesson plan can also make you teach and give good lesson.

Interviewee: When it come to the introduction, when it comes to the reinforcement, how are you going to do it then its, the one that is going to give you that this one will make me to go through teaching. Which will make my teaching sufficient, so maybe when you are using also some, like video so they be in a good mood of listening.

Interviewee: I think like some activity should read or be in connection with the lesson, so for you to make sure that the lesson was successful that whatever you wanted to achieve with the lesson have checked, was achieved. Or otherwise if it is not achieved then it is like you did not teach anything.

Interviewer: Okay, now what challenges you foresee in teaching literacy in mother tongue, any challenge you think of or you experienced when you were there, that maybe in this mother tongue is, there are these, there are these that is hindering me 40 present what I was supposed to present in mother tongue.

Interviewee: What is think is resources are not enough for us to teach in mother tongue, I do not know may at the school that I was, ahm the language, in some of the thing the words are newly introduced not really newly introduced but I, I find it difficult to find, like one Oshindonga teacher says it is this and the other one will say it is this and now the language is just not the same, they are using different words for like the scientific words this words that not really they are not really in our language yaa, so we have to make up words for it, because in the text book, in the syllabus that we have to cover that so we have to look for a way for that. I think it is the difficult thing.

Interviewer: Any maybe you should also mention what you were mentioning when you say when you were here.

Interviewee: And also the kids are exposed to so many languages that make them so confused. They mix up they just speak some words are in Afrikaans and some so it is

difficult for you to teach them because they, they are not exposed to that firm mother tongue yaah.

Interviewee: And then I think also some of the things we did not go in details on what we should do it is only like the topic and then few things so it is up to you then to go extra mile and in more information and then especially to uh, so my language usage the terms gets mixed up Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama so even you are teaching the kids you find yourself mixing up.....

Interviewer: Uhm because she is teaching both languages and she is Oshikwanyama speaking.

Interviewee: I end up speaking both Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga, I am biologically Oshikwanyama speaking, but I am using Oshindonga here. I am confused.

Interviewer: Ooh!

Interviewee: And also the challenge at schools is, some learners are not Oshindonga speaking, some are Oshimbalantu and when they are writing something you can see the word is correct but it is not in Oshindonga so now it is already difficult to a that you are wrong but a person is speaking his or her mother tongue.

Interviewer: Especially our languages there we are grouped in Oshindonga.....

Interviewee: Sometimes even when you are asking what is this? Embale but you can tell that one is not Oshindonga but Oshikwanyama, okay.

Interviewee: Or even when saying uyali is saying uwali, it is really a challenge.

2: And for those small learners it is really difficult to make them understand that at the same time she/he may not use that word because they do not understand.

Interviewer: Because at home they are using another word

Interviewee: Ehm

Interviewee: Even from the previous grade the teacher taught them this and you, it is like they learn something there and you come and teach them, it is not the same because the teachers do not teach the same. You are teaching grade 2 this one is teaching grade 1, it is different words because we are all left to our own to find out what is this. Because the book is not written that, it is just guiding us that you have to find out information on your own.

Interviewee: So the teacher finds out information and you find that this information is different.

Interviewee: And sometimes you find Orukwangari speaking kid in your class at home they speak Orukwanari she only speak Oshiwambo in school, it will be very difficult to help her or him when it comes to that learner.

Interviewee: And I think also some of the teachers from the previous college also they are having another information because when you go there you are having your information from here they are having their information from there say the learner coming from grade 1 to grade 2 where you are they are having another information then when you are trying to give yours then they will say no that is not what we were taught by Miss who, who.

Interviewer: Hah the young ones

Interviewee: Yaah, they will say that miss who who told us that the thing is like this but you already know that the thing is not correct.

Interviewee: And then this thing of saying if now 3 grade threes at a school 3A, 3B, 3C that system of doing the same thing okay they should do like this week we are all covering this topic but then those thing of activities those maybe the did the activity two years ago and you are still sing it sometimes you want to get your won activity but they have this thing the head grade will make all the activity for all the class then you only tech according to that activity so you are not for us you have some difficulty because sometimes you want to teach but then you are guided by that activity you should just teach that so that the learner can relax and it is no even relate to your objective.

Interviewer: I think that is twining with the next question but I am not stopping you I just want to let you know that the next question is aahm asking about what did you learn during your teaching practice, what were your strength and what were your weaknesses but I think it is a good point that you mentioned, it is your experience. Okay now can we elaborate more since we have started with the weaknesses can we talk about that. What did you learn during your teaching practice that where a weakness, because I wanted to start with strength but you have already started so we can just continue.

Interviewee: Ooh, Okay I think like I come prepared but then maybe around 8 there they had grade who come with bunch of activities and then they will all the subjects they will only divide them among themselves that grade 1, grade 3A, you are just setting Oshikwanyama maybe, 3B you setting the environment and Math, just like that so when you get that now you get that preparation make sure that you cover what is in that test paper for the learner to be able to answer that questions in that pater so whenever you prepare something maybe sometimes you do not teach it because it is not corresponding to what is in the test paper and then that test is not up to standard because its jut s duplication of years next year they are still just changing that 2017 and then goes to make copies, it goes on like that so there is no change so they teach to assess they do not teach for a learner to learn, that is what I have realised every time you must make sure, like I didn't prepare to assess them, I just prepared to teach them and so the teacher will always be no make up an activity but then it is an introduction of the lesson I don't have to give them an activity now but they just want to fill the papers you know I must put something there but not teaching the kids to really learn no.

Interviewee: They just want to have that assessment form that they complete or they may like they already started to mark the paper that this is the answer, this is the answer, it is that later, you give so that they can write now you did not teach just give to them then you read them the answers again so that is repetition only for them, because they will be like they are in this period they are going to write this test just go through that you teach that moment and then later, you teach you give them, it is like okay because when you are teaching you have to do this no no like okay here they use $2+3$ so now am only going to make a little change like $5+2$ same as what is in the paper?

Interviewer: So you didn't really practice in what you have learned?

Interviewee: yeah, we have been controlled you have to be, to convey direction to do this not like the day you want to do it is the day your lecture will want to evaluate you. So when she sits she is like yeah you have to start from the conclusion. You have to start from the introduction to the conclusion.

Interviewee: Or maybe the day because you are on your own you are planning on your own, you are not like aaye tomorrow they are going to do this activity so they even only use those activity on the dash book they don't want you to create up something practical.

Interviewer: Because I have observed it even that aahm that moment the teacher is teaching the students, I was sitting but the teacher is saying do this, do this.

Interviewee: Yeah, it is like those things that they have been doing already so they also want, so the activity the know that on page something so they even know the book in the head the page number, because they have been doing it years and years and years.

Interviewer: And what are the strengths that you learned something fro the teaching practices?

Interviewee: yes mem like if you are struggling with something, eeh how to put it....yaah, if I cannot sound some phonics, I get help from my colleague, serious some of the sounds me I cannot sound them you can call someone to come present maybe that phonics to your learners, oshili, that is what we are calling the teacher also to help one another. If you don't know how to do this let another teacher to come help you aa to do it for you.

Interviewer: I think aah the phonic one is even me myself I learned it while I was having my class, we were two teaching grade 1s and I did not know how to teach phonics because where I was trained to used language experience approach whereby learners are coming we sentence we cut, we do that so there was a lady who is very good in phonic so I had something good, the other one something good so we were just educating one another. So sometimes I call that lady to come in front I mean in my class, can you come and teach this lesson, I was observing Okay tomorrow I will come and observe you to see whether you are sounding it nice so when you get your class, don't aa, because here you are not really learning anything you are learning when you are there.

Interviewee: Even the learners also sometimes when you ask that Okay this one I did not know how to sound it but when you are listening you come to know that okay this one can sound one, you can let the learner to read then others will also follow just let the learner to read.

Interviewer: No it is true, learn from kids is also learned a lot from them. I did not mention, there was a learner who started grade 4 she know English, that English I did not even know how this handle when you receive a phone I got it from that learner. Many things I allow them to discuss and when they move around, Okay I say this is a discussion actually but I do not really want, want to give answer. Okay ahm do you think that you learned from the class teacher? Or What have you learned from the class teacher has changed the way you teach?

Interviewee: My support teacher when I was doing practice for grade one, that support teacher was really helpful and she is the one who taught me how to be wise when it comes to teaching, she is a fast person she is not that slow person she have to make sure that all the activities are done and she have to make sure that everything is in proper order, she is not that a person aahm sitting and wait for the learners, she is, move around and make sure the learners are doing their work, she is really encouraging.

Interviewer: Uhm, okay where were you did your teaching practical?

Interviewee: Ahm Faith Primary School

Interviewer: Because I was asking how do you cope you don't have a teacher now, how do you learn like now the questions is who assist you?

Interviewee: This time no one assist me, I just did it on my own. I learned, unless, the HOD come to see me especially this other day she came so she has to give me a feedback. Just like that.

Interviewee: ME this time I was teaching, like the lecture was not there in case maybe that day if I am lying she is just sitting after I have done there is nothing, its only maybe I am, okay you are going to teach this again that's all so there is no feedback from the previous lesson.

Interviewer: Shonoo, nowhere you planning together? Like when you plan

Interviewee: No there is no planning

Interviewee: Me we plan together, sometimes I can do introduction and then she come do presentation and then I conclude we work together, and sometimes she will even tell you like we are supposed to do like this and this and next time you prevent this, you will have to change, that's all.

Interviewer: Okay and grade what?

Interviewee: One

Interviewer: The other one, the first class

Interviewee: The second

Interviewer: Because I use to start with the other class and come to this class and come to the other class

Interviewee: The second one

Interviewer: Oo, okay and PPS

Interviewee: No I started at Emma that teacher was the best like she was really the best she would, she is literally like am in the class she would teach the kids, she is teaching me also. She would stop and say Paulina, this is not what you do you with the kids you should do like this and so she would teach me again and she will tell me plan this lesson, and after I present she will come oh my love this is okay that you did here but you are not supposed to do that do this. So I really received and she will tell me, “make teaching eggs then she show me make this bag and you must put your teaching eggs there put the topics the title there. Like this is for environmental put it there, she made me that bag like she is showing me a lot of things. But then when I went to PPS, I was in this class where the teacher I told you now they just recently introduced the another policy so this teacher was not taught Oshindonga but she is a wambo speaking so its first time in the class so I was told to come and be in that class, I was supposed to be in grade 1 where there, I was there last year but then they asked me to come and be in that class I will assist her and so I was most of the things I was the one giving out and really to be honest I didn't learn anything unless I have learned, I picked up some things that I should do better as a teacher like I should look on the kids like I am the one guiding them I shouldn't expect them to learn on their own. Yaaah and I should always use my time as a teacher like I am the as a teacher I shouldn't be having discussions with other teachers and the time is just going. Those are the things that I have learned like not to do as a teacher, but no really in a positive way yah.

Interviewer: Mhm, okay we are almost there almost done. Why do you think it is important for the junior primary learners to learn in mother tongue, what are the advantages of learning in mother tongue?

Interviewee: They said if you don't know your mother tongue than you also, you will never also know the other language, because everything that you are going to translate have to start from mother tongue it's really important for one to know a word for your mother tongue.

Interviewer: Why do you think it's very important for a learner to learn her own language?

Interviewee: For me I think it because education of the child is to be done by 3 people, the teacher, the mother and then the kid, so if you are teaching the kid in the kids mother tongue it will also be better when you give the kid homework the parents are going to assist, because if it was English then they have to help so I think the communication

Interviewer: Okay what else?

Interviewee: Mother tongue, what I realized when I was teaching is that ahm when you teach the kids something in mother, tongue like when I was teaching them the topic let me say verb “oityalonga” you teach them in mother tongue when you are going to teach them in English, its much much more easier, they understand it. When you teach them in English they refere to what you taught them in their mother tongue and they will immediately get it in English, so that's why understanding something in your mother tongue first it's easier and they are able to communicate well with their mother tongue, it just helps their language not to die out. Because now we will become like Angolans, now Angolans just speak Portuguese, they forgot their mother tongue as so now if we focus on English our language will die out so its better we use mother tongue in school like this then it helps to build our culture, our pride, yaaaah.

Interviewer: Alright and I think go and find out more, it's very very important, ahm they have worldwide they are talking about the importance of learning in one's language, they mention aahm psychological, cultural, ahm a lot and as a junior primary teacher you are going to look, to imply the language policy, I think to see if you understand, why mother tongue

Interviewee: I also didn't understand at first but when I went to the schools I realized its very important to use

Interviewer: But I told you I was teaching at International but I think Oshikwanyama have really help me, I am not Oshikwanyama speaking, I learned in Oshindonga before I went for

exile, my Oshiwambo is diermekaar. But when I started teaching I came to Oshindonga “oshakati” then I move to international, for Oshakati was better because that is the language I learn at school when I was young. International it was worse because it was Oshikwanyama but actually that language assisted me to teach English because at a international was English medium of instruction Oshikwanyama was just a subject, Oshikwanyama assisted me to teach because you know, once they read Oshikwanyama, the can also read English. Because most letter sounds are the same it’s quite interesting. Okay we are there, is there any or did you find any difference from what I have learned, did you find any different from what you learned here and what you find in the field?

Interviewee: Concerning environment, what we are learning here and environment, there’s three things that only the social environment that is corresponding to the schools but then there is the one that we learned (did) last year, is not a helping thing

Interviewer: Are you really having, do you have the revised curriculum?

Interviewees: Here

Interviewer: Uhm

Interviewees: Aaye ah, we are talking about here now the things they are teaching

Interviewer: Because I think it’s good if you are familiarizing yourself with what is in school before you go there, because the syllabus were revised and I think topics where shifted and

Interviewee: And those workshop HoD is going to attend when they came back they are having another story of doing things another way so those things are not really the same. What we are taught here only some, because they said they are going to revise this things to the new, to people in connection with the curriculum, we are still using the old curriculum

Interviewer: eehm we had a very close link with colleges, what NIED said should implement in schools in the region, the same to the to the colleges. Okay so you say there are some things which are not correspond, which you learn here and they are not there, there are something there that are not here. Okay and in the schools, you were doing your teaching practice, do they have ee literacy program that they are implementing there? A programme maybe is a just for teaching process, for example we were having Molteno, we were having those, Do you find any program that is in school?

Interviewees: No

Interviewer: Are the materials available in the language use a medium of instruction at the school you were? Or here

Interviewee: together; even here no, that’s why sometimes we are struggling with the technology because when we are in math class is just English, when we are going to teach you should teach in Oshiwambo so sometimes you just don’t know what’s multiplication will be

Interviewee: yes, 3 continue.... Yes and

Interviewee: you have to go in the syllabus and see what are they saying, sometimes if you don’t even know sometimes the world can be there but you don’t know whether that’s multiplication

Interviewee: and number decomposition, they mistake it even in the syllabi you just don’t understand

Interviewee: the new syllabus neah?

Interviewee: No the old one, even sometimes we are given a English note in Oshiwambo because also is the time to translate or the hints so you just have English one than you can take on E50 so it’s not it’s also ask the thing like to translate

Interviewer: Okay, now what do you think this aahm, this situation, how do you think it can be improved? Do you want to say from NIED?

Interviewee: Maybe they just people from NIED yes and maybe teaching from different schools, we combined, we should discuss what should be possible that we are in the system

already, because somebody who is sitting in the office at NIED will not know what is happening in the schools. So if they can include those people that are in the school people will know this is

Interviewee: And the lecture at UNAM so that they can know what's expected, not just that too much theory theory that they never even use.

Interviewer: Okay colleagues, we have come to the end of our discussion, thank you very much, thank you for the valuable information you have really given me a lot which I think will contribute to my report and the report will be shared with UNAM on the recommendation...

Interviewees: the names of the schools

Interviewer: ah, no, no, no the names of the school, your names are not going to appear, that is the ethic of the research. Thank you very much colleagues and good luck with your final year.

Annexure 4: A sample of lecturers classroom observation

2nd visit

2nd year student

12 April 2016

Grace used a Power Point presentation which the computer froze for 2 minutes. Some student came late 15 minutes, some 30 minutes late

Grace linked the lesson to the previous one by asking questions about “what is the value of why singing during lessons?” Student answered by saying it stimulate thinking and interest.

She continued by saying today we are going to look at the ways and the value of songs in children’s learning. The lecturer explained that songs help learners to learn the structure of the language, bring enjoyment among learners because songs brought laughter and excitement. She related the lesson to the student cultural songs when she was explaining the types of songs, e.g. cultural song, dance songs, songs sang at different festivals, weddings, birthdays, traditional beer festival (Omaango), cow’s birthday, etc. The student teachers were given chance to share their experiences when they were discussing each festive song. They enjoyed the lesson but I realized that some student teachers lack cultural experiences because when the lecturer gave chance to some student teachers to give their experiences on either songs or games of a particular festive, they could not.

The lecturer explained traditional song that needs actions. She asked students to sing and demonstrate some of the songs and explain what they mean. She also asked them to explain how each song is being sung. The lecturer emphasised that those types of songs are very important for children learning as they link what is happening in the classroom to their cultural experiences. She encouraged students to play and sing those types of song with children in their class. She encouraged them to link the songs or dances to the topic.

It was interesting and enjoyable for everyone in the class; especially when they share their experience of cultural or traditional songs. The junior primary teachers need to know songs and sing with children. Songs must be based on the content, e.g. counting, reading, etc.

How to choose songs:

Poems- The lecturer explain what poems are and why how need to teach and say poem.

The lesson was completed at 8:30

Annexure 5: A sample of student teachers classroom observations

Grade 2

Fennie

17 March 2016

Reading lesson: The student greeted the learners and asked them whether they have heard about the puzzle. She drew a puzzle and wrote words in it. She wrote the words that are in the puzzle aside and explained how to work out the puzzle. She gave an example by circling some words. Afterward, she asked learners to come on the chalkboard one by one to find words and circle them. The student asked a group of learners to come in front to explain them. Other learners who were still on their table were doing nothing.

The puzzle was about the transport, the theme or topic for the week. It was a very interestingly an integrated lesson. The student distributed the puzzle to each learner to do individually. The class was quite because each learner was involved. She moved around to assist and explain how to complete the puzzle. She gave a very interesting example which was different from the class activity. She explained and gives time to learners to work alone on their paper. She did an excellent job by moving around to assist learners with difficulties.

Note: Some learners came very late because the observer learned that they are staying alone while the parents where in the village working in the field, so children alone cannot take care of themselves.

Annexure 6: A sample of student teachers classroom observations

Grade 2A

Oshindonga

18 March 2016

Reading: The lesson started with the song of the train again. The student distributed the papers to each and every learner; this paper composed of a text and questions from the text for learner to answer. The student asked learners to follow the story while she is reading it, while she was reading; she modelled good reading habit, e. g. stop where there was full stop. She asked whether learners followed and further asked learners to summarize what they heard from the story. Learners put up their hands if they want to say something.

Writing: She went through the entire questions that several learners were supposed to answer. She explained how they should answer the story. This was an individual activity whereby learners have to answer by filling in the words in the space provided after each question. The student reminded the learners of the punctuation. She asked learners to consider how sentences are started and how they are ended. She by all times related to the learners experiences. It took almost half of the time marking the learners' book. During the marking, she gave a tick or a big cross and sometimes gave zeros. This was done in front of others learners in the group. Both did correction of the question they got wrong. She asked some learners to write correction behind their papers. The learner that got big crosses and zeros seemed withdrawn and did not pay attention. After the correction she instructed the learners to put their paper into their files the lesson was over. She wrote the homework on the chalkboard and asked learners to copy it into their homework books.

Note: The lesson started late because there was assembly that day 30 min so the lesson was started 7:30. No text books that are in Oshindonga except one reader. She had a lesson plan in place which was written in Oshindonga.

Did correction on the chalkboard some learners were bored because they had nothing to do. Students used the old text books that are not in line with the revised syllabuses.