Exploring the pedagogy of writing in English second language classrooms in the Foundation Phase

by

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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Supervisor: Dr Xolani Khohliso

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Declaration of Originality

I, Betty Nomasonto Sithole **(**student number 20751363**),** declare that this dissertation, "Curriculum and Instructional Design and Development", which I hereby submit for the degree Magister Educationis at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

25 July 2022

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Dedication

I dedicate this research to my mother, Nomakula Regina Maseko, my number one fan. Thank you for always encouraging me to broaden my horizon and having faith in everything I do.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the following people:

Abstract

Effective writing instruction starts with teachers recognising the learners' background and writing needs. Teachers must plan approaches and strategies that encourage collaboration, interaction, and negotiation of meaning to improve the development of learners' writing skills. Research has shown that instructions that scaffold learners' writing development improve learners' quality of writing and their attitude towards writing. Teachers should teach writing with the prominence it contributes to the development of learners' literacy skills. The purpose of this study was to qualitatively explore how Foundation Phase teachers teach writing in English second language in their classrooms. Six teachers were purposefully sampled for a multi-case study to explore teacher practices in teaching writing in their English second language writing lessons. Semi-structured interviews, lesson observation, and document analysis were used to gather data. Themes were identified from the six-phase thematic analysis. The findings of the study indicated several factors in Foundation Phase writing instruction practices. First, the findings indicated that through the utilisation of annual teaching plans, teachers neglected learning outcomes and did not plan for the inclusion of writing skills nor did they reflect on their practices. Secondly, the teachers used shared writing to model writing to learners, however, they were not aware that the strategy they used to teach writing was shared writing. Thirdly, the manner in which writing was taught and the kinds of writing activities given to the learners showed that the learners were not exposed to different text types. Lastly, in schools where learners had low English second language proficiency, the teachers faced challenges when teaching this type of learner. The study concludes that the teachers' limited knowledge of the strategies to teach writing had a negative impact on the way they taught writing, and, as a result, the learners were not exposed to different text types. The study recommends that the Department of Education develops a guideline document on how to teach writing in the early grades. Further research is required to fully understand the implication that teacher practices have on the development of learners' writing skills.

Key Terms: English second language, writing, writing approaches, writing instruction, Foundation Phase

Language Editor's Letter

Certificate of Editing

I, Brenda Gouws, confirm that I have edited the following manuscript:

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ANA	Annual National Assessment
ATP	Annual Teaching Plan
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
EFAL	English First Additional Language
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
GPLMS	Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy
ESL	English Second Language
HL	Home Language
IL	Interlanguage
IMSCI	Inquiry, modelling, shared writing, collaborative and independent writing
LiEP	Language-in-Education Policy
LOLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
SRSD	Self- Regulated Strategy Development
TL	Translanguaging

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CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I introduce the study by providing the background of and rationale and purpose for conducting the study. The problem statement and research question guiding the study are presented. Key terms in the study are defined. Ethical considerations and the organisation of the study are also presented.

Writing is a skill that learners have to acquire at an early stage of their lives in order to fit in and compete in the communication-driven workforce. In South Africa, English is the primary language used in government institutions and the business sector. This requires that learners become proficient in their home language in order to become proficient in English, which incorporates speaking and listening, reading and writing. According to the Annual National Assessment (ANA) Diagnostic Report (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2012), South African learners have challenges with writing skills. However, there is limited research on how to write in English second language (ESL) in the Foundation Phase. There are different schools of thought on how writing should be taught and, in addition, there are factors that contribute to how writing is taught for learners to fully acquire the skill of writing.

1.2 Background of the study

South Africa is a country rich in languages with 34 historically established languages, 30 of which are living and four are extinct (Alexander, 2018). However, the South African Constitution (1996) has only declared 11 languages as official with English elevated to a higher level as the language of communication in the country. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) further prescribes that national and provincial government institutions should use at least two of the official languages for communication. Since English is the language used predominantly in government and private institutions across the country, most provinces use English plus the dominant African language of that province. In South Africa, when most learners start school, they use African mother-tongue languages and from Grade 4 onwards they transition to using English as the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) (Taylor & Von Fintel, 2016). This requires these learners to learn English as a second language.

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South Africa's language-in-education policy (LiEP) (1997) acknowledges that learning more than one language should be the general practice as is the global norm. The LiEP (Department of Education, 1997) promotes an additive bilingualism approach, which is the maintenance of the home language and effective acquisition of an additional language. As a means to promote this additive bilingualism approach, the practice in township schools is that when learners start school, they learn content subjects in their home or African language which makes it the LOLT in the Foundation Phase, and English is learnt as an additional subject from Grade 1 to Grade 3. From Grade 4 onwards, learners transition to English as the LOLT. English First Additional Language (EFAL) Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2011) requires learners to reach a high level of competence in English by the end of Grade 3 and be ready for the transition from English as a subject to English as the LOLT from Grade 4 to Grade 12.

According to Howie *et al.* (2017), 78 per cent of South African Grade 4 learners do not read and write for meaning nor do they retrieve basic information from the text to answer simple questions, as reported in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS, 2016). One of the President's directives of the 2020 State of the Nation Address (Ramaphosa, 2020) states that by the time learners reach ten years of age, that is, when they reach Grade 4, they should be able to read with understanding. The Minister of Education actioned the President's directive and has put priorities in place for the implementation of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2019–2024 (Motshekga, 2020). The first priority of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework is to improve learners' foundation skills of numeracy and literacy.

The DBE has, over the years, implemented a number of teacher development strategies such as the Foundations for Learning Campaign (2008), Certificate in Primary English Language Teaching (CiPELT) (2013), and Primary School Reading Improvement Programme (2017) in an attempt to improve teacher practice in teaching ESL literacy skills. However, studies like PIRLS still report a need for improvement in learner attainment and teacher practices in teaching English as a second language. This research focuses on the teaching of writing in English by the Foundation Phase teachers at two township primary schools in the Johannesburg North District in Gauteng that offer English as a second language.

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1.3 Rationale

I work as a school evaluator in the Foundation Phase at the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE). My core function is to evaluate schools on the quality of teaching and learning with teacher development being one of the areas for evaluation, and to report on the status of education in Gauteng primary schools. The evaluation process involves observing Foundation Phase teachers in practice and analysing learner achievement results as some of the processes to gather information on the levels of achievement in all the subjects. In recent years, I have worked in township schools where learners learn African languages as Home Language and English as a second language. My interest in language-writing skills has made me focus on the pedagogy of English as a second language and I observe teacher practices in the teaching of the language. When I conduct evaluations, in most cases, the overall performance of Foundation Phase learners results are acceptable because they cover all the language components which are listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, when one focuses on the specific language skills in which learners perform well, it tends to be the language components of listening and speaking. Reading and writing skills, by contrast, seem to be challenging for learners. My observations as an evaluator when I peruse learners' exercise books show that learners' writing skills do not meet the expected curriculum outcomes.

In 2010, the Gauteng Primary Literacy Strategy (GPLMS) was introduced by the GDE as an intervention to improve teacher instructional practice in teaching ESL as one of the languages in the programme. During the implementation years of the GPLMS, the administration of the 2012 and 2013 ANAs took place. Even though the administration focused on Grade 3 Home Language, the ANA Diagnostic Report of 2012 (DBE, 2012) reported that generally South African learners were unable to produce meaningful written outputs. Learners wrote words and sentences that were completely incoherent and they showed limited knowledge of grammar and punctuation. The 2013 ANAs reported findings similar to those of the 2012 ANAs that learners faced challenges with writing and had not developed an adequate skill. It reported that Foundation Phase learners were unable to write sentences about visual texts, construct and punctuate sentences, or use tenses correctly.

Fleisch and Schöer (2014) researched the impact of the GPLMS and found that the implementation of the strategy mainly provided teachers with routines and they could not

conclude that the strategy had improved instructional practice, which would have resulted in improved learning outcomes. Research on the GPLMS suggests that Foundation Phase classrooms must improve instructional practice and pedagogical techniques (Fleisch & Schöer, 2014). The ANA Diagnostic Report (2013) recommended teacher development to improve teachers' skills in teaching English. The DBE implemented the ANA's recommendations through the introduction of the CiPELT (British Council, 2012) to train teachers on ESL content, pedagogical knowledge, and the production of learner–teacher support materials.

In collaboration with the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT), the DBE introduced the Primary School Reading Improvement Programme (NECT, 2017) as a support intervention to improve the quality of ESL teaching and learning. Even though the programme is termed a reading programme, it entails writing skills. The focus is to improve teacher pedagogy to effectively teach writing in the early grades. Six months into the implementation of the programme, data were collected in 12 districts in the Eastern Cape to track the impact of the programme. The NECT (2018) reported that the programme increased learner performance and teachers' knowledge and practice in ESL. In relation to writing, the programme noted an improvement in the number of writing activities that learners did. Yet, even though there was improvement in practice, the NECT did not report on progress across the country.

Interventions were put in place by the DBE and GDE to improve teacher pedagogical knowledge in order to improve learner performance. However, there is a need for teachers to use teaching methods that suit the needs of learners. Liu and Shi (2007:71) state that "teachers should consider the kind of learners taught, level of proficiency, communicative needs, and the circumstances in which learners will be using English in the future". There should be research conducted to find out how Foundation Phase teachers teach ESL, especially the skill of writing in their classrooms.

In the Foundation Phase, the teaching of writing skills builds on shared reading texts to provide the basis for writing tasks (DoE, 2008; DBE, 2011). Writing instruction allows for teachers to read different types of texts during shared reading to create awareness for learners of the structure and features of the texts. In this way, during the teaching of writing, teachers model how to write a type of text and, depending on the level of the grade, learners

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will write text based on the text modelled. This study will provide insight into how teachers teach writing in relation to the literacy learning programme suggested by the curriculum.

The knowledge generated through this research will assist teachers in developing pedagogies to improve the teaching of ESL writing skills as part of the literacy skills required for learners to become proficient in ESL. The knowledge will also guide school evaluators, subject advisors, and departmental heads on the kind of support that teachers require to teach ESL writing skills and to assist them to improve both their own practice and learner proficiency.

1.4 Problem statement

According to the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) (DBE, 2012) in South Africa, learner writing is an area that is neglected. The report highlights that the quality of writing that learners produce in their home language does not develop high cognitive capacity. What the report highlights is consistent to the ANA Diagnostic Report of 2014, which reports that Foundation Phase learners performed below average for the writing component in Home Language. Learners face challenges when they write words, construct sentences, and write paragraphs with content and coherent ideas.

Several studies conducted on ESL writing in higher grades suggests that learners are not able to produce meaningful written outputs and their knowledge of grammar is limited (Kalipa, 2014; Mpiti, 2016; Ngubane, 2018; Ndlovu, 2019). To date, there has been limited research conducted on the teaching of writing in ESL in the Foundation Phase. Based on the NEEDU and ANA reports and findings from previous studies conducted in the higher grades, I felt that there was a need to explore how writing is taught in ESL by Foundation Phase teachers.

1.5 Research questions

1.5.1 Main research question

The main research question for this study is:

How do Foundation Phase teachers teach writing in English second language?

1.5.2 Sub-questions

The main question necessitated the formulation of the following sub-questions:

1. What teaching methods do Foundation Phase teachers use to teach writing in English second language?
2. How do Foundation Phase teachers plan for the writing lessons in English second language?
3. Why do Foundation Phase teachers teach writing in English second language the way they do?

1.6 Purpose of the study

The focus of this research is on the pedagogy of writing in ESL in the Foundation Phase. The purpose of the study was to explore how Foundation Phase teachers taught writing in ESL in their classrooms. I sought to discover what writing instructions teachers used. Teachers should be exposed to different teaching methods to teach writing as a means to improve practice, thereby improving learners' writing skills and, in the end, improving performance in literacy skills.

1.6.1 The research objectives

The research objectives of the study are:

- To explore the pedagogies that Foundation Phase teachers use to teach writing in their ESL writing lessons
- To observe how Foundation Phase teachers teach writing in their respective grades
- To determine the factors that influence teacher instructional practices when teaching writing in the Foundation Phase classroom

1.7 Definition of key concepts

The following concepts are defined to clarify how they are used in this study:

1.7.1 Pedagogy

Sahana (2018:797) defines pedagogy as "a science of teaching for effective teaching of learners". According to Shah and Campus (2021), pedagogy is an approach to teaching that addresses teaching methods and principles of instruction. Teacher pedagogic knowledge is categorised as general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Guerriero, 2014). General pedagogical knowledge is the knowledge to plan lessons, manage the classroom, assess learners, and adapt learning activities to accommodate the different needs of the learners whereas pedagogical content knowledge is the ability to apply the content knowledge of a particular subject (Guerriero, 2014). In this study, pedagogy is the ability of a teacher to plan writing lessons, apply teaching strategies, and be able to address the learners' educational needs.

1.7.2 Writing instruction

The practices involved in the teaching of writing, that is, the way writing is taught, the writing approaches, and the strategies that teachers use to teach writing, are part of writing instruction (Graham, 2019). In this study, writing instruction is the way teachers teach writing in their respective grades within the Foundation Phase.

1.7.3 English second language

The South African LiEP (1997), refers to a language offered to learners that is not their home language as an additional language whilst CAPS (DBE, 2011) refers to a language offered to learners other than their home language as a first additional language. According to Mitchell, Myles and Marsden (2019), a second language is a language that a learner learns later than in their earliest childhood. Internationally, the term used for teaching English as an additional language is ESL. Therefore, in this study, English first additional language is referred to as ESL.

1.7.4 Foundation Phase

Foundation Phase generally refers to the first four grades of the South African lower primary school system which spans Grade R to Grade 3 (DBE, 2011). However, in this study, Foundation Phase refers to Grade 1 to Grade 3 as this study focuses on the teaching of a first additional language, which only occurs from Grade 1.

1.7.5 Foundation Phase learner

In the context of this study, a Foundation Phase learner is a learner who is in Grades 1, 2 or 3 and is learning English as a first additional language (DBE, 2011).

1.8 Ethical considerations

Adherence to ethical considerations results in a study's trustworthiness. Prior to the commencement of the study, ethical clearance was issued by the University of Pretoria to conduct this study and the research title was approved. I considered the participants' views, beliefs, rights, and needs as suggested by Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Kumar (2011). Throughout the research, I ensured that there was no breach of ethical practices (Kumar, 2011). All the data generated were scanned to be converted to soft copy, were stored on One Drive, and a backup was done on the university's research data repository for safekeeping.

1.8.1 Informed consent

I requested permission from the GDE (see Appendix A) to conduct research at the two selected schools and permission was granted. After permission was granted, the two schools were contacted and the principals were briefed on the purpose of the research. The principals signed letters of consent (see Appendix B) to grant me permission to conduct the research at the respective schools.

An information-sharing session was held with participants to explain the aims, objectives, and research processes. The teachers, as the primary participants, completed consent forms (see Appendix C) to grant me permission to record the interviews, observe them in practice, and peruse their documents. The parents of the learners gave consent (see Appendix D) for their children to participate in the research as secondary participants.

1.8.2 Confidentiality

The schools, teachers, and learners were assured confidentiality and anonymity. The names of the schools, teachers, and learners were not mentioned anywhere in the study. Codes were used for the schools and teachers. The learners' names were removed from the samples of their work to protect their identities. I ensured that the information shared

was treated with confidentiality and caution. The participants were assured that participation was voluntary, and that they were free to withdraw from the research without reproach.

1.8.3 Safety of participants

A researcher needs to ensure that participants are protected from any potential harm (Kumar, 2011). The research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and the safety of the participants was assured at all times. During the lesson observations and teacher interviews, I complied with the COVID-19 safety protocols by frequently sanitising my hands, wearing my face mask to cover both my nose and mouth, and observed one-metre social distancing to protect myself and the participants from infection. The time scheduled for teacher interviews at School Y was disrupted by COVID-19 cases at the school and the interviews were held telephonically to protect the teachers from exposure to infection.

1.9 Organisation of the study

Below are short descriptions of the five chapters that constitute this study.

Chapter 1: Orientation to the study

This chapter has introduced the study. The background of the study, rationale, problem statement, and purpose of the study are outlined. Key terms are defined. Ethical consideration and the organisation of the study are highlighted.

Chapter 2: Literature review and theoretical framework

In this chapter, I present the literature that was read in relation to the research topic to explore and analyse the work done on similar research topics. Writing approaches, pedagogies for teaching writing to primary school learners, teacher pedagogical competence, and writing practice in different countries are explored. The theoretical framework that guides the study is described.

Chapter 3: Research methodology and design

The processes and procedures used to conduct this research to solve the research problem are described. The interpretivism research paradigm, qualitative research approach, case

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study research design, purposive sampling, data generation methods, and the six-phase thematic data analysis are discussed with regard to how they link to the study.

Chapter 4: Data presentation, analysis, and synthesis

The data that was gathered is presented and analysed to address the purpose of the study.

Chapter 5: Discussion of findings, recommendations and conclusion

This chapter synthesises the study linking it with the theoretical framework. The findings of the study are discussed in relation to the research questions and a summary of the findings is presented. Recommendations are given to the different stakeholders in education for further research and to add to the body of knowledge. Finally, conclusions are given.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter provided the background to the study. The rationale, problem statement, and purpose of the study were presented. The problem statement and research questions as to how the study was conceptualised were discussed. Key terms were discussed. The ethical consideration and the organisation of the study were highlighted. In the next chapter, I will present a literature review on the teaching of writing in an ESL context.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

A literature review guides the reader about the context and background of the work conducted on a specific topic and assists the researcher to come up with the framework for conducting a specific study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). There are different styles to approach a literature review, namely systematic, hermeneutic–phenomenological, and traditional narrative reviews (Efron & Ravid, 2019). According to Efron and Ravid (2019), systematic reviews appraise and synthesise the empirical evidence whilst hermeneutic–phenomenological reviews explore the meaning of a text with the aim of provoking thinking amongst writers and readers. A traditional narrative review focuses on surveying the state of knowledge in a specific subject area with the aim of highlighting issues and trends. This research follows a traditional narrative review to explore the writing trends.

The aim of this literature review is to determine how writing is taught to ESL learners in the Foundation Phase. This chapter discusses writing skill, provides an understanding of how writing is taught to ESL learners, identifies the different approaches to teaching writing, explores pedagogies for teaching writing to primary learners, including teaching in a multilingual context, and establishes writing practices in different countries to gain an understanding of how writing is taught in the context of a second language, specifically in the Foundation Phase. Later, the chapter presents sociocultural theory, which is the theory that underpins the study, and looks at mediation and the zone of proximal development (ZPD) which are the theoretical tenets that inform this study.

2.2 Writing skill

Writing is one of the four fundamental language skills that a learner is required to master, the others being listening, speaking, and reading. Many scholars agree that writing is a skill that is difficult to master, and it is even more challenging for second language learners (Cheung, 2016; Graham, 2019; Bizetto, 2020). Widiati and Cahyono (2016) are of the view that writing is a support skill which is important in language teaching as it reinforces grammar, vocabulary, and reading as a means for communication. Martínez, López-Díaz and Pérez (2020) argue that teaching writing is important as it is one of the fundamental skills that contribute to a person's language literacy. Richards, Sturm and Cali (2012)

contribute that learners communicate what they have learnt through writing. Therefore, writing is a fundamental skill that teachers use to develop learners' literacy skills for them to effectively communicate in writing the knowledge that they have gained.

Graham and Rijlaarsdam (2016) are of the view that writing requires the use of a variety of cognitive, motor, and affective skills. The cognitive aspect involves the use of grammatical skills and engagement of writing processes. The motor aspect involves multiple judgements on how to frame intentions into sentences, whereas the affective aspect involves the selection of the right words to create the intended meaning. This means that learners require the skill of writing to present their understanding through the selection of appropriate words to communicate their understanding of what they have learnt. As a result, learners need to be taught writing skills effectively for them to achieve the requirements pointed out by Graham and Rijlaarsdam.

The South African curriculum advocates for additive bilingualism in learning language skills in English (DBE, 2011), meaning that "writing skills are transferred from home language" (DBE, 2011:16). Therefore, learners learn to write different types of texts in their home language and then they draw on that knowledge to learn how to write in an additional language which, in this context, is English. Furthermore, CAPS expects that by the end of Grade 3, learners "need to be able to read and write well in English" (DBE, 2011:8) for them to be able to learn in English as the LOLT (DBE, 2011), which means that from Grade 4 onwards, writing becomes a tool for learning (Harris & Graham, 2016).

The teaching of writing in the context of ESL has evolved over the years. The teaching of writing in ESL has moved from the early days of teaching writing through the grammar-translation method to the audio-lingual method and currently to communicative language teaching (CLT) (Widiati & Cahyono, 2016). Many countries advocate for CLT (Diallo, 2014; Jabeen, 2014; Mothudi & Bosman, 2015; Widiati & Cahyono, 2016). However, all the different language teaching approaches still contribute to teacher practice in teaching writing. Some teachers find it difficult to implement the CLT approach as prescribed by the curriculum (Murridza, Prapagara & Satanihpy, 2019). In countries like Botswana and Lesotho, it has been reported that even though the prescribed curriculum approach is communicative, the examination focuses on mastery and accuracy in written communication which has an implication for teacher practices as teachers revert to a grammar-translation approach (Mothudi & Bosman, 2015).

In South Africa, CAPS guides the teaching of the various learning areas. However, the curriculum does not clearly prescribe the second language teaching approach to be followed, although the aims of the curriculum subtly identify the audio-lingual and communicative approaches to second language teaching, as the policy document states, "When children start to learn an additional language in Grade 1, they need to build a strong oral foundation" (DBE, 2011:8).

According to Barnard (2017), there is a discrepancy between what teachers know about curriculum expectations and what should be taught to ensure curriculum coverage. Dornbrack and Dixon (2014) affirm that teachers' knowledge of the curriculum is important so that teachers know and understand the curriculum's expectations and are able to implement them. Makeleni and Sethusha (2014) are of the view that in order for the curriculum to be implemented effectively, the context in which the curriculum is delivered needs to be taken into consideration. On the other hand, there is a need to unpack the information in the curriculum for teachers to know and understand the curriculum expectations (Lenyai, 2011). Ngubane (2018) notes that it is good practice when teachers know what is expected in terms of curriculum requirements. They are then equipped to teach to learners and overcome the contextual challenges which they experience in their practice. Incomplete curriculum coverage occurs when there is a waste of contact time and low cognitive demand, which results in poor educational outcomes (Spaull, 2015).

Spaull (2015) has highlighted a gap in the curriculum and notes that Foundation Phase learners learn basic reading and writing, as prescribed in the ESL curriculum; however, this is not an adequate language foundation when learners transition to English as a language of instruction in the Intermediate Phase. Sebetoa (2016) notes that Foundation Phase teachers focus on English as a subject rather than as a language to be read and written; this creates a content gap for learners when they move into the Intermediate Phase. In addition, Marshall (2014) acknowledges that a low level of teaching and learning of ESL in the Foundation Phase limits learner exposure to English, which, in turn, has an effect on learner outcomes.

Observatory studies (Khan, 2011; Choudhury, 2013; Afrin, 2014; Hapsari & Sukavatee, 2018; Rahman & Sarker, 2019) reveal that even though the prescribed approach to teaching English is communicative, teachers still use traditional methods of teaching, namely the grammar-translation method. A mixed method study on English teachers'

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conceptual pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical practices reported that teachers knew what they should do to improve their learners' language skills, but their pedagogical practice differed from their pedagogical knowledge, which meant that the teachers needed training to put theory into practice (Dewi, 2019).

It is evident that even though the CLT is widely used as a contemporary method to teach ESL, it faces challenges. Although the grammar-translation approach has received criticism, it is still applicable in teaching learners the important language skills that are vital to ensure that language structure and forms are in place (Matamoros-Gonzalez *et al.*, 2015). Essossomo (2013) suggests that teachers blend teaching methods to suit the needs of the learners. Different scholars (Adebileje & Akinola 2020; Alharbi, 2017; Kumar, 2013; Mwanza, 2017) advocate for the use of an eclectic method that infuses different teaching methods, taking into consideration the language skill being taught and the needs of the learners.

2.2.1 The importance of teaching writing skills

Writing is a "predictor for academic success and a basic requirement for participation in civic life and in the global economy" (Graham & Perin, 2007:3). Learners need the skill of writing to master work and life skills (Swandi & Netto-Shek, 2017). Richards *et al.* (2012) is of the view that learners should communicate their knowledge through writing. Additionally, Rietdijk, van Weijen, Van den Bergh and Rijlaardam (2018) note that writing is a tool for learners to communicate, function in society, acquire knowledge, and display what they have learnt. Raimes (1991) argues that learners should perceive writing as a tool for learning to help them throughout their professional and personal lives. In other words, the academic and social demands of written communication requires learners to be proficient writers.

According to Hyland (2003), writing effectively requires extensive, specialised instruction. Graham (2019) adds that writing is a skill that should be well developed and, if writing is not well developed, learners will have challenges in other subjects. Writing plays a facilitation role to second language development through the notion of write-to-learn (Williams, 2012) and once the learners reach the Intermediate Phase, the LOLT is English which means that learners use writing to learn the content of different subjects. In addition, Finlayson and

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McCrudden (2020) posit that people who are not writing proficiently have difficulty taking part in daily activities that involve communication in writing.

2.3 Approaches to teaching writing

The way writing is taught has evolved over the years. There have been inputs on how writing should be taught, which brought about different writing approaches that ranged from the initial product approach to the genre approach, to the process–genre approach. This section examines each approach by looking at their instructional practices, strengths, and weaknesses.

2.3.1 Product approach

The product approach is a traditional approach to teaching writing, also known as the text-based approach, which is popular in teaching writing in ESL. The writing instruction is teacher-centred and learners imitate model texts. The writing skills in the product approach focus on linguistic forms and accuracy in grammar and lexical knowledge (Hyland, 2003).

Teachers who adopt the product approach to teaching writing follow a grammar-translation approach to language teaching and adopt text structure instruction with a belief in reinforcing language patterns through habit formation (Hyland, 2003). The model texts are discussed and analysed. Learners discover the structure and features of the text to organise ideas (Klimova, 2014). The main focus of the writing activities is the end product. Knowledge of writing is demonstrated through linguistic knowledge about grammar and text structure (Badger & White, 2000).

According to Eliwarti and Maarof (2014), writing is taught in four stages in the product approach. The first stage is familiarisation whereby learners are given model texts in the form of a genre and they study the features of that specific genre. The second stage is controlled writing, in which learners practice the features of the genre. The third stage is guided writing whereby learners organise their ideas, and the last stage is free writing in which learners write using the patterns they have learnt.

The product approach is beneficial to novice writers and learners of low language proficiency. Novice writers require more guidance from teachers in gaining linguistic knowledge about the text (Eliwarti & Maarof, 2014), whereas low proficiency learners

require scaffolding in writing development to build vocabulary and increase confidence in their writing skills (Hyland, 2003). The learners in this study could benefit from the product approach.

In a product writing lesson, a teacher might, for example, introduce the learners to how to write a recipe where the focus of the lesson is on learners learning the structure of recipe writing. The teacher will let learners read different recipes as model texts and let the learners identify generic features from the recipes. Writing tasks involve activities like filling in gaps, finding mistakes in the text of the recipes, or writing a true or false statement to test their knowledge on whether they understood the features of a recipe. Learners then generate ideas on how they will structure their own recipes and finally write their own recipes using the information learnt. The teacher gives feedback on the learners' writing.

Selvaraj and Aziz (2019) criticise the product approach because of the great emphasis that is placed on accuracy. Consequently, meaning is lost and learner creativity is neglected. McQuitty (2016) contributes to the criticism by noting that when teachers focus on activities like sentence correction, writing is decontextualised and the purpose of writing, that is, to formulate meaningful ideas and organise thought logically, is lost. Furthermore, she highlights that even though learners might accurately learn sentence correctness, they do not necessarily apply that knowledge in their own writing. In some cases, learners make grammatical mistakes whereas they performed well during instruction. Hyland (2015) observed that accuracy does not benchmark writing competency.

2.3.2 Process approach

Criticism of the product approach brought about the process approach. The process approach is a widely used approach in the teaching of writing in both first and second language teaching (Graham & Sandmel, 2011). Implementors of the process approach believe that writing is a cognitive process that requires the learner to engage in the mental process of composing text (Alshammari, 2016). Flower and Hayes (1981) state that in the process of writing the writer makes decisions and choices. The decisions are about the writing pattern and content they want to present, and the choices are about why they are writing.

Teachers who use the process approach are of the view that writing is a recursive process that involves linguistic skills, namely pre-writing, drafting, evaluating, and revising (Nordin

& Mohammad, 2017). In pre-writing, the learner is introduced to techniques to help them gather information about topics. Drafting requires the learner to engage in writing a text, receiving feedback, and working on their draft. The learner then evaluates their text. Finally, the learner revises the text through editing and rewriting. As a result, in the process approach, the learner engages in multiple-draft processes. The learners learn how to write rather than being taught how to write (Hyland, 2003; Nordin & Mohammad, 2017).

Writing instruction in the process approach is within the communicative approach to language teaching. The instructors of the communicative approach believe that writing tasks should be meaningful and based on communicative competence (Liu & Shi, 2007). This means learners write with the overall purpose in mind, that is, they write to communicate with an audience.

Classroom instruction in the process approach is learner-centred (Durga & Rao, 2018). Learners collaborate through peer editing and conferencing (Hyland, 2003). The focus of the instruction is on learners writing full texts with meaningful ideas following the act of writing (McQuitty, 2016). During instruction, teachers pay attention to and provide time for learners to draft and revise their writing tasks (Vega & Pinzón, 2019). The learner's knowledge of writing is demonstrated through linguistic skills, namely planning and drafting (Badger & White, 2000).

In a process writing lesson, for instance, using the example of writing a personal recount[1] as one of the genres to be taught in the Foundation Phase, the teacher encourages the learners to come up with ideas about how they want to structure their stories. The learners write their stories without thinking about errors; the focus is on the content rather than on accuracy. The writing activity at this stage can be done collaboratively to enable learners to guide each other with ideas and feedback to improve their writing. Later, the learners revise by ordering their texts, editing them on their own, or asking a peer to edit their texts with the aim of retaining the most important information. Lastly, the learners write their final drafts with the purpose of presenting it to an audience.

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[1] To recount is to tell about past events in sequence (e.g. to say or write about what one did last weekend) (DBE, 2011:95).

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According to Martínez, López-Díaz, and Pérez (2020), the process approach is beneficial for novice writers as some of the writing process activities, such as brainstorming, help learners to generate and organise ideas in order to develop structures and meaningful texts. Hyland (2003) points out that this writing instruction focuses on creative expression where learners freely express their ideas and show a willingness to write. Jones (2015) affirms that process writing instruction improves learners' compositional skills. Durga and Rao (2018) concur that learners get to understand the importance and value of developing their writing skills, hence they gain awareness of their writing strengths and weaknesses (Troia, 2014).

The process approach also has some limitations. Badger and White (2000) highlight that this approach ignores the context in which writing occurs and writing is seen in the same way – it does not consider what is written or who is writing (Badger & White, 2000). Bayat (2014) also notes that, in the process approach, there is too much emphasis placed on the draft. Selvaraj and Aziz (2019) concur that implementation of the process approach requires a lot of time. Also, the quality of writing tends to be ignored; teachers focus on drafting, editing, and revising, and, in the end, learners' writing does not improve (McQuitty, 2016).

2.4.3 Genre approach

The genre approach is somewhat similar to the product approach. The similarity lies in the shared focus on linguistic skills and the ability of the learners to express themselves in writing. However, in the genre approach, the emphasis is on the context in which the text is produced (Badger & White, 2000). The context serves to accommodate the reader and thereby reflects the purpose of the writing (Dirgeyasa, 2016). Nordin and Mohammad (2017) view the genre approach as an extension of the product approach and agree with Dirgeyasa (2016) that in the genre approach the emphasis is on the social content, which is the purpose that the text serves.

The implementors of the genre approach believe that writing is situational and that writers write something to achieve a purpose within a context (Hyland, 2003). Similarly, Selvaraj and Aziz (2019) highlight that in the genre approach the emphasis is on the various types of writing, text types, and the social need for writing. In other words, instruction motivates learners to focus on content, context, and audience when writing.

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In the genre approach, CLT is the language teaching approach followed to teach writing. The instructional technique of the genre approach is strategy instruction, which is used to help learners to distinguish between the different genres. The writing tasks expose learners to examples of different genres to study their structures. The focus of the writing activities is on the purpose of writing and learners learn how to write different types of texts (Hyland, 2003). In addition, writing pursues a certain goal, for example, a recount retells, a procedure describes, and an information report informs (Hyland, 2003).

According to Oliveira and Lan (2014), in the genre approach, writing development occurs in three phases which are deconstruction, joint construction, and independent construction. In deconstruction, learners are introduced to model texts in the form of demonstration, modelling, and discussion about the language features and the purpose of the specific genre is introduced. In joint construction, teachers collaborate with learners to develop text that is similar to the model text, and lastly, in independent construction, learners construct their own texts with teachers providing less support to give learners the opportunity to work independently.

Similar to the product approach, in a genre approach lesson, learners are presented with a genre. However, in this context, the focus of writing is the communicative purpose and the targeted audience of the genre. The lesson emphasises the writing style and how the information is organised. The teacher models the genre, for example, a personal recount. The teacher highlights to whom a recount can be told and why. In a shared writing lesson, the teacher develops a personal recount collaboratively with the learners. In addition, the information learnt in the product approach about the features of a genre is reiterated to guide learners about the features of the targeted genre. Learners are then allowed to write a personal recount on their own and the teacher provides developmental feedback.

Badger and White (2000) note that learners learn to be conscious about writing as learning to write involves imitation and analysis of text types. Hyland (2003) adds that teachers teach learners how to distinguish between genres, noting their structures, so they can write them more effectively. Selvaraj and Aziz (2019) add that learners' writing is scaffolded. They are introduced to model text, collaborate in writing the model text, and then work independently. Therefore, genre instruction reduces writing anxiety, especially for novice writers (Selvaraj & Aziz, 2019).

In defence of the genre approach, Hyland (2007) clarifies that the genre-based writing instruction approach is explicit and systematic. This means that the learning outcomes are clear, learners know what is learnt for a target text, and they are exposed to the learning framework which entails the knowledge of the language and context. Dirgeyasa (2016) supports the idea and mentions that writing instruction is goal-oriented. In other words, writing entails a style expressed to show a language pattern for the targeted genre or type of writing. In order for the writer to achieve a writing goal, Troyan (2016) further adds that the writer expresses and links ideas.

The genre approach, like the other above-mentioned approaches, has received criticism. Oliveira and Lan (2014) criticism of the genre approach is that learners reproduce the text. Furthermore, teachers with limited pedagogical knowledge might fail to contextualise the knowledge to learners which in turn may restrict learner creativity. Cheung (2016) concurs that the reproduction of text limits learner creativity. In addition, the focus on the organisational structure limits learners' thinking about the processes involved in writing. Furthermore, McQuitty (2016) reflects that too much emphasis on forms and features causes teachers to lose focus on the situational nature of genres.

2.3.4 Process–genre approach

Badger and White (2000) point out that the process–genre approach is the synthesis of the other three approaches. Ugun and Aziz (2020) agree and elaborate that it is an integration and extension of the three basic approaches, whilst Neupane (2017) attests that it is a complementary use of the process and genre approaches. Nordin and Mohammad (2017) term it an eclectic approach. Overall, the scholars agree that the process–genre approach combines the practices of the product, process, and genre approaches.

The instructional approach of the genre-based approach is strategy instruction. According to McQuitty (2016), teachers who use strategy instruction teach learners the process of writing strategies relevant to the targeted genres. In this way, learners learn the writing process and the features of the genre. The focus of the instruction is to expose learners to the purpose of writing, the audience, and the message.

According to Agesta and Cahyono (2017), process–genre instruction has six steps, namely preparing, modelling and reinforcing, planning, joint construction, independent construction, and revising. In the preparation step, learners observe the generic organisational text

structures. In modelling and reinforcement, learners are introduced to different model texts in order to discover the purpose and structure of texts by comparing them. In the planning step, learners connect with the topics through brainstorming, discussion, and reading of similar materials. Brainstorming arouses learner interest to help them to come up with ideas to prompt writing (Hussain, 2017). During the joint construction step, as in the genre approach, the teacher, together with the learners, constructs a text. The learners give the teacher the ideas and the teacher writes. In independent construction, learners compose texts independently and the teacher guides learners in the process of writing. In the last step, revising, learners revise their drafts either with their peers or with the teacher. Learners work on the final draft which is published to motivate the learners to write.

A process–genre approach lesson extends the three approaches. Learners use the strategies learnt in the product, process, and genre approaches with more focus on applying the skills learnt in these approaches, for example, developing an information report on a topic they like. Learners produce texts by taking into consideration the structure of the text, such as a general statement, defining the item, and describing why they like it. Whilst producing the text, they take into consideration the processes of developing the text, like structuring ideas, drafting, editing and revising the text, and then writing a final draft based on the feedback received from the teacher or their peers. Learners look beyond the development of the text and think about why they are developing the text and with whom they are going to share it.

Some scholars have identified the strengths of the process–genre approach. Nordin (2017) highlights that this approach acknowledges the elements of the other two approaches, for example, it uses the model texts in a more focused way, meaning that the different types of genres are shared with learners whilst engaging learners in the process of writing. Ugun and Aziz (2020) agree that it covers the language knowledge, the context and purpose of writing, as well as the skills for language use. Bizetto (2020) asserts that the process–genre approach sees writing from a social perspective and writing as a recursive process that develops awareness of learners' composing skills.

The introduction of the process–genre approach is a solution to instructional practices. The process–genre approach assists teachers in overcoming the limitations of the other three basic approaches (Neupane, 2017). Teachers pitch the development of writing skill according to the learner's needs (Badger & White, 2000; Pujianto, Emilia & Ihrom, 2014;

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Neupane, 2017). Learners get to experience learning to write in a series of stages from a particular situation to a text and the teachers are there to facilitate the learners' progress by providing guidance on knowledge and skills (Badger & White, 2000). Finally, "teachers should focus on increasing students' experiences of texts and reader expectations, as well as providing them with an understanding of writing processes, language forms, and genres" (Hyland, 2003:26).

2.3.5 Implications of the writing approaches

CAPS advocates the process approach (DBE, 2011:17). On the other hand, it promotes learner exposure to the structure and features of different types of texts, that is, the writing genres (DBE, 2011:90). Yet when it comes to writing activities, CAPS promotes sentence writing and builds to paragraph writing, which is aligned to the product approach (DBE, 2011:21). The way the curriculum is structured, it subtly promotes the process–genre approach. Therefore, it requires teachers who have a deeper understanding of the different writing approaches to clearly understand what CAPS requires concerning the teaching of writing in the Foundation Phase.

Different writing approaches are vital for different learning situations. According to Ugun and Aziz (2020), the product approach is most suited for young learners who are classified as novice writers. Dirgeyasa (2016) further elaborates that the product approach is relevant for learners of low proficiency and low motivation, whereas the process and genre approaches are suitable for average to advanced writers (Ugun & Aziz, 2020). Hyland (2003) is of the view that teachers should synthesise the approaches to allow learners sufficient understanding of the processes involved in writing, the purpose of writing, the context within which texts are developed, and aspects that give the texts meaning.

Selvaraj and Aziz (2019) support the notion of the synthesis of the approaches and state that teachers should blend them. Furthermore, Badger and White (2000) affirm that the approaches complement each other. However, McQuitty (2016) warns that to effectively implement the writing approaches, teachers need the training to contextualise the writing approaches to identify variations. In addition, Neupane (2017) states that teachers should consider the language level of the learners, the classroom size, and contextual factors related to the learning environment. Overall, Westwood (2019) advises that teachers provide instruction that supports learners to enable them to experience success in writing.

Alharbi (2017) believes that principled eclecticism is the most effective way of teaching language. According to Alharbi, principled eclecticism is a pluralistic approach to language learning. Teachers use a variety of language learning approaches to teach learners writing skills. Teachers first determine the learner's needs and learning styles and thereafter design practical and functional writing lessons that incorporate various instructional skills. Alharbi (2017:34) is of the view that writing teachers should undertake "a well-rounded approach that meets the diversified needs of their learners". This means that the writing approaches should address the text, context, and needs of the learners. For example, at Foundation Phase level, learners need more support in learning to write. A Grade 1 teacher might let learners label a picture to build vocabulary. The learners will then use that vocabulary to describe a picture for an information text that they are going to share with a friend. In this way, the teacher addresses the needs of the learners by allowing them to label the picture with the assistance of the teacher and later to write an information text that explains the context of the writing to a friend.

2.4 Pedagogies for teaching writing to primary learners

At Foundation Phase level, learners require a great deal of support to learn a targeted skill, in this case, writing. To effectively teach learners to write, Ugun and Aziz (2020) argue that second language teachers should provide second language learners with a variety of scaffolding. Scaffolding instruction is beneficial to second language learners (Cole & Feng, 2015; Carson, 2019; Kornmann, 2019). Carson (2019) identifies two ways of scaffolding – task and material. According to Carson (2019), task scaffolding assists the teacher by breaking the writing task into small manageable tasks. Material scaffolding assists by providing learners with written cues to complete the writing task at hand. The teacher needs to identify the needs of the learners and facilitate the writing activities by identifying the scaffolding required by learners. In this respect, there are different models of instruction that teachers may use to scaffold learners towards the development of a language skill.

2.4.1 Explicit writing instruction

The effective development of writing skills relies on explicit writing instruction. Explicit instruction ensures that teachers provide an experience for learners to learn both language and content (Hyland, 2015). In addition, Swandi and Netto-Shek (2017) assert that explicit writing instruction should be given attention for learners' writing skills to be fully developed

and for them to produce text that shows different and high order skills. Mastan, Maarof and Embi (2017) explain that explicit instruction has a positive effect on ESL learners' writing performance and should be made an essential part of ESL writing pedagogy. It can be noted that explicit instruction supports the learners to achieve the high skill level required to learn a language and its content.

Explicit writing instruction is beneficial to ESL learners. Tsiriotakis *et al.* (2020) conducted an explicit writing strategy intervention with English foreign language learners. The findings of their intervention revealed positive aspects related to the suitability of explicit writing instruction given to ESL learners. First, the instruction significantly improved the overall quality of the learners' writing, which was related to the improved composition process. The learners engaged in genre-specific strategies for planning and composing genre knowledge procedures and self-regulating strategies. Secondly, it developed a positive attitude to writing in learners. Finally, the instruction catered for all learners' levels of writing. Tsiriotakis *et al.* (2020) concluded that explicit writing strategy instruction was effective for ESL learners.

Even though different scholars have highlighted the benefits of explicit writing instruction, there are factors that contribute to challenges in its implementation. These include insufficient time to teach writing (Korth, Wimmer, Wilcox, Morrison, Harward, Peterson, Simmerman & Pierce, 2017; Mastan *et al.*, 2017; Rietdijk *et* 2018); teachers who do not know how to deal with writing in their lessons (Bizetto, 2020), meaning that they do not trust their ability to teach writing (Korth *et al.*, 2017); teachers who experience challenges in the organisation and sequencing of classroom instruction (Han & Hiver, 2018); and an inadequate writing curriculum and structured pedagogy to teach writing (Naghdipour, 2016). There are, however, writing instructional approaches that address explicit writing. The following section deals with instructional approaches to address the need for explicit writing.

2.4.2 Interactive writing

Interactive writing is an instructional approach aimed to acquaint learners with an understanding of what it means to write (Williams, 2018). In interactive writing, the role of the teacher is to scaffold in which the teacher explicitly teach writing strategies to novice writers (Brotherton & Williams, 2002). Furthermore, Wall (2008) found that interactive

writing makes writing both interactive and collaborative and it models the writing process for learners.

The overall focus of a writing lesson in the interactive writing instructional model is to guide learners towards independent writing. Teachers and learners build up to the creation of a meaningful message that is free of spelling and grammatical errors (Brotherton & Williams, 2002) which means that learners learn the conventions of spelling, syntax, and semantics by writing letters, lists, and stories correctly (Button, Johnson & Furgerson, 1996). Additionally, the teacher teaches writing mechanics in context (Wall, 2008). Overall, interactive writing complements other writing practices, for example, shared writing and journal writing (Roth & Dabrowski, 2014).

Interactive writing is primarily developed for early-grade writing instruction from the preparatory grades to Grade 1 (Brotherton & Williams, 2002). However, scholars have researched and modified its efficacy in grades beyond Grade 1. Wall (2008) shared her experience of teaching a class of Grade 3 learners using a news article in a whole-class setting. She found that during the progression of the year, by teaching the learners interactive writing skills, they developed more complex sentences and the overall text was longer. In addition, she used interactive writing in addressing ESL learners in a small-group setting and found that it increased the learners' participation and application of concepts when the learners were brought back to a whole-group setting.

Roth and Dabrowski (2014) share four key shifts on how to modify interactive writing for Grade 2 to Grade 5. The key shifts are first, the lesson flow is more fluid and dynamic. Second, elements of share the pen are modified. In share the pen, learners take turns to write. Third, lesson decrease in fluency whilst increasing in length. Lastly, the teaching points expand and extend around genre Roth and Dabrowski (2014:36) During share the pen, learners discussed writing conventions, and as it did not necessarily require many learners, this could be done by one learner while the rest of the learners discussed what was written. The focus of the lesson is on learners conveying the message through writing for a specific genre. As a result of using these key shifts, learners from Grade 2 show progress in writing fluency and require less time writing sentences as in Grade 1 and below.

Evidence shows that interactive writing can be beneficial to learners in different learning situations. Brotherton and Williams (2002) assert that interactive writing is useful for

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learners who are struggling to write. Roth and Guinee (2011) affirm that interactive writing can be used in content areas across the curriculum and can be adjusted to suit teaching styles and the needs of learners. Putri (2016) adds that, in interactive writing, activities are learner-centred from start to finish. Learners share their language experiences and ideas about what they want to write with the group.

2.4.3 Inquiry, modelling, shared writing, collaborative and independent writing model

Read (2010) developed an instructional model to scaffold writing instruction using the following steps: inquiry, modelling, shared writing, collaborative writing, and independent writing (IMSCI). IMSCI models both product approaches (with a focus on genre) and process approaches to writing.

In the first step, inquiry, the teacher reads a specific genre and discusses the features of it. In modelling, the second step, the teacher models how to write text of the genre discussed. In the third step, shared writing, the teacher writes a text for a target genre together with the learners, and the learners engage in what decisions they will make when they write the text independently. The fourth step entails collaborative writing, in which the learners work together to produce a text. Lastly, in independent writing, the teacher gives a topic to the learners without instruction for them to write independently about a target genre.

Scholars have researched the IMSCI model in different learning situations. Lott and Read (2011) conducted a study on a science project with Grade 1 learners who struggled to write. As a result of the scaffolded instruction, however, they were able to write about a life cycle. Using the scaffolded writing model, Rahayu, Rahman, Sopandi and Sujana (2020) conducted a study of Grade 4 learners learning to write a personal letter. They found that scaffolded writing improved learners' writing abilities. Read, Landon-Hays and Martin-Rivas (2014) identified that IMSCI was beneficial for learners who experienced challenges with writing. In their study to find out if scaffolded instruction was beneficial for learners with low outcomes in learning, Read *et al.* (2014) found IMSCI instruction reduced learner anxiety and enhanced learner motivation to write.

Read *et al.* (2014) assert that during the use of IMSCI, learners internalised the characteristics of the genre to use when they wrote independently. Furthermore, it

integrated reading and writing processes and learners worried less about the product as they engaged in the process of writing. Above all, interactive writing can be used to teach any genre and improves teacher efficacy in teaching writing (Read *et al.*, 2014).

Cole and Feng (2015) support the facilitation of lessons using IMSCI to support ESL learners. They found it to be more beneficial when lessons were facilitated in a small group so learners would have more opportunities to use the second language. According to Cole and Feng (2015), ESL learners scaffold, acknowledge each other's strengths, and are more confident in engaging in writing tasks in small-group instruction. Several benefits were identified with the use of IMSCI instruction, however, in the studies conducted, the number of learners was small (Håland, 2017; Rahayu *et al.*, 2020), meaning that the efficacy of the IMSCI model was high in classrooms with a small number of learners. Consequently, teachers with high numbers of learners may find it challenging to implement this instruction. Alternatively, it can be used to scaffold learners during guided writing.

2.4.4 Self-regulated strategy development

Learners with limited writing abilities need explicit writing instruction. In 1993, after identifying that learners with writing challenges had underlying mental challenges that related to effective writing, Graham and Harris developed the self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) instructional model. Graham and Harris (1993) claim that learners with writing challenges have limited knowledge on how to develop and organise ideas, control and regulate the writing process, and control and monitor the quality of the text that they produce.

In addressing the writing challenges experienced by what they termed less capable learners, Graham and Harris (1993) pioneered the SRSD model to teach writing. SRSD is a strategy instruction approach meant to teach learners strategies for planning and revising texts whereby learners learn self-regulating strategies and the writing process (Graham & Harris, 1993). The SRSD instructional approach combines explicit instruction in self-regulation procedures with strategy instruction (Mason & Shriner, 2008, Rietdijk *et al.*, 2018).

According to Graham and Harris (1993:170), the goals of the SRSD are for learners to:

(a) master the higher level cognitive process involved in composing; (b) develop autonomous, reflective, self-regulates use of effective writing strategies; (c) form a positive attitude about writing and about themselves as writers.

Therefore, the writing instruction should help learners to develop effective strategies for planning and revising.

Harris, Graham and Mason (2006) identified five stages of SRSD. The first stage is "develop background knowledge" in which learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to apply a general planning strategy combined with a genre-specific strategy. In the second stage, which is "discuss it", learners practice finding story parts as stories are read out loud. The third stage is "model it" in which the teacher models how to plan and write a story. Modelling improves learner engagement and motivation to write (Curtis, 2017). In stage four, "support it", the teacher and learners plan and write together using the general planning strategy. The last stage is "independent performance" when learners write the story on their own using the strategies taught.

SRSD is explicit, cognitive strategy instruction. According to Tsiriotakis *et al.* (2020), SRSD is a multi-component and multi-characteristic instructional approach. The multi-component aspect covers complex learning, whereby teaching improves learners' composition skills to improve their attitude towards writing, whilst the multi-characteristic aspect covers the learners' diverse needs. This ultimately means that the instruction improves strategic behaviour, writing knowledge, and learner motivation to write.

In addition, SRSD is systematic and mastery-oriented instruction. McQuitty (2016) notes that in a writing lesson, learners are taught pre-writing skills to discuss strategy, then model, memorise, and practice the strategy. The lesson progresses to a guided form and then moves to independent practice. Mason and Shriner (2008) explain that in the use of SRSD learners are taught self-regulating procedures in which they set goals, teach themselves, reinforce what they have learnt, and monitor their own progress.

Scholars have identified the efficacy of SRSD in teaching ESL learners. In their study on the effect of strategy instruction, in this case SRSD, Mastan *et al.* (2017) discovered that SRSD improves learners' content, vocabulary, language use, and writing mechanics and learners are able to produce longer and more meaningful sentences. On the other hand, Tsiriotakis *et al.* (2020) conducted a study on the impact of explicit writing intervention on

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English foreign learners and identified that in the use of SRSD learners used metacognitive skills and self-regulation strategies that resulted in an improvement in the quality of learners' writing.

SRSD is beneficial for learners in the lower primary grades. Graham, Harris and Mason (2005) conducted a study with Grade 3s in which they found that learners wrote longer and more complete stories and persuasive essays that were qualitatively better than learners in the control group. Harris, Graham and Mason (2006) conducted a study with Grade 2 learners and experienced similar findings to the Graham, Harris and Masson study with Grade 3 learners. Zumbrunn and Bruning (2013) conducted a Grade 1 study that was similar to the Grade 2 and 3 studies, although the length of the stories was longer. They found that the learners used story components in their writing.

In sum, SRSD is an instructional approach that is applicable for use at different primary grade levels. The Grade 2 and Grade 3 studies were conducted in small-group setting (Graham *et al.*, 2005; Harris *et al.*, 2006) whilst the Grade 1 study took place in a whole-class setting (Zumbrunn & Bruning, 2013). Therefore, it can be concluded that SRSD is beneficial in small-group and whole-class settings. Another dynamic is that in the studies of Graham *et al.* (2005) and Harris *et al.* (2006), the participants were struggling learners but in Zumbrunn and Bruning's (2013) study, the participants were learners who could write independently on a topic of choice. Therefore, the implementation of this instructional model is suitable for different types of learners' educational needs. Teachers should consider the type of learners, the writing level, and the setting in which the instruction is presented.

2.4.5 Translanguaging instructional strategy

The South African LiEP (DoE, 1997) promotes additive bilingualism, that is, maintenance of the learner's home language whilst promoting access to effective acquisition of additional languages. The policy acknowledges that learners' language needs to be accommodated when they learn new language skills. However, in learning a second language, there are factors that influence the process in a multilingual context. Learners can interlanguage by producing their own language whilst transitioning to learning a second language (Tarone, 2012; Bennui, 2016). Therefore, it is vital to discuss translanguaging processes in this study of Foundation Phase ESL learners to determine the instructional strategy to use to accommodate learners' dynamic language development.

García and Lin (2017) view translanguaging as two-fold: first, as the fluid language practice of bilinguals; and second, as a pedagogical approach that addresses language practices. From García and Lin's (2017) view, learners in this study can benefit from a translanguaging strategy. García and Wei (2014) argue that teachers need to construct curricula and pedagogies that build on the socio-political, socio-historical, and socio-linguistic profiles of bilingual learners. MacSwan (2017) is of the view that translanguaging, should be used as a pedagogical approach to teach an additional language in recognition of teachers' and learners' multilingual backgrounds, that is, the learning of language develops around the social context. Teachers should consider learners' language background and how the language background contributes to them mastering the targeted skill. In addition, teachers need to build on and develop learners' additional language skills whilst educating them (García & Wei, 2014). Teachers who use translanguaging view it as a pedagogical tool for language learning (Henderson & Ingram, 2018). In recognition of learners' language needs, it is vital for teachers to provide assistance, and translanguaging can be another form of support provided to learners. Use of first language is the foundation for learning and scaffolds learners to learn an additional language (Pierwieniecki & Smith, 2021). Therefore, learning from the basis of a home language benefits the development of language skills and translanguaging reinforces the other language to increase understanding (Ngcobo *et al.,* 2016).

Multilingual learners perform multimodal activities when learning a language through translanguaging. Translanguaging is beneficial in teaching and learning in a multilingual classroom (Mpofu, 2021). In a case study that examined Grade 2 learners' translingual writing, the learners in Machado and Hartman's (2019) study were able to assert their bilingual identities by using their own language to replace the words they could not write in the target language. The learners showcased their languages and noted that with the use of their own language repertoires, it was easy for them to express themselves. In this way, learners solved language comprehension and production challenges through the creation of their own text (Velasco & García, 2014). Machado and Hartman (2019) concluded that with translanguaging young learners can make creative and strategic choices in their writing across languages.

García and Wei (2014) share insight into how teachers can use translanguaging as a pedagogy and state three categories of translanguaging strategies. The first category is the attentiveness of teachers to meaning-making, that is, teachers encourage translanguaging

for understanding and allow learners to use inner speech. The second category is the use and design of classroom resources. Since this research focuses on lower primary school learners, the appropriate strategies relevant to them are availability and the development of multilingual texts, multilingual word walls, and multilingual sentence starters. The final category is the design of curriculum and classroom structures which includes grouping learners according to their home language to encourage collaborative dialogues and cooperative development of tasks, and the engagement in research tasks to allow learners to translanguage as they find new information and integrate ways of translanguaging and producing knowledge.

There are, however, challenges with the implementation of translanguaging. There is lack of directive policy and teacher training on how it should be implemented (Machado & Hartman, 2019). García and Wei (2014) note that teachers need to learn about learners' complex and dynamic language practice. In addition, García and Wei (2014) posit that unless translanguaging is acknowledged in government schools, it will remain a pedagogical strategy that is used outside the confines of the department's regulations. It would be beneficial to learners that policy accommodate translanguaging as a scaffolding instruction for learners who come from a multilingual context.

Different scholars (Adebileje & Akinola 2020; Alharbi, 2017; Kumar, 2013; Mwanza, 2017) advocate for the use of an eclectic method, which is an approach that integrates different teaching methods, taking into consideration the language skill taught, and the needs of the learners. This sentiment aligns with Wei, Lin and Litton (2018) who suggest that countries should look at the teaching context and explore a variety of teaching methods rather than focus on only one method. I agree with the view of Wei, Lin and Litton (2018) that countries should look at the context in which a language is taught and should consider the types of learners in order to inform the curriculum and teaching approaches to be implemented by teachers.

2.5 Teacher pedagogical competence in teaching writing

Teacher competency encompasses different skills for teachers to improve their practices. A teacher should have curriculum competency to teach effectively (Selvi, 2010). Furthermore, Selvi (2010) highlights that an English language teacher should have lifelong learning skills which include the ability to identify and address the needs of the learners,

create an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning, and be innovative in the way they to impart knowledge. Hamad (2015) points out that teachers' inadequate qualifications and training impacts on the implementation of the proposed Sudan Practical Integrated National English programme and on the aim to improve learner skills. Furthermore, unqualified English teacher practices influence learners' English proficiency (Adebileje & Akinola, 2020). For example, the results of the pedagogic competency test of Indonesian English elementary teachers found that 90,5 per cent of the teachers fell within the poor and fair categories, meaning that the teachers' pedagogic competency needed to be improved (Sikki, Rahman, Hamra & Noni, 2013).

Research has shown that teachers have an array of challenges in taking up their role to teach writing skills to learners that stem from teacher pedagogical competence. Scholars agree that pedagogical competence involves knowledge and skill in teaching and learning (Ningtiyas & Jailani, 2018; Sahana, 2018). The knowledge aspect covers cognitive abilities, that is, content knowledge, pedagogic content knowledge, and general pedagogic knowledge (Guerriero, 2014). The skills covers the teachers' ability to create effective learning processes (Ningtiyas & Jailani, 2018).

Sikki *et al.* (2013) define pedagogic competence, first, as what the teacher does to address the needs of the learners. They state, "pedagogic competence is mastering the learners' characteristics from the physical, moral, spiritual, social, cultural, emotional and intellectual aspects". Second, they look at the expectations from the teacher, by which they mean "mastering the theory of learning and learning principles, developing curriculum, organising learning, communicating effectively … [and] taking the reflective action to improve the quality of learning" (Sikki *et al.*, 2013:144).

Sahana (2018) concurs that a pedagogically competent teacher is capable of managing the teaching and learning process from planning to assessment processes. Furthermore, Shahana notes some basic areas of developing pedagogical competences, that is, developing learning design, developing learning materials, developing management skill, mastery of using teaching aids, use of proper teaching methods and techniques, and developing management, reinforcement, and encouragement skills. In other words, a teacher is someone who is skilled to identify the different learners' needs whilst having the knowledge and expertise to address the curriculum and reflect on processes to improve practices. Overall, teacher pedagogical competence is the teacher's ability to plan lessons,

present the content using different teaching strategies, address learners' educational needs, and administer assessments.

2.5.1 Effective lesson planning

The first step to effective teaching is effective planning (Ayua, 2017). A lesson plan is a systematic plan of what the teacher will cover in a lesson (Farrell, 2016). Four basic elements guide the planning process, objectives, content, methodology, and assessment (Ayua, 2017). The development of the task needs to be considered when planning lessons (Fujii, 2016). In addition, the teacher thinks about the materials, sequences, timing, and activities to engage in during the presentation of the lesson (Farrell, 2016).

Before engaging in presenting a lesson, a teacher needs to identify the learning objectives (Farrell, 2016; Milkova, 2012). Farrell (2016) asserts that a well-written objective is the first step in daily lesson planning. In addition, Farrell (2002) advises teachers to use action verbs such as present, explain, list, etc. to guide them in how to design a lesson. Milkova (2012) elaborates that the learning objective determines the learning activities and strategies that the teacher will use in the lesson. Furthermore, Uhrmacher, Conrad & Moroye, *et al.* (2013) highlight that objectives guide teachers on the content to cover. Milkova (2012) argues that when the teacher informs the learners about what they will be doing, this helps to allow learners to follow the presentation and understand the rationale behind the learning activities. Ayua (2017) asserts that teaching is effective when the objectives are realised.

There are different schools of thought on the processes of lesson planning. Li and Zou (2017) argue that a teacher who plans effectively plans for instructional activities takes into consideration the learners' communicative needs and instructional objectives. Farrell (2016) argues that a clearly thought-out plan minimises confusion on learner expectation and assists teachers to easily manage classrooms. On the other hand, Milkova (2020) is of the view that a lesson plan should not be an exhaustive document but should provide a general outline on teaching and learning goals and how the teacher plans to achieve them.

All in all, the lesson plan's overall goal is for learners to be taught, and, above all, for teachers to reflect on their practices to address learners' needs in instances where lesson plans did not meet the intended goals. Farrell (2002) points out that during the lesson teachers should make interactive and evaluative decisions to determine the lesson's successes or failures to reflect against the lesson objectives. Teachers should reflect on

the success of the tasks, the appropriateness of the materials, and the pace of the lesson to know what to improve for future lessons. Farrell (2002:28) asserts that a carefully thought-out lesson plan can result in more efficient use of instructional time and beneficial teaching and learning processes.

In recent years, in Gauteng, it has been a practice to provide teachers with scripted lesson plans. The provision of the lesson plans is aimed at reducing teachers' planning and administrative workload so that teachers can focus on teaching (Fleisch & Schöer, 2014). However, the provision of the lesson plans has not had an impact on teacher practices and learner performance (De Clercq & Shalem, 2014).

2.5.2 Teaching writing to English second language learners

ESL learners experience a collection of challenges in learning writing skills. It is argued that learners low proficiency in writing originates from two factors, the teacher and the learner (Fareed, Ashraf & Bilal, 2016). According to Fareed, Ashraf and Bilal (2016), teachers lack the pedagogic approach to teach writing and also lack the ability to motivate learners to write. Learners have language difficulties related to vocabulary and grammar, as well as generating and conveying ideas in English (Hyland, 2003; Daud, Daud & Kassim, 2016). Second language learners need a significantly large vocabulary to understand the target language (Viera, 2017). They have challenges with composing skills and focus more on sentence construction instead of on generating ideas (Tsiriotakis *et al.,* 2020). In addition, learners lack the motivation and practice to write (Fareed, Ashraf & Bilal, 2016).

Choudhury (2013) shares the same belief about writing difficulty, stating that writing is a complex process that requires creating and organising ideas to form a cohesive text that is readable. Overall, ESL learners experience cognitive overload as they have to learn the target language and simultaneously to learn write the content (Hyland, 2003). As a result, writing takes time and requires concentration and effort (Han & Hiver, 2018). There is a need for teachers to prepare writing lessons that address learners' needs. Arvizu (2020) asserts that young elementary learners benefit from engaging with visuals and stories to develop vocabulary to promote communicative competence.

Different scholars attest that writing is a challenging skill to learn for ESL learners (Hyland, 2003; Abdelrahman *et al.*, 2017; Hussain, 2017; Han & Hiver, 2018; Hapsari & Sukavatee, 2018). Moses and Mohamad (2019) argue that developing learners' ability to write is one

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of the major challenges that ESL teachers face in schools nowadays. Teachers have to attend to challenges related to addressing learners' lack of interest and motivation to write as well as their poor writing abilities, namely lack of vocabulary, poor spelling, and poor grammar (Moses & Mohamad, 2019).

Therefore, teachers require knowledge on how to address the writing challenges that ESL learners face by tailoring the writing instruction to the needs of learners (Wall, 2008). On the whole, teachers who teach ESL learners should have the general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge to address learners' needs beyond the content and also address the content required in teaching writing skills.

Scholars support collaborative teaching in the teaching of ESL writing (Sibanda, 2018; Kerfoot & Van Heerden, 2015; Ngubane, Ntombela & Govender, 2020). The use of collaborative teaching approaches addresses differentiation in the class and thereby accommodates learners' educational needs (Sibanda, 2018). An important aspect of collaborative learning is scaffolding and Kerfoot and Van Heerden (2015) acknowledge that scaffolding enhances learners' language skills. Ngubane, Ntombela and Govender (2020) support Kerfoot and Van Heerden's (2015) stance that teachers should use collaborative writing activities to enhance learners' writing skill.

2.5.3 Teaching and learning environment

Teaching resources are part of lesson preparation to enhance teaching and learning processes. Resources increase learner participation, interest, and ability to write (Apsari, 2017). They contribute to the learners' writing plan (Wright, 2013) and scaffold learners writing (Ugun & Aziz, 2020). In addition, Machado and Hartman (2019) point out that resources such as drawings and symbols not only serve to scaffold but are a valid form of communication for multilingual learners to enhance expression. However, teachers need to model the use of resources to learners to expand their written communication skills (Bingham, Quinn, McRoy, Zhang & Gerde, 2018).

The writing instruction used by teachers to facilitate their lessons has an impact on the writing environment in their classrooms. In their study on the relationship between the writing instruction and physical environment, Billen *et al.* (2011) found that teachers who facilitated process writing instruction created writing-rich classroom physical environments and had more evidence of learners' and teacher's writing activities. It is evident that a

writing-rich environment is beneficial to writing instruction and the quantity of writing activities that learners engage in to develop an interest in writing.

According to Blease (2014), teachers face challenges with regard to the provision of resources to effectively teach writing. The lack of resources impacts on writing tasks and the effective teaching of writing (Graham, 2019). Teachers from low-income communities are the most affected by the lack of or poor resources provisioning compared to their counterparts in high-income communities (Manyike & Lemmer, 2014; Desai, 2016).

Teachers find it difficult to be innovative in situations where there is a lack of resources. One of the interventions of the DBE was the introduction of the CiPELT, which aimed to equip teachers to teach English as well as guiding them on the development of teaching and learning resources where they were limited (British Council, 2012). Sebetoa (2016) identified that teachers lack innovation and creativity to develop resources and rely on the DBE workbooks. This aligns with Maja's (2019) findings that teachers lack knowledge of interactive activities which means that they tend to rely on charts and pictures to teach ESL. Tomlinson (2012) is of the view that teachers should develop their own materials to accommodate the learners' needs and address ways of acquiring a language.

2.5.4 Curriculum interpretation

The other areas of pedagogic competence are teacher knowledge, understanding, and interpretation of the curriculum. Research suggest that teachers have limited understanding of the curriculum requirements for the subjects they teach. De Clercq and Shalem (2014) identified that the majority of South African teachers have weak pedagogical content knowledge, whilst König *et al.* (2016) revealed that German teachers of English find that teaching according to their content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge is a challenge. Teachers are not aware of writing approaches advocated by the curriculum (Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014; Akinyeye & Plüddemann, 2016; Mpiti, 2016). They are not pedagogically confident to teach the content prescribed by the curriculum (Barnard, 2017). They misunderstand teaching strategies, and, as a result, find it challenging to fully implement the strategies advocated to teach the language skills (De Lange, Dippenaar & Anker, 2018). They misinterpret strategies (Fischer & Frey, 2013; Abongdia & Mpiti, 2015) and resort to using strategies that they are comfortable with when they teach (Olds, McCraney, Panesar-Aguilar & Cale, 2021; Akinyeye & Plüddemann, 2016; Joseph, 2017).

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Teacher professional development initiatives influence teacher practice. Teachers who are not adequately prepared professionally tend to take decisions that do not improve their practices (Korth *et al.*, 2017). Inadequate preparation is a contributing factor to learner performance (Harris & Graham, 2016). Korth *et al.* (2017) argue that teachers who are well-supported have a positive attitude towards teaching and are willing to try skills that they are supported on to improve their practices. Suprayogi, Valcke and Godwin (2017) highlight that teachers are not explicitly trained to address differentiated instruction. Olds *et al.* (2021) assert that professional development is a tool to support instructional practices. In other words, structured and specific professional development assists in improving teacher practices.

2.6 Writing practices in different countries

Internationally, teachers face challenges in meeting the needs of learners' whose performance and attitude towards writing differs (McKeown, Brindle, Harris, Graham, Collins & Brown, 2016). Various countries have writing instruction that they advocate for teachers to implement in their respective countries. The implementation is flagged by a range of contextual challenges that teachers and learners face.

2.6.1 American writing practices

In America, the teaching of writing has evolved over the years. In the early 1900, teaching of writing was merely the expression of thought on paper and the emphasis of the writing instruction was handwriting (Hawkins & Razali, 2012). The passing of time brought about changes in instructional practice and handwriting instruction was no longer the focus of writing instruction. Instead, language instruction was introduced with the emphasis placed on spelling and grammar (Hawkins & Razali, 2012). Instruction was teacher-directed with sentence correction activities and was focused on memorisation rather than self-expression. In this era, learners were taught to write at the level of words and sentences with a limitation on writing ideas. Later whole-language, emergent literacy, and process writing gained popularity (Hawkins & Razali, 2012). Currently, strategy instruction is used to teach writing (McQuitty, 2016).

According to Harris and Graham (2016), SRSD is a scientifically proven instructional approach for teaching composing across grades and genres. The research conducted in America reflects that American scholars are in support of the implementation of SRSD

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(Graham *et al.*, 2005; Harris *et al.,* 2006; Zumbrunn & Bruning, 2013, McKeown *et al.*, 2016; McKeown, FitzPatrick, Brown, Brindle, Owens & Hendrick, 2019). Research findings reflect that SRSD is beneficial for learners in lower primary classrooms. The efficacy of the instruction looked at struggling learners (Graham *et al.*, 2005; Harris *et al.*, 2006), achieving learners (Zumbrunn & Bruning, 2013), and teacher development interventions (McKeown *et al.*, 2016; McKeown *et al.*, 2019).

Harris and Graham (2016) argue that teachers face contextual factors that impact on the development of learners' writing skills. In their review of SRSD policy implementation, Harris and Graham (2016) identified that inadequate teacher preparation to teach writing is a major contributing factor to learners' poor writing performance. They further identified that teacher preparation challenges are related to teachers finding it difficult to address the learners' diverse writing needs and limited time to implement the writing instruction.

When the curriculum does not specify how teachers should teach writing, it impacts on teacher practices (Santangelo, Harris & Graham, 2016). In their literature review, which included American writing instruction, Finlayson and McCrudden (2020) identified that in most of the conducted-writing research, whole-class teaching dominated the writing lessons. McKeown *et al.* (2016) conducted a study on practice-based professional development on SRSD in lessons facilitated through SRSD to accommodate learner differentiation to change from whole-class teaching to small-group teaching. McKeown *et al.* (2016) question why teachers do not instruct writing in groups like they do with reading.

2.6.2 Indonesian writing practices

English in Indonesia is taught as a first foreign language (Widiati & Cahyono, 2016; Zein, 2017); it is optional at primary school level (Mappiase & Sihes, 2014). In taking the stance to adopt English as a foreign language, the country follows international trends in its adoption of an approach to follow in teaching English to its citizens (Fatima and Masduqi, 2017). CLT with its learner-centred method of teaching is the suggested approach to teaching English as a foreign language (Zein, 2017). As a result, writing is taught using the CLT approach.

Studies conducted reveal that Indonesia is faced with English foreign language (EFL) writing implementation challenges, namely inadequate time allocation, lack of resources and instructional materials, and learner materials that are not suited to the country's culture

(Zein, 2017; Dewi, 2019). The inadequacy of time given to writing pressurises teachers to either cut writing in the teaching lesson or give writing as homework, which results in writing receiving insufficient attention (Widiati & Cahyono, 2016).

There is strong research on the teaching of EFL writing in Indonesia at high school level (Fatima & Masduqi, 2017). According to Fatima and Masduqi (2017), the use of the three writing approaches, namely product, process, and genre improves learners' writing skills and builds towards learners' writing competence. However, Fatima and Masduqi (2017) argue that the success should not be in each of the approaches but should incorporate the insight of all three approaches to motivate and engage learners in their work.

Teachers acknowledge that writing is a difficult skill to teach (Yaacob & Suriyanti, 2016). At high school level, the writing instruction follows a genre approach (Yaacob & Suriyanti, 2016). The process starts with learners writing vocabulary, sentences, paragraphs, and summaries of texts (Setiadi, 2020). In most cases, learners write sentences or paragraphs dictated by the teacher (Setiadi, 2020). Teachers rely significantly on textbooks when teaching writing (Hapsari & Sukavatee, 2018).

There is limited research on the teaching of EFL writing in primary grades. Most of the studies conducted on EFL writing are at high school level (Setyono, 2014; Ayudhia, 2017; Widiati & Cahyono, 2016). Studies at primary level address literacy skills (Sary, 2015; Setiadi, 2020; Hidayat, 2020) and teacher pedagogies (Sikki *et al.*, 2013; Dewi, 2019), and are not specifically focused on the teaching of writing.

A study conducted on primary school Indonesian teachers of English revealed that the teachers lacked pedagogic competence to teach English (Dewi, 2019). In addition, Sikki *et al.* (2013) identified that lack of competence is related to lesson planning, creation of instructional media, teaching grammar, and vocabulary. On the other hand, studies on literacy skills reveal that the use of oral language skills, that is, speaking and listening, helps learners to apply what they have learnt to reading and writing (Sary, 2015). Furthermore, Setiadi (2020) reveals that teachers teach writing activities through reading. Following the product approach, they dictate the sentences or paragraphs to learners with the focus on correcting errors.

2.6.3 Kenyan writing practices

In Kenya, the curriculum follows multilingualism. When learners start school, they use their mother tongue and Kiswahili as the languages of instruction and, when the learners get to Grade 4, they transition to English as the language of instruction (Morse, 2015). However, the intention of the language is not realised and stakeholders interpret and implement the language policy differently (Morse, 2015). Kisirkoi and Mse (2016) argue that even though the country has a clearly defined English curriculum, the objectives of the language curriculum have not been fully met.

Some studies conducted on the teaching of writing in Kenya have highlighted that teachers rely heavily on textbooks (Onchera & Manyasi, 2013; Jumba, 2016). Okari (2016) is of the view that primary school learners should be taught writing in stages. In the first stage, writing instruction should take the form of a developmental sequence whereby learners learn through imitation by watching the teacher write and then imitate the teacher. The next stage is copying in which the teacher presents a writing model for learners to copy. The last stage is independent writing in which the learner writes without assistance nor guidance by the teacher.

Generally, in Kenya, teachers use old-fashioned methods of teaching, that is, mostly rote learning, lecturing, and question-and-answer methods (Kisirkoi & Mse, 2016). Teachers dominate the lessons through the use of a teacher-centred approach to teaching language (Onchera & Manyasi, 2013; Jumba, 2016; Kisirkoi & Mse, 2016). In teaching composition skills, the method used most often by teachers is write-correct-write where learners are not exposed to discussions that motivate them to write compositions (Jumba, 2016). In teaching essay writing, lecturing, demonstration, and question-and-answer methods are mostly used (Nyang'au, 2014).

According to Okari (2016), learner interest should be central to the teaching of writing. When learners are motivated, they feel the need to write and are encouraged when the writing activities serve to communicate (Okari, 2016). However, Kenyan learners cannot write competently (Koross, Indoshi & Okwach, 2015). The writing tasks given to learners are controlled composition in which learners are given exercises to complete a sentence using pictures as a guide, filling in blanks, rewriting paragraphs, and retelling stories (Onchera & Manyasi, 2013). Learners are not exposed to a variety of texts with teachers relying on the

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text given by the textbook, and they do not go beyond the scope of the textbook in exposing learners to write different forms of functional writing activities (Onchera & Manyasi, 2013; Jumba, 2016).

The way teachers are trained has an effect on teacher practices. What teachers are taught at training colleges and the practices in school are different (Metto & Makewa, 2014). Teachers are taught the learner-centred approach in theory, but there is limited practice of the learner-centred approach and, when teachers get into classrooms, they teach the way they were taught (Metto & Makewa, 2014). Teachers see the introduction of contemporary methods, namely the process and genre approaches, as a waste of time (Jumba, 2016).

2.6.4 South African writing practices

South African teachers find it challenging to implement the prescribed curriculum. Wildsmith-Cromarty and Balfour (2019) argue that writing requirements are clearly stated in CAPS but that does not necessarily mean that they occur in class. Studies conducted identified that teachers either do not fully understand or they are unaware of the writing approaches advocated by the curriculum (Julius, 2013; Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014; Allen, 2015; Akinyeye & Plüddemann, 2016; Mpiti, 2016). According to Graham (2019), many learners are not taught writing based on their needs and the way they deserve to be taught. The writing curriculum does not have a coherent structure that instructs how writing should be taught in order to lay a solid foundation for writing development (Graham, 2019).

Teacher understanding of the curriculum impacts on the way teachers teach writing. Blease (2014) argues that teacher ability to interpret the curriculum is beneficial to learners' writing skills. Research findings by Sebetoa (2016) reveal that teachers dwelt on writing activities that they were comfortable to teach and neglected what the curriculum had prescribes. To be able to follow the curriculum, teachers require subject content knowledge to be able to address what is prescribed and facilitate lessons according to the prescripts of the curriculum.

Most of the research conducted on the teaching of writing is in the higher primary and secondary school grades in South Africa. According to Jane-Francis and Mpiti (2014), learners have challenges with writing skills, which Jane-Francis and Mpiti attribute to the style of teaching and methods used by teachers. Findings from the studies of Blease (2014),

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Sebetoa (2016), and Ngubane, Ntombela and Govender (2020) reveal that writing is taught in a whole-class setting through question-and-answer discussions.

Foundation Phase studies were conducted that examined English home language rather than ESL, as in this study. In the English home language studies, writing activities involved learners writing about pictures to construct sentences (Blease, 2014) and the use of pictures to guide learners to write stories (Govender, 2015). The use of pictures is not limited to the Foundation Phase but extends to the Intermediate Phase too. Maja (2019) found that teachers often relied on charts and pictures. Abdulla and Yunus (2019) argue that pictures are beneficial for ESL learners as they assist learners with ideas and vocabulary, which means that pictures scaffold learners' writing development (Ugun & Aziz, 2020).

Various factors contribute to teachers' writing practices. There are demands placed on teachers by subject advisors to complete prescribed learners written work, which pressurises teachers into deviating from the curriculum prescripts in focusing on the process of developing learners as writers (Julius, 2013). Also, classrooms have limited space which results in overcrowding (Manyike & Lemmer, 2014; Akinyeye & Plüddemann, 2016) and there is a lack of resources (Desai, 2016). In addition, teachers lack the pedagogical skills and subject content knowledge to teach writing (Julius, 2013, Blease, 2014, Govender, 2015; Mpiti, 2016). Blease (2014) identified that there are no writing workshops to train teachers on the how to teach genres.

In summary, factors such as teacher awareness of curriculum requirements, demands to finish the curriculum, number of learners in classrooms, access to teaching and learning resources, and lack of teacher training in teaching writing have a negative impact on how teachers facilitate writing lessons which, in turn, affects the development of learners' writing skills.

2.7 Theoretical framework

A theoretical framework forms the basis from which knowledge is constructed and provides structure and support for the research study (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). This study is based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978), which was founded by Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934), a Russian psychologist, who contributed to the field of educational psychology.

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Sociocultural theory is set on the premise that learning is an act of enculturation through interaction, negotiation, and collaboration (Scott & Palincsar, 2013). Vygotsky looked at learning through the lens that a learning situation occurs within a broad social system and organised activities (Scott & Palincsar, 2013). In other words, culture and the way the learner is socialised influence the child's mental development (Panhwar, Ansari & Ansari, 2016).

Vygotsky was of the view that people within the environment of the learner influence the learning process and how the learner responds to learning thereby shaping the learner's conceptual understanding (Cole, John-Steiner & Souberman, 1978). Therefore, a learner learns through support from others, is influenced by cultural beliefs, internalises information, and applies the knowledge as an outcome of learning.

Sociocultural theory refers to language and writing as some of the psychological tools required for cognitive development (Cole *et al.*, 1978). Adults teach these tools to children and children use them as mediators for more advanced psychological processes (Karpov & Haywood, 1998). Learners use of advanced psychological processes indicates that they have reached the level of independence reflecting proficiency in the skill taught.

This study explores the pedagogies of writing in ESL in Foundation Phase classrooms. Vygotsky's mediation and ZPD are the concepts used to identify the instructional practices that teachers use to develop learners' writing skills. Kozulin (2004:5) clarifies that "there are different types of literacy acquired in different contexts and used for different purposes", which supports the notion that language learning is of a multicultural and multilingual nature. This theoretical framework views the concepts of sociocultural theory related to pedagogic practice in the teaching of writing in English as a second language, which are mediation and the zone of proximal development.

2.7.1 Mediation

Mediation is the part played by people within the learner's world using tools and symbols as mediators that assist in changing the learner's performance (Turuk, 2008). Panhwar *et al.* (2016) support the view that mediation is when the learner interacts with the world through mediational cultural tools that have psychological and social functions. Mediation occurs through the use of psychological tools and cultural artefacts which are referred to as tools for learning (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015).

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Lantolf, Thorne and Poehner (2015) are of the view that these tools are modified by generations through the passing of time to suit the communicative and psychological needs of learners. At the beginning of their writing development, a learner is introduced to writing by writing with writing media such as crayons, pencils, or pens and paper. As a learner progresses through the passing of time and is exposed to writing at a higher level, they are introduced to writing with a computer. At the same time, the communication aspect begins with the learner writing in class for the teacher or peers and progresses to writing outside the school context.

Masuda and Arnett (2015) affirm that the ultimate aim is for the learner to use the language tools to direct themselves from social to private negotiation. Furthermore, in the context of language learning, mediation assists with progress in competency and fluency which are as a result of cognitive improvement. Kozulin (2004) supports the notion of mediation in comparison to the concept of mediated learning in that children learn through adult mediation to improve learner cognition.

Writing is a social activity that is socially mediated by teachers and peers (Thompson, 2013). In the context of writing instruction, the teacher develops the learners' writing skills through peer collaboration in the joint construction of a writing task. The teacher guides the learners to use materials such as books and wall displays to mediate the writing activity (Thompson, 2013).

2.7.1.1 Regulation

Lantolf *et al.* (2015) identified regulation as a form of mediation that uses tools to enhance learners' skills. When the learner relies on assistance from other people, for example, peers who are above them or teachers or any adult who can assist them in improving a certain skill, they engage in regulation by others. Hence, the teaching of writing occurs in a collaborative way. The teacher presents the writing lesson by modelling the correct way of writing, for example, a procedural text through shared writing. In this way, writing is learnt collaboratively.

The next level is object-regulation whereby a learner relies on objects for assistance. The teacher provides the learner with, say, a graphic organiser of a procedural text for a learner to use as an object that regulates the learner to follow the steps required to write a

procedural text. The graphic organiser shows the learner what to do first, then next, and last.

The last level is self-regulation which is when the learner acknowledges their pre-existing knowledge to gain new knowledge and internalises what is learnt. At this level, the learner writes a procedural text on their own applying the skills learnt during the regulation by others and object regulation phases. Self-regulation indicates that a learner has become proficient in a skill they have learnt (VanPatten & Williams, 2015).

2.7.1.2 Internalisation

Language is a powerful, cultural artefact which is influenced by outward behaviours through social interaction. However, language learning does not end with outward behaviours; it moves to inward activity (Lantolf *et al.,* 2015). The concept of internalisation is when language as a tool takes up a psychological function in recognition of pre-existing knowledge (Lantolf, 2000). VanPatten and Williams (2015) assert that tools influence the outcome of a learning process. Panhwar *et al.* (2016) agree that learning awakes a variety of internal development processes.

In view of the above, a learner who has learnt writing as an internal development process can apply new knowledge to write for different purposes. Therefore, a language teacher structures lessons that recognise learners' prior knowledge and build new knowledge on the existing one. In the context of writing skill, teacher instruction should not limit the teaching of writing to what the teacher introduces as new information but should award learners with the opportunity to internalise what is learnt and apply the knowledge, for example, through different types of writing.

2.7.2 The zone of proximal development

Vygotsky describes the ZPD as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Cole *et al.,* 1978:86).

Lantolf *et al.* (2015) elaborate and refer to the ZPD as a state of movement from dependency to independence through guidance by an adult expert or through collaboration

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with peers who are more capable than the learner. The ZPD promotes learner interaction and cooperative learning pedagogy (Panhwar *et al.,* 2016) and is dependent on scaffolding. The teacher is a knowledgeable other who assists the learner to reach the ZPD through social interaction (Masuda & Arnett, 2015).

Scaffolding is the support that the teacher provides to a learner to achieve understanding of an area in which a learner struggles or the support that a learner needs but would not achieve on their own (Panhwar *et al.,* 2016). Lantolf (2000) and Turuk (2008) agree that scaffolding focuses on the amount of support provided to the learner and progress is worked on by the teacher and the learner collaboratively. In relation to the teaching of writing, a teacher uses collaborative instruction such as cooperative learning and facilitates learning through a learner-centred approach.

Sociocultural theory is relevant for this study as it illustrates that people within the learners' environment contribute to the learning process. Learning occurs as a result of interaction between the teacher and the learner and also amongst learners through collaboration as the learning process progresses. When learners collaborate, there is interaction and negotiation of meaning.

In relation to the development of writing skill through the theoretical concept of mediation and the ZPD, Vygotsky's theory provides a framework as to how a teacher can structure instruction. Instruction starts with support from teachers, moves to the support of peers, and then to the support of other learners to enable the learner to internalise what they have learnt. Overall, the theory provides clarity on who develops the skill of writing and how it is developed.

2.8 Conclusion

The literature review provided insight into the importance of the teaching of writing skills, and the approaches and pedagogies suitable for teaching writing to primary learners. The background to how writing is taught in South Africa and other countries was provided. The review of the literature highlighted factors that impact on teacher practices in writing instruction which include teacher competency to teach writing, contextual factors (namely provision of teaching and learning resources), and learners' English language proficiency levels. The factors identified impact on teachers' efficacy in teaching writing in the ESL

curriculum and in teaching pedagogy. Lastly, sociocultural theory's mediation and ZPD were presented for teachers to consider how learners learn based on their educational needs.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

Successful research depends on a relevant choice of research methodology and design. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018:309), "a methodology is a set of procedures that guide the use of design" while Ngulube (2015) describes it as research methods that are techniques for gathering data. The choice of the research methodology depends on the research goals that the researcher aims to achieve (Tracy, 2019). In view of what is described as research methodology, below are the research procedures followed to successfully complete and produce data of high quality for this research.

3.2 Research paradigm

Rehman and Alharthi (2016:51) explain that "a paradigm is a basic belief system and theoretical framework with assumptions about ontology, epistemology, methodology, and methods". Scotland (2012) defines ontological assumption as what constitutes reality, epistemological assumptions as how knowledge is created acquired and communicated, methodology as a plan of action about a choice and use of a particular method, and lastly, methods as techniques and procedures used to collect and analyse data. Research can be traced to a form of methodological, ontological, and epistemological position (Scotland, 2012), meaning that the researcher's belief system shapes how the researcher conducts the research and is influenced by how they view reality, how knowledge is constructed, and how data is collected and analysed.

Different paradigms structure research. Positivism assumes that reality is not mediated by our senses and is independent of humans (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). A positivist researcher is objective, works with observable reality, and believes in the discovery of facts (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). The common belief of a positivist researcher is in universal generalisation and the power of replicable research (Wahyuni, 2012). Post-positivists, on the other hand, believe in knowable reality and can involve making or testing claims (Leavy, 2017). A post-positivist researcher employs multiple methods in a single study with the aim of discovering and properly explaining assumptions to create new understanding of a phenomenon (Panhwar *et al.,* 2016). The critical paradigm is concerned with issues of power in social life related to race, gender religion, class, and so on (Asghar, 2013). A

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researcher who conducts critical paradigm research is less concerned with the nature of truth and operates within a power-rich environment (Leavy, 2017).

In addition, there is an interpretivist paradigm, which is adopted in this study. In an interpretivist paradigm, the researcher seeks to understand and describe meaningful social actions from the perspective of the research participants (Creswell, 2007). Rehman and Alharthi (2016) point out that in interpretivist ontological belief, there are multiple realities and reality is approached from different angles by different people. Furthermore, Rehman and Alharthi (2016) posit that reality is mediated by our senses and that the goal of research is to understand the interpretation of individuals about the phenomenon that they interact with.

Thanh and Thanh (2015) contribute by noting that in an interpretivist paradigm, the researcher asks broad research questions to understand, explore, and interpret the social context, believing that understanding the context in which the research occurs play a vital role in the interpretation of the data. Apart from the context, Goldkuhl (2012) notes that understanding the subjective meaning in the studied phenomenon is important to the interpretivist researcher. The interpretivist believes that meaning is not discovered but it is constructed (Scotland, 2012). What a person knows is due to interaction with the world around them and the observations they make. Therefore, interpretivism subscribes to constructivism (Wahyuni, 2012).

This research aimed to understand the pedagogical practice of Foundation Phase teachers from their perspective and the factors that contribute to the way they teach writing in their respective grades. The interpretivist research paradigm was suitable for this research to gather data from the perspective of the teachers in order to gain an in-depth understanding of what contributes and influences their practices.

To understand the multiple realities, six teachers were interviewed, observed teaching writing for their respective grades, and their curriculum documents were analysed. Open-ended questions were used in the semi-structured interviews to provide teachers with individual opportunities to relate to me how they taught writing and the factors that contributed to their practices. The teachers provided their subjective interpretation of how they taught writing, why they taught it the way they did, and what informed them to give the learners the kinds of writing activities that they did. Therefore, I gained subjective meaning

on the reality of the teachers from their perspective in understanding the writing phenomenon.

This research followed an interpretative style of analysis whereby data extracts were analysed to find the hidden meaning drawn from them (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). In order to present how data is relevant or useful in answering the research question, analysis moves beyond the meaning of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2012). An interpretative style of analysis was used, and analytic narrative was used for all themes relating to the data extracts (Crowe, Inder & Porter, 2015).

3.3 Research approach

A research approach depends on how the researcher structures the research with reference to the research questions, the responses anticipated, and the philosophical assumptions the researcher brings to the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Three research approaches used in conducting research are qualitative, quantitative, and a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches known as the mixed method approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Generally, qualitative and quantitative research approaches are commonly used in education, sociology, psychology, and history disciplines (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016), whereas the mixed method approach is used in health, social science, and the behavioural sciences (Halcomb & Hickman, 2015).

According to Kumar (2011), a qualitative inquiry is a study that seeks to explore the experiences of a group of people in their environment. In qualitative research, the aim is to gain insight into a practice (Creswell, 2007). Creswell and Creswell (2018) point out that qualitative research has a holistic account, meaning that it looks at the overall picture and the factors that contribute to the way things are.

Quantitative research is commonly used in exploratory research with the aim of building or refuting evidence (Leavy, 2017). According to Rutberg and Bouikidis (2018), quantitative research employs the use of numbers and accuracy. Asghar (2013) outlines that quantitative research expresses a phenomenon in terms of quantity. Data is collected objectively and systematically from a large sample to present results in a general way (Queirós, Faria & Almeida, 2017).

In research that seeks to describe, explain, and evaluate a complex problem, mixed method research is applicable (Leavy, 2017). Mixed methods are confirmatory in nature (Asghar, 2013). A combination of the data collection methods allows the researcher to capitalise on the strength of qualitative and quantitative approaches to improve their weaknesses and provide an integrative, comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon (Halcomb & Hickman, 2015).

Based on the descriptions of the research approaches above, I acknowledge that a research design is informed by the research paradigm, data collection methods, data analysis, and the overall aim of the study. Therefore, this research adopted a qualitative research approach. The aim of this research was to discover how Foundation Phase teachers taught writing in ESL and why they taught it the way they did. Qualitative inquiry allowed me to observe lessons and interview teachers to explore the Foundation Phase teachers' pedagogical approaches with the purpose of finding out how the teachers taught writing in ESL in their respective classrooms. Data was gathered from teachers in the school setting by observing the practices of individual teachers across the Foundation Phase as a means to understand the holistic teaching of writing in ESL.

Foundation Phase teachers experiences were observed in their environment, in this instance, their classrooms. The observation within the schools allowed me to observe not only the lessons but also the teaching and learning environment, which included their classrooms, the resources they used to teach writing, and the resources that the learners used to enhance their writing skills.

3.4 Research design

Research design is a way of designing and conducting research (Ngulube, 2015). In research design, the researcher has a procedural plan to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately, and economically (Kumar, 2011). A procedural plan follows the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

This research adopted a case study design. According to Yin (2018:45), a case study is "an empirical method that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the 'case') in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and

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context may not be clearly evident". Creswell (2007) clarifies the case study further and describes it as a method that provides insight into an issue of a descriptive nature. Patten and Newhart (2018) point out that a case study focuses on a group, event, or context.

There are different types of case studies. However, this research followed a multiple case study. According to Yin (2018), a multiple case study is when a case study is organised around two or more cases. Yin (2018) notes that in multiple case study designs the evidence is more compelling and has analogical reasoning. The sampling of two schools that taught different home languages was done to represent multiple cases.
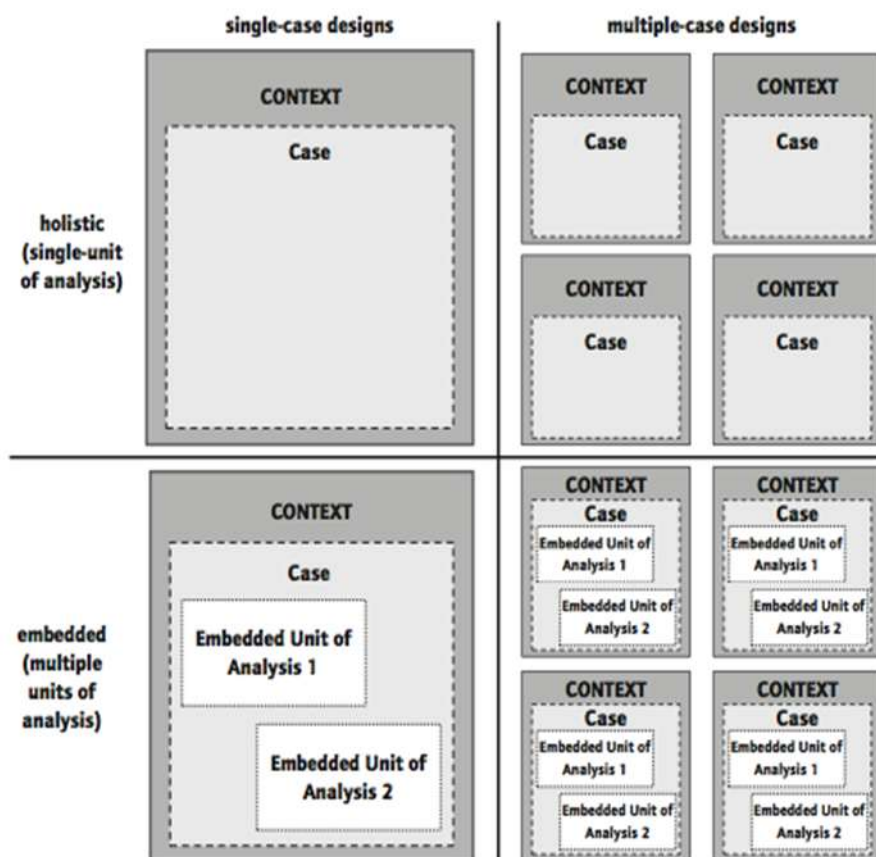
Figure 3. 1 Basic types of designs for case studies (Yin, 2018)
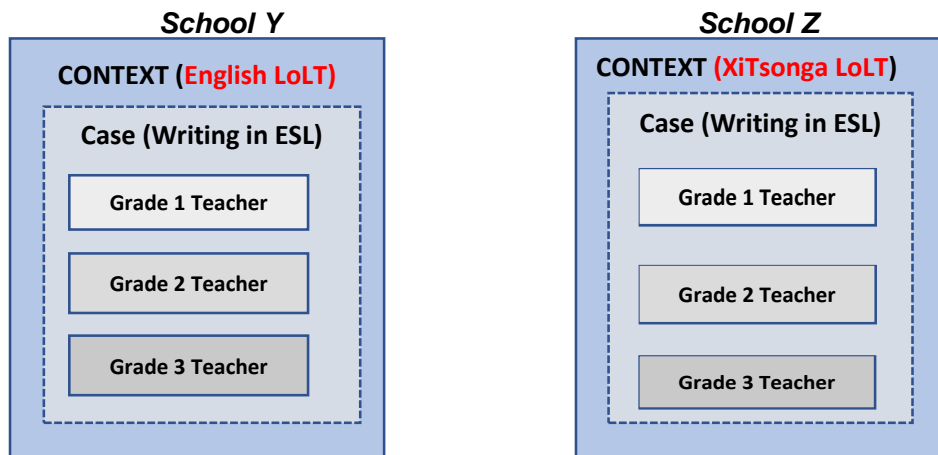
Figure 3. 2: Schematic representation of this research case study, adapted from Yin (2018)

Figure 3.1 above shows the schematic representation the types of designs for case studies as explained by Yin (2018). This research adopted a multiple case study with three embedded units as represented on Figure 3.2. In School Y, the LOLT is English and, in School Z, the LOLT is Xitsonga. Therefore, the two schools provided two different contexts in which writing in ESL is taught and they represented multiple cases. The Grade 1, 2 and 3 Foundation Phase teachers formed the different levels of the units of analysis and represented the three embedded units of each of the cases. The aim was to uncover the teaching of writing in different grades in the Foundation Phase and to report the findings in the grades and across the Foundation Phase at the two selected schools.

This research sought to find out how Foundation Phase teachers taught writing in ESL and why they taught it the way they did. The research question was descriptive in nature and required information to clarify the phenomenon which, in this case, was writing in ESL in the Foundation Phase. The use of a multiple case study enabled me to gather detailed data in the form of lesson observations, interviews, and analysis of teacher curriculum documents to gain in-depth and descriptive insight into teacher practices in their context of Foundation Phase classrooms.

3.5 Research methods

3.5.1 Researcher's role

As the researcher, I was instrumental in the data collection process. During the lesson observations, I was a non-participatory observer (Patten & Newhart, 2018) and did not have an influence on how teachers presented the writing lessons. The focus was on gathering the data through listening to the lessons and completion of the lesson observation tools.

When conducting the interviews, I established a respectful, non-judgemental and non-threatening environment for the participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). During the interviews, I used a teacher interview protocol (see Appendix F) to guide the interview process. However, the teachers were politely asked clarity-seeking questions when I felt that more information was required. I showed interest by probing and also used assuring cues to make the participants comfortable to share their experiences and perspectives.

3.5.2 Sampling

There are different strategies to choose a sample, such as probability sampling, which is a sample done with all participants standing a chance of being selected to participate in a study, and non-probability sampling, also known as purposive sampling, which is when some participants are excluded (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018).

In purposive sampling, the researcher samples participants whom they believe will give the required information (Kumar, 2011). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggest that in purposive sampling participants are selected based on a criterion. Patten and Newhart (2018) warn, however, that in purposive sampling there is no generalisation as participants are selected based on limited criteria. In this case, the criteria were limited to teachers teaching English at the level of second language, teaching in the Foundation Phase, and the school was to be situated in a township. This research, therefore, adopted purposive sampling. Table 3.1 below shows the profile of the research participants.

Table 3. 1: The research participants

School Code	School Y			School Z		
School Home Language	IsiZulu			Xitsonga		
School LOLT	English			Xitsonga		
Teacher Code	TY1	TY2	TY3	TZ1	TZ2	TZ3
Age	36	54	42	38	29	46
Grade Taught	1	2	3	1	2	3
Class Size	45	48	45	35	37	45
Teacher Qualification	Bed Foundation Phase	Junior Primary Teacher's Diploma	Bed Foundation Phase	Bed Intermediate & Senior Phase	Bed Foundation Phase	Senior Primary Teacher's Diploma
Overall Teaching Experience	12 years	25 years	8 years	6 years	6 years	12 years
Current Grade Teaching Experience	4 years	10 years	3 years	1 year	2 years	4 years

In this purposive sampling, I selected participants based on the data required to address the research question, goals, and purpose of the study (Tracy, 2019). The research

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questions sought to discover how Foundation Phase teachers taught writing in ESL. The two schools' ESL learner performance results for 2019 were analysed. Even though School Y's LOLT was Xitsonga, the learner performance in ESL was higher than the learners at School Y who offered learning and teaching in English. Teachers who taught a Foundation Phase grade and who were willing to share their teaching practices were selected to participate in the study.

Convenience sampling was another method of non-probability sampling used in this study. Convenience sampling is when a researcher chooses participants based on the participants being easily accessible to the researcher (Cohen *et al.*, 2018). The two township schools were selected because, apart from offering English as a subject and at a level of second language, they were located in a township which was easily accessible to my domicile. This meant the schools were selected based on their geographic convenience (Cohen *et al.*, 2018). Selection of the two schools gave a perspective of the pedagogical practices of the township schools which, in most cases, were the schools that offered English as a second language.

3.5.2.1 Sample Size

The selection of participants in the study was informed by the research questions (Crowe *et al.,* 2015; Kumar, 2011). In this study, the research questions sought to determine how Foundation Phase teachers taught writing in ESL, therefore, the selection of teachers was informed by teachers who taught in a school that offered ESL and teachers who taught in the Foundation Phase. The focus of the research was on gaining understanding across the Foundation Phase and not necessarily on the number of teachers in the Foundation Phase. The selection of a teacher in each Foundation Phase Grade provided the required insight.

Crowe *et al.* (2015) highlight that sample size depends on the practicality of sourcing data from the data sources. Yin (2018) suggests that rather than focusing on the number of sample cases, the focus should be on the empirical light shed by the case study. It can be noted that in a case study the number of participants does not have much of an impact on the results of the research as findings can be generalised based on the case study rather than on the number of cases (Yin, 2018). Creswell and Creswell (2018) posit that the data analysis plan influences the sample size.

To gain insight into practices in the Foundation Phase, there was a need for representation of each of the grades in that phase, that is, Grades 1, 2 and 3 which offered English as a second language. This criterion excluded Grade R as one of the other grades in the Foundation Phase. The three teachers in each of the two sampled schools collectively resulted in six teachers overall. Participation of two schools and six teachers gave insight into the data required for the research questions.

3.6 Data generation

Data generation determines research success. Research success is achieved through the collection of data through primary data sources (Creswell, 2007). Data in this research was collected through semi-structured interviews, lesson observations, and document analysis (Creswell, 2007; Baxter & Jack, 2008; Ngulube, 2015). Below is the discussion of each of the data sources used.

3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews are commonly used in qualitative case study design. Kumar (2011:144) defines an interview as "any person-to-person interaction, either face to face or otherwise, between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind". An interview is a data collection technique with the purpose of obtaining a special kind of information (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

I used a semi-structured interview guide also known as a research protocol (Patten & Newhart, 2018; Ngozwana, 2018) to structure the interviews. Smith and Osborn (2007) highlight that when a researcher aims to find out the participants' perspectives on a phenomenon, then a semi-structured interview is a relevant data collection instrument to use as it is flexible. In a semi-structured interview, an interviewer can deviate from the structure of an interview guide to rephrase a question in the case that an interviewee does not understand the question (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Furthermore, Patten and Newhart (2018) mention that an interviewer can probe the interviewee with follow-up questions to get more clarity on the information required. In instances where participants provide information that the researcher feels needs further explanation, the participants can be asked clarity-seeking questions, as I did during my interviews.

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In this study, the semi-structured interviews were the main source of data generation. The six teachers sampled for lesson observation were interviewed individually at the end of the second school term. Three teachers were interviewed in their respective classrooms. The other three teachers were interviewed telephonically due to the school experiencing COVID-19 cases. For safety reasons, the interviews could not be conducted in their classrooms as was the case with the teachers at the other school. The purpose of conducting the interview was explained to the participants. I provided participants with opportunities to ask me to rephrase questions if they did not understand them, and this allowed the participants to provide information based on their thorough understanding. The interviews were, on average, 20 to 30 minutes long. A voice recorder was used to audio record the interviews and other information such as non-verbal cues were documented through field notes to back up the audio recording.

The focus of the interviews was to determine the teaching approaches, methods, and strategies that the teachers used when they presented their writing lessons; the resources that the teachers used when they taught writing; the teachers' exposure to different methods of teaching writing; and the factors that contributed to teacher instructional practices. I also gathered information related to teacher competencies, such as their teaching experiences in the grades they currently taught and across the phase, their knowledge of the CAPS writing requirements, the support they gave to learners to improve their writing skills, and the support teachers received to improve teacher-writing instruction competencies.

3.6.2 Observation

Observation is when a researcher takes field notes on the behaviour and activities of individuals at a research site (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Observations are used to gather first-hand information and triangulate data gathered from other data sources (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). A researcher should be a careful and systematic observer who pays attention to details and writes descriptively advise Merriam and Tisdell (2016). Furthermore, Merriam and Tisdell note that the use of observation assists the researcher to find information that participants may not be willing to share through discussions.

Yin (2018) suggests the use of observational instruments in case study design. In this research, I developed a lesson observation tool (see Appendix E). Teacher interaction was

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recorded through detailed notes on the teaching methods, pedagogical practice, learner interaction, and teacher and learner resources used in the lessons to enhance the teaching and learning of writing skills (Kumar, 2011).

Patten and Newhart (2018) refer to non-participant observation as observation where the researcher is not part of an activity. I observed without participating in the lessons. The school's timetable was used to schedule my observation of the lessons. One writing lesson of each of the teachers was observed. The observation time depended on the duration of the period allocated on the schools' timetables. On average, the three lessons observed were an hour long. Lessons were observed during the last two weeks of the second term when the learners had been exposed to the writing content over two terms for their respective grades.

The teachers were observed teaching an ESL writing lesson. The aim of observing lessons was to explore the teaching methods and gaining insight into why teachers used these methods, their compliance to the CAPS prescripts for teaching writing, adherence to the time allocation, and coverage of the content prescribed for writing in the respective grades. Furthermore, the lesson observations established writing words and sentences as the kinds of writing activities that the teachers gave to the learners during their lesson presentations.

3.6.3 Document analysis

In qualitative research, another data source is document analysis whereby the researcher gathers more information to support information from other data sources. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016:162), "[a] document is often used as an umbrella term to refer to a wide range of written, visual, digital, and physical material relevant to the study" whilst Bowen (2009:27) defines document analysis as a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents. A researcher should develop rules as to how to select the documents to analyse and choose documents that relate to the purpose of the research (Owen, 2014). Furthermore, Owen (2014) acknowledges that the researcher's intention makes the document more dependable.

ESL subject files of the six sampled teachers were analysed to examine how they planned their lessons with the focus on the process of planning that teachers engage in when preparing writing lessons. Lesson planning analysis focused on the writing activities given to the learners to monitor the teachers' adherence to the CAPS prescribed writing activities

for the different Foundation Phase grades. Other information of interest were the teaching and learning resources used to teach writing.

Teacher professional development records were checked to find out if teachers had been monitored on the teaching of writing, the outcomes of the monitoring, and the support provided in cases where teachers needed it. It was necessary to establish teacher attendance at in-service training of ESL as a subject to determine the kind of support teachers received within schools from the departmental heads and externally from the subject advisors.

Three samples of learners' books from each teacher were analysed. The books were purposively sampled by selecting learners who were performing at the level of the grade, those performing averagely, and those that performed poorly (Kumar, 2011). Sampling of the learners' books at different levels of performance gave me a perspective on the kinds of writing activities that the learners received based on their capabilities. To determine the kinds of differentiated activities given to the learners, I looked at whether the teachers accommodated fast learners by giving them expanded writing activities or by giving additional support to those who needed it.

Yin (2018) acknowledges that documents are useful to corroborate information from other sources; however, he warns that this information can be contradictory and that it requires the researcher to inquire further into the information required. Document analysis was the last source of data collection used to corroborate the information given during the interviews and what was observed during the presentation of the lessons.

3.7 Data analysis

In qualitative interpretive research, reporting of results highlights the views from the perspective of the researcher (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Qualitative data analysis aligns the research data gathering and reporting procedures together with the assumption of the research (Ngulube, 2015). Creswell and Creswell (2018) guide researchers to start the data analysis process with general procedures and move to analysis based on the specific qualitative design. This is a case study and it required the data to be analysed in themes. Based on this requirement, a thematic data analysis was used.

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Thematic analysis "is a method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning ('themes') within qualitative data" (Clarke & Braun, 2017:297). Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen and Snelgrove, (2016:616) clarify that thematic analysis is when participants create an understanding that brings together the commonalities and differences in describing their subjective experiences. Nowell, Norris, White and Moules (2017) assure that thematic analysis is a highly flexible method that can be modified to the needs of many studies.

I chose thematic analysis for the data analysis as it is a useful method for examining the perspectives of different research participants and generating unanticipated insights (Nowell *et al.*, 2017). Above all, as a novice in the research field, this type of analysis allowed me to gain insight into how analysis is conducted. This type of analysis allowed description of the teaching of writing from the perspective of the individual grade teachers and the teaching of writing in the Foundation Phase overall. Therefore, in this research, I adopted Braun and Clarke's (2012) six-phase approach to thematic analysis with reference to Braun and Clark (2006).

3.7.1 Phase 1: Familiarising oneself with the data

First, I familiarised myself the audio recording by listening to them several times. Thereafter, I transcribed the audio recordings (see Appendix G) with the assistance of Microsoft Office Word Dictate. Transcripts from MS Word Dictate were worked on to correct the punctuation and to ensure that the recordings were captured verbatim. The advantage of self-transcription is that whilst the researcher transcribes, there is intimate familiarity with the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). All the transcripts were read and reread several times to ensure accuracy. Notes were made about each of the data sets and individual transcripts to start analysing what the data meant. The aim was to familiarise myself with each data set and derive information that was relevant to the research question. Nowell *et al.* (2017) highlight that during familiarisation researchers familiarise themselves with the depth and breadth of the content and note patterns.

3.7.2 Phase 2: Generating initial codes

All the data sets were coded. Braun and Clarke (2012) suggest the collation of coded text as you code to ensure that the coding process is inclusive, thorough, and systematic. Colour coding of the text was done using Microsoft Word. Nowell *et al.* (2017) emphasise that

coding allows the researcher to focus on specific characteristics of the data. The data was interrogated and common items which related to the topic were identified. Coding allowed me to identify patterns that answered how the Foundation Phase teachers taught writing in ESL. Codes were collapsed and a final list of codes was developed.

3.7.3 Phase 3: Searching for themes

After coding, categories were developed from the codes. The coded data assisted in the identification of similarities and overlaps between codes (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Themes and sub-themes were identified by collapsing categories that had the same features to reflect and describe coherent and meaningful patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Themes that related to telling a story about the research topic were identified. Codes that did not fit in any of the themes were used to develop new themes and some were discarded. The reason for discarding the codes was that reporting was based on the research topic and not on everything that was said by the data (Nowell *et al.,* 2017). Themes were used to present sufficient depth and convey the meaning of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

3.7.4 Phase 4: Reviewing potential themes

Themes were checked against the collated extracts of data to check if they formed coherent patterns. Broad themes were split to form more coherent themes. Themes were reviewed in relation to the entire data set. The data was reviewed to determine if it meaningfully captured the most important and relevant elements related to the research topic. Braun and Clarke (2012) advise that if the themes do not capture the most important and relevant elements of the data, the research needs to be refined and the researcher should review the process.

3.7.5 Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

Braun and Clarke (2012) guide the researcher to clearly state what is unique and specific about each theme. Furthermore, they suggest that a good thematic analysis has themes that are focused, related, and directly address the research question. A good name for a theme needs to attract the reader and give a clear picture about the content of the theme (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Defining themes involves selecting data extracts to present and analyse. Then the story of each theme is set out with or around these extracts. I drew

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extracts from across the data to show coverage of the themes. Themes were given names and the extracts were used to describe what the data presented.

3.7.6 Phase 6: Producing the report

In a thematic data analysis approach, data is reported on narratively and is informed by the themes. The narrative tells the reader what is interesting about the extract and why the conclusions are drawn from across the whole analysis (Ngulube, 2015). Findings are then situated in relation to the existing literature on the research topic to provide sufficient evidence to support interpretation (Clarke & Braun, 2017; Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016; Nowell *et al.*, 2017). Ngulube (2015) suggests that there should be alignment of the research data gathering and reporting procedures together with the assumption of the research.

Crowe *et al.* (2015) point out that during the synthesis process, the researcher should explore the relationship of themes to each other in relation to the sociocultural context with a focus on the meanings that emerge from data that are related to the research question. The interpretation of the data in this study gave a picture of the teaching of writing in the respective grades so that I could inform and draw conclusions on the teaching of writing across the phase. I used data extracts and quotes to make arguments that answered the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Crowe *et al.,* 2015). Themes were presented in an orderly way to connect them logically and meaningfully (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Holistic writing was conducted using the identified themes in relation to the research topic and research assumptions. The findings on the teaching of writing in the different grades were presented with the aim of gaining in-depth understanding of how writing is taught in each of the grades across the Foundation Phase.

In conclusion, in this case study data analysis, the themes that emerged were used to compare the cases (Ngulube, 2015). Baxter and Jack (2008) warned that I should not analyse individual units and neglect to cover the global issue. Data was collected from the individual grade teachers representing a within-case analysis and moved to the Foundation Phase to do cross-case analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2018).

3.8 Trustworthiness

When there is rigour in the manner a researcher carries out research, then the study will be trustworthy (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The qualitative research design is known to have

issues of trustworthiness (Kumar, 2011; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Patten & Newhart, 2018; Yin, 2018). The responsibility lies with the researcher to assure rigour and trustworthiness (Crowe *et al.,* 2015). Baxter and Jack (2008) point out that the nature of a qualitative case study requires the researcher to be part of the research process, but it does mean that the researcher could be influenced by the context. Morse (2015) highlights that in qualitative inquiry the researcher tends to be biased. This research applied Lincoln and Guba's (1986) criteria of trustworthiness which are credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability as a means to address issues of trustworthiness. The criteria will be detailed below and how they applied to this research is described.

3.8.1 Credibility

Credibility is when the research achieves its intended purpose. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) view credibility as how the research findings capture the reality of the situation. Triangulation was used to ensure that the data was credible. The sampling of six teachers from two schools with the representation of two teachers for each Foundation Phase grade served the purpose of data triangulation as information was gathered from different participants who had different perspectives and worked in different contexts. The use of different data sources is referred to as method triangulation (Patten & Newhart, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The use of semi-structured interviews, lesson observations, and document analysis as data sources addressed the method of triangulation to validate the data gathered. The data gathered in interviews was checked against lesson observations and document analysis.

3.8.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the "generalisability of inquiry" (Nowell *et al.,* 2017:3). In addressing the generalisability, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) state that the findings of a study should be applicable to other situations, which means that when the research design is applied in a different context, it will result in similar findings.

This research applied member checking and thick descriptions. Member checking is the process of presenting the preliminary findings to the participants after the data analysis as a means of verifying if the findings represent their perspective and/or practices (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) and to verify if the findings captured the essence of their perceptions.

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Thick description is when the researcher identifies salient descriptions to understand the participants' contextual actions (Tracy, 2019). During data gathering at the schools, there was frequent interaction with participants. The week spent at each of the schools provided the researcher with the opportunity to understand the participants better and gain a deeper understanding of their teaching practices. In this way, the results of the study were richer and more realistic (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.8.3 Confirmability

Confirmability is the degree to which the results obtained through qualitative research could be confirmed or corroborated by others (Kumar, 2011:381). According to Nowell *et al.* (2017), confirmability is when the researcher demonstrates that the interpretations and findings are clearly derived from the data. This research applied audit trail strategy to clearly define all the research processes and keep all the data collection records (Nowell *et al.,* 2017). I kept all the research records as the research progressed. Electronic documents together with scanned hard copies were filed in folders that were created for each of the data sources from each school.

3.8.4 Dependability

Dependability is replicability of the research process. It is achieved when the researcher clearly documents the research process (Tracy, 2019). Nowell *et al.* (2017) recommend that the research process should be logical and traceable. Documents and details of the research data generation and analysis were thoroughly documented through an audit trail process to ensure that this research is replicable.

3.9 Limitations

Kumar (2011: 237) defines limitations as "structural problem[s] relating to methodological aspects of the study". Creswell and Creswell (2018) agree that limitations are methodological problems and further add that limitations are weaknesses in the research that the researcher should alert future researchers to. In addition, Tracy (2019) advises the researcher to review the limitation of their research as a guide for further research. Patten and Newhart (2018) suggest that research should indicate how the limitations affect the interpretation of the results. Below are some of the limitations of this study.

This study only focused on writing as one of the literacy skills. The findings of the study do not necessarily mean that the findings relate to literacy skills as a whole, but as a contributing factor to the development of literacy skills. The findings highlight teacher practices in teaching writing to create an awareness of how writing in ESL is taught in the Foundation Phase.

I work as an evaluator of schools. I might have interacted with teachers when I engaged in my daily core functions. Initially teachers were reluctant to take part in the study. However, they were assured that the data gathered was for study purposes and was not work-related. The data collection processes were solely based on my findings without the backing of another observer. Therefore, the findings might have been influenced by my experiences and perceptions. Member reflections and member checks were applied to address this limitation.

Gaining access to the school due to COVID-19 regulations had an impact on the initial data generation method. The scheduled face to face interviews could not take place due to infection at School Y. As a result, the teacher interviews were conducted telephonically. Some of the information that I might have picked up from teachers' gestures could not be identified due to the nature of the telephonic interview.

3.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the methodology used to conduct the study on the teaching of writing in ESL in Foundation Phase classrooms. I described the different research paradigms, including the interpretivist paradigm which was adopted for this study. Different research approaches were discussed that were inclusive of the method followed for this study which is a qualitative method. I provided details on how I purposively sampled the teacher participants for this multiple case study. The process of how I generated data using semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis data collection methods was described. A road map of how I analysed the collected data using the six-phase thematic analysis was provided. The next chapter focuses on data presentation, analysis and synthesis.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND SYNTHESIS

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I provided an outline of the research strategies that informed this study. In this chapter, I will shed light on the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis. Data from the semi-structures interviews, lesson and general classroom observations, and document analysis is presented, analysed, and synthesised with reference to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Synthesis of the themes culminates in the findings on practices of writing in relation to learners' writing development and factors that impact on learners' quality of writing tasks. In addition, insight is gained into factors that contribute to practices in writing instruction in the Foundation Phase. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the themes and sub-themes which will be described later in this chapter.

Table 4.1: Overview of themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis

THEMES EMERGING FROM THE DATA SOURCES
TEACHER LACK OF LESSON PLANNING COMPETENCY
TEACHER PREPAREDNESS TO TEACH WRITING SKILLS TO LEARNERS   • Knowledge of curriculum prescripts   • Teacher-limited knowledge of writing strategies suitable for ESL learners   • Modelling as an instructional strategy   • Misinterpretation of writing strategy   • Traditional writing instruction versus process writing instruction   • Creation of a writing-rich environment   • Consideration of learner needs
LEARNER EXPOSURE TO VARIETY OF WRITNG TASKS   • Visual literacy to support writing activities   • Types of writing activities given to learners in the Foundation Phase   • Learner exposure to different text types
DIFFICULTIES TEACHERS FACE IN TEACHING LEARNERS THE WRITING SKILLS   • Learners' language proficiency   • Teaching learners writing conventions   • Dealing with learners' learning capabilities

4.2 Teacher lack of lesson planning competency

Lesson planning involves setting learning goals, planning for teaching and learning activities, and identifying strategies for learner understanding (Milkova, 2012). Teachers should think about content, materials, sequencing, timing, and activities when planning a lesson, advises Farrell (2016). This can be identified in the responses that the teachers gave that they focused on resources when planning for the writing lessons versus planning for the different aspects of the lesson and, as a result, they neglected other aspects of lesson planning.

Of all the six teacher participants, only one understood the planning process. The teachers from the two schools had different views and practices with regard to planning for the writing lessons. Teachers at School Z focused on the ATPs and on teacher and learner resources like pictures, posters, and flashcards as the resources they used mostly to prepare their lessons. Even though the teachers prioritised the learner resources, TZ1, TZ2 and TZ3 emphasised the use of the ATPs, which is in line with the CAPS. However, TZ1 highlighted the need to link the resources to the topic, which is linked to content. This is one of the aspects of lesson planning. It was evident that teachers at School Z followed the same practice when planning for their writing lessons. The following are teachers' interview responses on the process of planning for the writing lessons:

> When we plan, we use the ATPs that are provided by DBE. Then there are posters that the school buys for us. (TZ1)

> I prepare and design the lesson using the ATP together with CAPS and then do flash cards and pictures. (TZ2)

> I plan and prepare using ATPs and then I have phonic charts, pictures, real objects, [a] print-rich classroom, magazines and newspapers. (TZ3)

Planning practice was not the same with all the School Y teachers. The teachers at School Y had different views on how they planned, even though they taught at the same school. The teachers mentioned different processes of planning for the writing lessons, namely writing instruments, teaching methods, and learning activities. The teachers responded:

> Ok, when planning for writing, all you need is writing instruments. (TY1)

Learners will be divided into different groups. (TY2)

First, I identify the objectives, the learning objectives on that specific lesson. I plan for the specific learning activities, and I plan to assess the students' understanding. And also, I plan the sequence the way I want the lesson to flow. I plan for meaning, engagement with the learners. I try to create a realistic timeline for my lesson. Then I close my lesson with assessment. (TY3)

The information that the teachers gave in interviews and observations from the document analysis was not the same. Lesson plan analysis reflected information that the researcher expected teachers to share on how they planned for writing, that is, lesson outcomes content areas, activities, remediation, and reflection. In School Z, the teachers developed their own lesson plans based on the school's lesson plan template. The lesson plans reflected lesson outcomes, content areas, activities (learner activities), and resources.

Figure 4.1 shows a sample of the lesson plan provided by the district that was used by School Y.

Figure 4.1: Sample of a lesson plan

As the sample shows, in the writing section, the lesson plans reflects the language components and learner activities. They do not show the lesson outcome or the teacher activities that should guide teachers on what to do leading up to learner activities. The lesson plans show activities that learners will do and not what teachers will do to facilitate the lesson in order to structure the writing skill to be taught on the day and, above all, the lesson plans do not reflect learning objectives to guide the teacher on the focus of the writing skill they anticipate achieving for their writing lesson.

At School Y, the teachers printed out the lesson plans but did not complete the information (note the reflection section). The lack of planning for teacher activities in both schools limited the teachers planning for specific writing skills. The way the teachers planned their English lessons in general showed that there was no clear indication as to the writing skills that the teachers anticipated they would teach by the end of the lessons.

When the teachers presented their writing lessons, the researcher observed that they emphasised the resources, which was not the main focus of the writing lesson. The lessons

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revolved around the learners naming the objects on the poster, identification of objects on the pictures, and learners writing sentences about the poster or pictures. Neither the writing skills nor the type of writing that the teachers wanted the learners to achieve were reflected in the lesson. Teacher emphasis on the resources when planning lessons has a negative impact on the improvement of learners' writing skills. Research findings by Maja (2019) revealed that teachers often relied on charts and pictures and lacked innovation in improving learners' communicative competency. Maja's (2019) findings corroborate the findings of this study that the teachers relied a lot on pictures and charts in their planning and when they facilitated writing lessons.

Li and Zou (2017) identified that teachers who plan efficiently take into consideration the role of the teacher, the role of the learners, and the processes in which learning occurs. This means planning for teaching and learning activities and how these activities will improve learner performance. Farrell (2016) and Fujii (2016) highlight that a lesson plan should have lesson objectives. Lesson objectives assist teachers to select appropriate activities to identify the focus of the lesson and give teachers the opportunity to reflect on what learners have learnt at the end of the lesson. Farrell (2016) further emphasises that teachers should engage in reflective practice to gain knowledge and monitor lesson variety to improve their practices. Lesson variety includes varying the level of difficulty and changing teaching methods of activities, namely individual, pair, group, or whole-class interaction. The level of difficulty should extend the type of writing skills, for example, starting with writing sentences, writing a paragraph, writing stories, and other kinds of texts (Farrell, 2016). It was evident from my observations that, in the lessons that the teachers planned and presented, there was no variation in the learners' activities and they did the same activities repeatedly.

Resources are part of the planning; however, when planning for writing, teachers should engage in different activities, such as planning for the learning goal, deciding on the writing content to be covered, and looking at the strategies to improve learner understanding, teaching, and learning activities that will be covered in the lesson. The provision of the ATPs and lesson plans by both the national and provincial departments created a lack of innovation in teachers to expand on the given planning documents. The teachers lacked the knowledge to go beyond what was given to them in the provided planning documents. In a critical review of the GDE professional development activities, De Clercq and Shalem

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(2014) identified that the provision of scripted lesson plans by GDE did not bring about a significant difference in teacher practices and learner performance.

Both sampled schools fell under the same district, but the teachers from School Y developed their own lesson plans and they did not use the lesson plans provided by the district as was the practice of School Z. The practice to develop their own lesson plans at School Y indicated that the lesson plans provided by the district were to be used as a guide. School Y's lesson plan covered language components including writing, lesson outcomes, learner activities resources, and reflection. The district lesson plans covered language components including writing, learner writing activities, and reflection. In comparison, even though both lesson plans did not cover all the required lesson plan aspects, namely lesson objective, learner and teacher-writing skills, differentiation, informal assessment, resources, and reflection, School Y's lesson plans were better developed than the district lesson plans.

4.3 Teacher preparedness to teach writing skills to learners

The teachers highlighted their need to be equipped to teach writing skills to learners. They stated that they were not pedagogically equipped to teach writing and required further training to improve their skills in teaching writing. TY1 stated that she did not require training, however, she stated that the subject advisor was still in the process of training and might train them on teaching writing skills. The response she gave was an indication that she still required training, like the rest of the teachers in the study. The teachers had this to say.

> I still need more training. (TZ1)

> Yes. I do need more, training. (TY2)

> I need to equip myself first before I go and teach because at the university and the school there is no one to support you. (TY3)

Teachers' limited pedagogic skills have an influence on how they facilitate their writing lessons and the kind of writing activities they give to learners. The teachers' responses could have implications for the teaching approaches and strategies that they use when they teach writing to learners. Korth *et al.* (2017) identified that when teachers are not adequately prepared professionally to teach writing that has an influence on their understanding and the decisions of the writing instruction they use in the classroom. Korth *et al.* (2017) are of

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the view that a lack of in-depth understanding of writing instructional practices results in teachers resorting to teaching learners writing skills not suited to the learners' required writing needs. Olds *et al.* (2021) agree that professional development is an important tool to support instructional practices. In their study on instructional strategies for English language learners, Olds *et al.* (2021) identified that teachers used their teaching strategies based on their own familiarity rather than on learners' needs.

Inadequate preparation by teachers to teach writing is a contributing factor to learners' performance in writing (Harris & Graham, 2016). Harris and Graham (2016) identified that teachers who lack efficacy in teaching writing tend to teach it less. As a result, learners' performance in writing is affected. On the other hand, Korth *et al.* (2017) identified that teachers who have a positive attitude to teaching writing are the teachers who have observed mentors or university lecturers modelling writing lessons and, in turn, are willing to practice what they have observed in their classrooms. Therefore, teachers need coaching and mentoring to feel comfortable and equipped to teach writing skills.

A pedagogically equipped teacher possesses specialised knowledge to provide an effective teaching and learning environment to accommodate the needs of all the learners (Guerriero, 2014). English teachers have a challenge to teach the language content that is the subject matter as well as the communicative aspect, that is, for learners to use the language as a communicative tool (König *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, the teaching of English as a second language requires teachers to have specialised knowledge to teach it over and above the learners' general learning needs (De Clercq & Shalem, 2014). In their study on teacher knowledge and professional development, De Clercq and Shalem (2014) identified that the majority of South African teachers have weak pedagogical content knowledge. Barnard's (2017) findings revealed that the teachers in that study were not pedagogically confident to teach the writing content prescribed by the curriculum, which are the same findings as in this study.

In-service programmes provided to teachers should establish the skills that teachers require through development rather than providing workshops that do not improve teacher practices. Teachers need to be trained to be able to take decisions that make them improve their practices (Korth *et al.,* 2017). Professional development is a tool that supports instructional practices (Olds *et al.,* 2021). De Clercq and Shalem (2014) assert that

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professional development activities should shift the focus from compliance to the curriculum framework to finding ways of teaching to improve learner attainment.

4.3.1 Knowledge of curriculum prescripts

EFAL in the CAPS (DBE, 2011:17) advocates that the process writing approach, which is learnt in Home Language be transferred to ESL. Teachers shared the following about their knowledge of the curriculum requirements:

> We use gestures so that learners will be able to understand. (TY1)

> The caption, it has to do with the picture. (TZ1)

> It is to write sentences with a frame. Write a caption for a picture. (TY2)

> Use punctuations already taught in Home Language. Write sentences using a frame. Example like "I like…" and then they complete the sentence. (TZ2)

> I think that their approach is based on cooperative learning. Where you do more of group work and the whole-class activities according to CAPS. (TY3)

> The approaches we must use is handwriting, writing comprises headings, and then writing of simple set of instruction, using of punctuations. (TZ3)

Teachers mostly mentioned writing activities such as writing a caption for a picture, use of sentence frames, and writing sets of instructions when they were required to identify the writing approach advocated by CAPS. One teacher mentioned the cooperative learning method. It can be deduced that, even though teachers might not know the writing approach, they do have knowledge of the writing activities to give to learners. This implies that teachers were not aware of the writing approach advocated by CAPS in their respective grades.

Different scholars found that teachers in their studies were not aware of the writing approach advocated by the curriculum, which is a similar finding to this study (Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014; Akinyeye & Plüddemann, 2016; Mpiti, 2016). Akinyeye & Plüddemann (2016) and Sebetoa (2016) found that teachers dwelt on traditional writing approaches and neglected the writing approach advocated by the curriculum which is the process approach. In Joseph's (2017) study, teachers used the traditional approach with a focus on grammar and neglected the writing process. The finding of the use of a traditional approach supports

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the identification of teachers using strategies because they are comfortable with them instead of practicing what is promoted (Olds *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, teacher practices are influenced by lack of exposure, the comfort of teaching approaches that they were taught, and what they feel suits the context that they find themselves in.

4.3.2 Teacher-limited knowledge of writing strategies suitable for ESL learners

Most teachers were not aware of writing strategies they could use to facilitate writing in ESL lessons. Teachers mentioned that they had not discovered the strategies. They used the direct approach, which is a language teaching approach, and facilitated lessons using individual work, which is a generic teaching approach. There were different views on whether there is a difference in teaching writing in home language and ESL. Teachers that highlighted that there is no difference, had the following to say about teaching writing in home language versus ESL.

> Home language, they speak it at home. They're used to it. They know the foundation. So, when I teach Home Language I go deep in details. They write stories. They understand, they are fast to understand when I teach them stories and long sentences because they speak the language. In English, they're not used to language. Some of them, they don't speak the language at home. So, when I teach, I start from the basics. And then teach them the simple sentences and then and I use pictures the most to help them understand. (TZ2)

> It (home language) advances the construction of English. (TY2)

Even though TZ2 is one of the teachers who did not identify a writing strategy used to teach writing, she understood that in teaching writing in ESL she had to scaffold and teach the basic skills. TY2's statement is in agreement with what the curriculum set as the premise for teaching writing skills in ESL. CAPS (DoE, 2011:17) states, "Many writing skills are transferred from the home language". This implies that teachers do not understand additive bilingualism, which is to apply the teaching methods used to teach home language to teaching ESL.

In a study of shared writing in writing instruction, de Lange *et al.* (2018) revealed that shared writing was not fully implemented in Intermediate Phase classrooms. However, in this study,

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even though three of the teachers mentioned shared writing as a strategy they used to teach writing, the observed teachers facilitated writing lessons through shared writing. This meant teachers used shared writing strategies unaware that the strategy was called shared writing.

4.3.3 Modelling as an instructional strategy

The ATP advocates modelling to teach writing. The expectation is that the teacher models writing by drawing a picture, writes a caption for it, allows learners to draw their own pictures, and writes their own sentences. In the Grade 1 lesson I observed, presentation of the instructional strategy was ineffective. All the learners drew the teacher's drawing and wrote the teacher's sentence. In Grade 2, the teacher used the vocabulary from the poster to write two sentences and the learners were not given an opportunity to write their own sentences using the poster. Instead, learners had to write the teacher's sentences.

Modelling is part of scaffolding instruction which is a research-based technique used to improve writing by ESL learners. In scaffolding instruction, the teacher finds out what learners know, models the writing activity through shared writing using mentor text, engages in collaborative writing, and lets the learners write independently (Cole & Feng, 2015). Curtis' (2017) action research revealed that modelling of writing strategies had a positive impact on teachers' ability to teach writing and there was improvement in learner engagement and motivation to write. However, in their study on writing instruction, De Lange *et.al* (2018) revealed that teachers were not sure about what was meant by modelling the writing process.

4.3.4 Misinterpretation of writing strategy

CAPS outlines how writing should be taught in the Foundation Phase. With regard to writing in Grade 1, CAPS states that the learner, "with the help of the teacher, writes a caption for his/her drawing and reads back what is written" (DBE, 2011:27). It was observed during TY1's lesson presentation that she wrote the sentences on the board for the learners to copy instead of allowing the learners to attempt to write the sentences on their own but with her guidance. It was evident from the sample of the learners' work that the teacher had limited knowledge on how to present the writing strategy prescribed by the curriculum.

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Figure 4.2: Samples of Grade 1 learners' writing

Figure 4.2 shows pieces of writing of different learners in TZ1's class. In all the pieces of writing sampled, TZ1 wrote the captions for the learners instead of giving learners the opportunity to attempt to write their own captions.
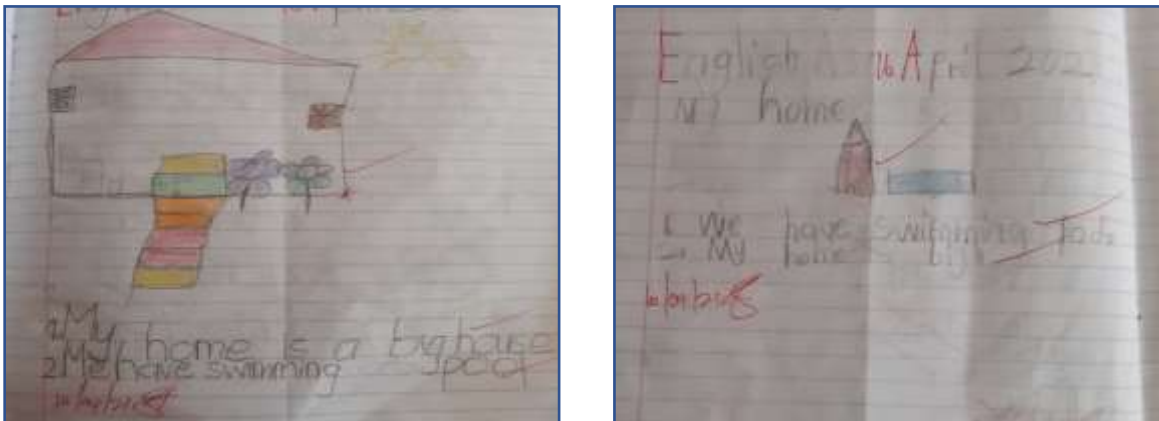
Figure 4.3: Sample of Grade 2 learners' writing

Samples of learners' work in Figure 4.3 show that the learners copied sentences written by TY2. The teacher allowed the learners to draw their own homes but the learners were not

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given an opportunity to describe their homes in their own words; instead, the teacher gave learners sentences to copy. Figures 4.2 and 4.3 reflect that the teachers did not fully understand modelling and the degree to which they needed to gradually release the responsibility to learners to write their own sentences (Fischer & Frey, 2013). Abongdia and Mpiti (2015) are of the view that the reason why learners have challenges with their writing skills relates to the style of teaching and methods used by teachers, which is similar to this study. Teachers' writing instruction impacts on the depth of writing learnt to give learners a solid foundation of writing development.

4.3.5 Traditional writing instruction versus process writing instruction

Traditional writing instruction is writing instruction that focuses on handwriting, spelling, and sentence structure and writing itself is taught implicitly (Curtis, 2017). Curtis (2017) claims that teaching early-grade learners writing skills through writing process and not isolated skills, namely language and conventions, is important to develop proficient writers. In a study that compared traditional writing instruction and process writing instruction, that is, "Writer's workshop and interactive writing", Jones (2015) discovered that, with the use of process writing instruction, learners' compositional skills improved. Learners' gained knowledge of purpose, and forms and functions of writing improved. Overall, learners improved the organisational structure of narrative text. The teachers in this study explained how they taught writing in their respective grades.

> Learners are told to write from left to right. They do finger exercises … Spacing from sentences. (TY2)

> We discuss the picture to get vocabulary words. After, we discuss those vocabulary words and then I remind them the capital letter and the full stop, the punctuations when they write sentences. (TZ2)

> I do the following: verbs, punctuations, adverbs, possessive nouns and tenses. Sentence constructions. (TZ3)

> Ah, I think that when teaching writing, writing I believe it is an act. It is an act of putting thoughts on the paper. They must think first and decide on what to write about. It also means that there are no correct or incorrect answers because every learner has his or her thoughts to write about. (TY1)

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I have looked at our ATPs. In our grade, they did not add a diary. I love the diary because it makes learners to talk. It challenges learners to talk about things that they are faced with and other stuff. It makes learners to write more about things that happen in a day. It is an ongoing thing because the learner writes daily. (TY3)

Teacher practices differed in the way they taught writing. It was evident that the teachers were mostly comfortable with traditional writing instruction. TY2 was concerned about writing orientation. The instruction of TZ2 and TZ3 focused on writing conventions like punctuation and grammar, which are associated with the text-based approach also known as the product approach.

TY1 engaged the learners in brainstorming, which is the initial stage of the writing process. Brainstorming benefits ESL learners to arouse an interest in learners to come up with ideas to plan for a composition and to assist learners with the vocabulary they require to expand their knowledge of different concepts when writing (Hussain, 2017).

TY3's instruction focused on exposing different genres of writing, which forms part of the process–genre approach, whereby the teacher has identified the context for writing that is, in this case, regular writing and the genre that the writing focuses on, which is a diary (Badger & White, 2000). Teachers should interchange between different writing approaches and consider learners' needs and level of writing proficiency (Ugun & Aziz, 2020).

The observation of lessons corroborated the information that the teachers gave during interviews. The observed teachers' writing lessons focused on writing conventions. According to CAPS (DBE, 2011), learners transfer writing text types learnt in their home language to ESL. The exposure of text types in a second language occurs during shared reading for learners to identify structures and features of text types to guide them when they write a certain text. This means that the sentences that learners write are related to text types and are not focused solely on writing conventions.

4.3.6 Creation of a writing-rich environment

Learners who are developing writing skills should be provided with a writing-rich environment to scaffold their writing activities. In the lower primary grades, teachers model how to embed the writing materials in writing activities to deepen learner understanding on how to generate ideas and capture them in print (Bingham *et al.,* 2018). According to Billen

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et al. (2011), teachers need to create a physical environment that promotes writing. A writing-rich environment provides a variety of writing media, materials to guide revising and editing, and an area to display learners' writing (Jones, 2015).

Observation of the classrooms showed that most classroom walls had mostly alphabet charts and phonic words on display. One classroom had a word wall and grammar charts. In all the lessons observed, the resources on the wall displays were not infused into the lessons to assist the learners with their writing activities.

TZ1 highlighted the need for teachers to make their own resources and stated, "Sometimes we make our own media by drawing or looking for pictures that are relevant to the topic that we will be teaching so that learners can understand" (TZ1). TZ1's response reflected that the school had limited resources to teach writing.

Similar to the control writing group in Jones's (2015) study, samples of the learners' work (see Figure 4.2) showed the use of pencil to write sentences and crayons to colour related pictures. This was a practice adopted in all the teachers' sampled work Learners were not exposed to a variety of writing media and the learners' work was not displayed on the classroom walls. Jones (2015) advocates the establishment of a writing-rich environment to move learners beyond foundational to compositional skills of writing.

4.3.7 Consideration of learner needs

ESL learners experience challenges when learning to write. Learners experience challenges with vocabulary, grammar, and compositional skills (Hyland, 2003; Tsiriotakis *et al.,* 2020). Teacher pedagogic competence involves knowledge on how to address learners' learning challenges (Sikki *et al.,* 2013), that is, teachers being able to identify the type of learners they teach and structure instruction around the learners' needs.

During the interviews, it came out strongly that when teachers used different strategies, they scaffolded the writing activities based on the learners' writing capabilities. Teachers shared their experiences:

> [It's] to think before they write, underline each word, and read what they have written … They help learners to feel confident about their writing by showing them that there is a series of steps to be followed when they write. (TY1)

Showing pictures. It makes (it) easier for learners to understand. (TZ1)

I try to do it as shared writing with the whole class, then do as individuals so that I can see how each learner thinks. What is the problem that each learner experiences with language? (TY3)

The teachers' responses reflect that they used both task scaffolding and material scaffolding. According to Carson (2019), task scaffolding is when a teacher breaks the task into small, manageable activities, as TY1 did by allowing the learners to generate ideas through thinking before they wrote. TY3 engaged the learners in task scaffolding by modelling through shared writing and then allowed the learners to work independently. Material scaffolding is when a teacher uses visual and written cues to help learners towards completion of a task (Carson, 2019). TZ1 used material scaffolding by using pictures to stimulate the learners to write.

Scaffolding instruction has proved to be beneficial for second language learners (Cole & Feng, 2015; Carson, 2019; Kornmann, 2019). In their study titled 'Effective strategies for improving writing skills of elementary English language learners', Cole and Feng (2015) found that scaffolding instruction improved learners' writing skills. Kornmann (2019) found that scaffolding motivated teachers to improve their practices in teaching learners to write and thereby improved learners' motivation to write. Carson (2019) found that instructional scaffolding techniques promoted writing success in kindergarten learners.

4.4 Learner exposure to a variety of writing tasks

Different writing approaches are aligned to certain writing tasks and have benefits for different learning situations. The teachers used traditional writing instruction to teach writing and the kind of activities given to learners were based on this specific instruction. Writing tasks were mainly writing sentences related to pictures.

4.4.1 Visual literacy to support writing activities

The teachers used pictures to enhance the learners' writing activities. Benefits of the use of pictures were highlighted and involved the use of pictures to guide them with vocabulary, check their understanding of oral text, and structure the sequence of their writing activities. There was significant exposure to pictures. The teachers' insufficient knowledge of other

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writing approaches limited their exploration of other writing tasks that were not picture-based. Teachers shared their experiences of how they used pictures in their writing lessons.

> Mostly we use pictures. They get answers quickly when they see something colourful, it makes them think quickly. (TZ1)

> Grade 1s need pictures in creative writing which sparks sentence construction. (TY1)

> Normally we use pictures … we discuss the picture to get vocabulary words. (TY2)

> After reading a short story with them, I want to see if they have understood and then they are going to draw a picture about the story read to them. (TZ2)

> Other activities that I give learners for creative writing is to draw a picture of whatever that they like or where they have been … draw the farm and write about the farm … pictures help them to follow. (TY3)

The teachers' responses reflect support of writing activities using pictures in relation to grade requirements, learner language proficiency, learner capabilities, and consolidation of learner understanding. The teachers acknowledged that the learners' uneasiness in using the target language required them to provide support during the writing tasks. The use of pictures was evident in the learners' exercise books. However, the learners' books reflected overemphasis on pictures (mostly learner drawings) and sentences related to pictures.

The Foundation Phase ATPs suggest that learners draw pictures about a story read to them. One of the pre-writing activities involved the use of pictures for writing whereby learners drew a picture relevant to the topic to write a writing plan (Wright, 2013). The use of pictures set the tone for the development of writing. Ugun and Aziz (2020) are of the view that second language teachers should provide second language learners with a variety of scaffolding. One of the scaffolding activities is to provide learners with printed materials like theme-based vocabulary and linking words to guide the writing process. Therefore, pictures assist ESL learners to come up with ideas and build sentences (Abdulla & Yunus, 2019). Carson (2019) agrees that drawing pictures is vital for learners in the lower grades to plan their writing. Overall, pictures increase learner participation, interest, and ability to write (Apsari, 2017). However, that does not necessarily mean that learners should be exposed only to this kind of writing activity.

When a follow-up was done on other kinds of writing resources that the teachers had in class, most stated that they lacked the resources to teach writing. Therefore, it can be gathered that the overemphasis on pictures is as a result of shortages of resources or teacher-limited exposure to other writing resources like picture labels, graphic organisers, sentence frames, picture boxes, and so on to support learners' writing. As a result, learners are not exposed to different types of writing tasks.

4.4.2 Types of writing activities given to learners in the Foundation Phase

There were commonalities amongst the teachers of the different grades on the knowledge of the writing activities to be given to learners in their respective grades. The teachers knew which writing activities to give to the learners in the Foundation Phase. They gave the learners activities in line with CAPS for their respective grades. Grade 1 teachers knew that the learners should write captions for pictures. The Grade 2 teachers knew about the expectation for learners to write two or more sentences, and the Grade 3 teachers knew about learners writing at least three sentences to form a paragraph. These are the teachers' responses on the writing activities given to learners.

> We draw the picture; we write a caption. (TZ1)

> I just tell them to do the creative captions. (TY1)

> I am going to use flash cards, sounds vowels are very important. Sentence construction. (TY2)

> Naming the pictures, writing paragraph with at least three sentences. Completing sentences by filling in the missing words and built own word bank. (TZ2)

> The other activities that I give learners for creative writing is to just draw a picture of whatever that they like or where they have been. If maybe a learner has been to their Granny's farm, they would draw the farm and write about the farm. (TY3)

> Breaking words into sound, name the pictures, write own story. (TZ3)

The teachers knew the writing activities suggested by the curriculum, that is, in Grade 1 it is expected that learners write a caption for a drawing, in Grade 2 they write a paragraph of at least three sentences on a familiar topic, and in Grade 3 they write a paragraph of four to six sentences still on a familiar topic (DBE, 2011). The writing activities mentioned by the teachers across the grades were in line with CAPS expectations.

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4.4.3 Learner exposure to different text types

The Foundation Phase English First Additional Language CAPS suggests that writing lessons be built through shared writing where the teacher exposes learners to personal and factual recounts, procedures, information reports, and narratives as text types to be taught in the phase (DBE, 2011). This means that a teacher should have mentor texts for the suggested text types. However, in the lessons observed, the teachers relied on the posters and pictures and did not expose the learners to the suggested text types during the writing lessons. It was evident that the teachers were not aware of recounts, narratives, procedures, and information texts as suggested by CAPS.

Interviews discovered that only one teacher, TY3, knew other text types. TY3 mentioned the use of model text such as a diary, which is a personal recount to encourage learners to engage in a different writing activity. TY3 stated:

> Most of the learners … have not seen a diary. They do not know it. Some stay in hostels, and they do not know what it looks like. So, I have to give them examples. I bring different diaries for different purposes. I make a big poster of a diary to display in class so that they can see it every day and we try to record our events in it.

Blease (2014) found that lack of resources impacted writing tasks, whilst Graham (2019) recognised that inadequate resources impacted on teacher practices in teaching writing effectively. Desai (2016) discovered that high-income learners outperformed low-income learners because they were well resourced. The lack of resources in the low-income context was also noted by Manyike and Lemmer (2014) in their study, when they discovered that in most townships schools that offer ESL there is a shortage of language learning materials. The teachers in this study lacked writing resources and exposed the learners to the same activities over and over due to a lack of resources.

Hyland (2003) recognises that materials are the only contact that ESL learners have for them to study targeted texts. Textual support provides language scaffolding for learners to create meaningful text for particular readers and contexts. For learners in the lower grades, Hyland (2003) advocates models to make learners aware of how writing differs for different audiences and uses, which is what CAPS advocates.

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Widiati and Cahyono (2016) identified six roles of teaching writing. One of these is imitation in which learners imitate the modelled texts to familiarise themselves with different formats of writing. Therefore, teachers need to be innovative and use model texts to effectively teach writing and expose learners to different text types. For example, teachers can engage learners in guided composition writing tasks whereby learners compose text using picture sequences to vary the activities (Hyland, 2003).

4.5 Difficulties teachers face in teaching learners writing skills

Generally, teachers experience a number of challenges when teaching, but the challenges are exacerbated in the teaching of writing in ESL. The literature review displayed that learners who learn English at second language level have challenges related to grammar, vocabulary, and generating ideas to compose texts. Learners also have cognitive overload challenges as they have to deal with the language as well as the content. Notwithstanding the linguistic skills, learners have challenges with lack of interest and lack of motivation to write. The learners in this study also experienced challenges, which contributed to difficulties faced by the teachers when they taught writing skills to the learners.

4.5.1 Learners' language proficiency

The teachers highlighted that the most difficulty they had when teaching the learners to write was teaching learners who experienced language difficulties such as writing conventions. They noted challenges with vocabulary and grammar due to limited exposure and access to English reading materials. Foreign learners also challenged the teachers due to the learner having challenges with the LOLT and the extra burden of learning English. The teachers shared their challenges.

> Learners who come from outside of South Africa. They don't understand English as well as our language. So, you have to dig what is it that the learners want. So that you may be able to help the learners. So, that they may be able to write as well and be on the same page with other learners. (TY1)

> I think it is because we do not speak it much. Learners do not read English that much. You can see that they do not have the vocabulary. (TY3)

> Learners lack of vocabulary. [They have] Poor spelling. (TY1)

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Learners struggle to use punctuations. They also struggle to use past tense when writing for me in English. (TZ2)

It's lack of vocabulary from learners. Poor spelling. (TZ3)

Learner language proficiency challenges were evident during the presentation of the lessons. The learners answered the teachers' questions with one word or in an African language. Some learners showed no interest in the lessons and when teachers asked them questions, they struggled to respond. When the teachers asked the learners the same questions that were asked in English but in an African language, the learners responded with the correct answers. The teachers resorted to code-switching to explain some of the words to learners.

In TZ3's classroom, it was evident that the learners had grasped the concept of writing sentences in their home language. However, when it came to ESL, one learner (Figure 4.4) had a challenge when constructing sentences in English and opted to express himself in Xitsonga which was his home language. He wrote:

Write 2 sentencs.

Nitsakele kuri i b(ph)athiyamina [I am happy it is my party]

Nitsakele kuri vanixavele bolo [I am happy they bought me a ball]
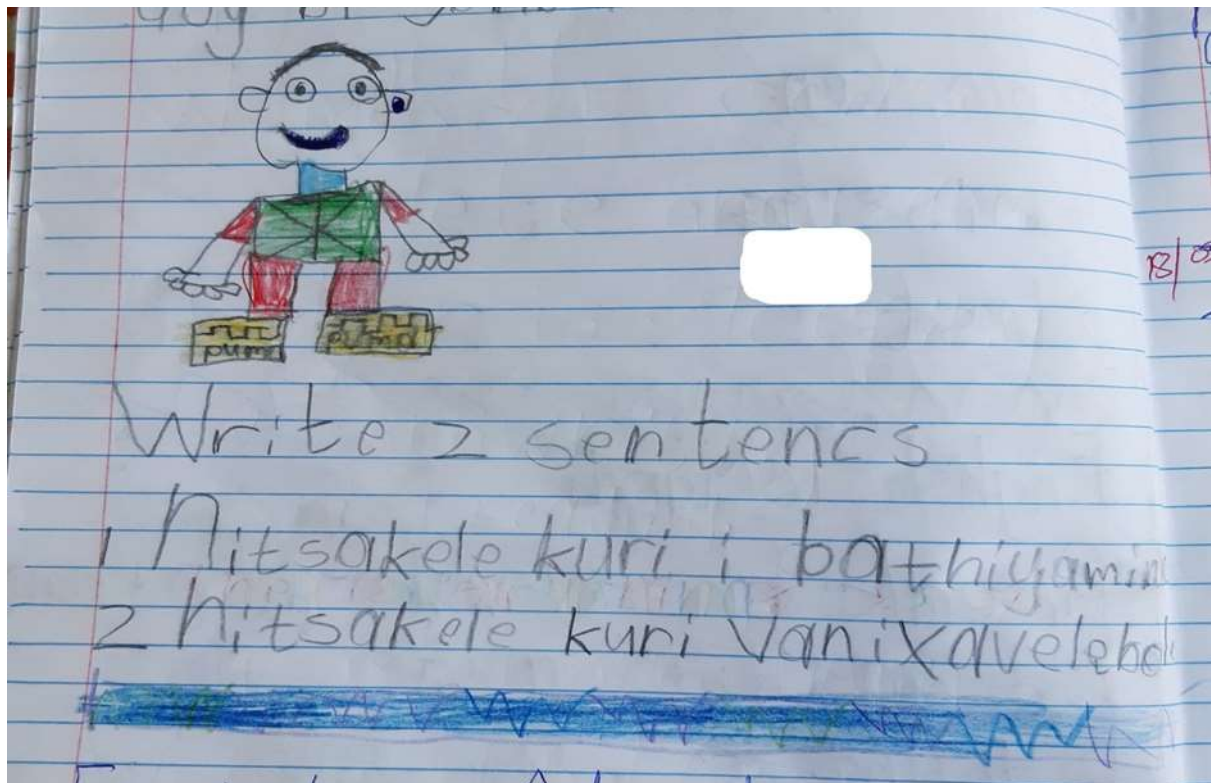
Figure 4.4. Sample of Grade 3 learner's writing

Figure 4.4 shows that the learner was able to express himself by writing two sentences in Xitsonga even though one word had a spelling error. The learner wrote "party" incorrectly by writing "**b**athiyamamina" instead of "**ph**athiyamina".

It is vital for learners to have a good vocabulary for them to be able to express themselves through writing. In their research on second language writing anxiety, Daud *et al.* (2016) found that the causes of anxiety for ESL learners were the challenges of learner exposure to language and limited vocabulary, which is similar to this study as mentioned by the teachers during the interviews and observed in the learners' samples of work. Viera (2017) identified that mastery and knowledge of vocabulary improved comprehension and production of grammar and phonology in the experimental group. As a result, the learners' language production improved. In her study of narrative instruction, Arvizu's (2020) experimental group showed improvement in vocabulary when they were pre-taught vocabulary and, overall, their vocabulary developed. Therefore, the findings from the above-mentioned studies highlight the importance that vocabulary plays in the development of writing skills.

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4.5.2 Dealing with learners' learning capabilities

Another factor that contributed to the challenges that the teachers faced when teaching writing was the learners' learning capabilities. The teachers' responses suggested that the learners they taught had challenges related to the learners not being school-ready. The level of the learners' school readiness challenged the teachers' ability to deal with learners who took time to finish given tasks. The challenges that the teachers mentioned can be linked to their inability to address the learning challenges experienced by learners, that is, the teachers lacked the knowledge to address non-linguistic challenges that the learners experienced, apart from the linguistic challenges.

The teachers faced challenges dealing with learners who were not school-ready and who took time to finish tasks, as their responses show:

> Some children not that they don't understand but some are kind of ignorant or maybe some they have not yet developed to understand. (TZ1)

> Some learners take time to grasp information. We do have some learners who are very, like slow learners. Some cannot complete the task given to them immediately on the spot. (TY2)

The teachers responses reflected their need to be trained on differentiated instruction to accommodate learners who experienced general learning challenges beyond the writing challenges. Part of a teachers' general pedagogical knowledge is dealing with learners with differing learning capabilities (Guerriero, 2014). Therefore, differentiated instruction forms part of lesson planning and lesson presentation to accommodate the needs of learners. In a study of implementation of differentiated instruction in the classroom, Suprayogi *et al.*'s (2017) participants stated that the professional development they received did not focus on explicit training in implementing differentiated instruction and the teachers who effectively implemented differentiated instruction were those that were individually trained. It is important for teachers to plan and present the lessons to accommodate different learning capabilities. However, in-service training should be specific to teachers' needs to improve teacher practices.

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4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the research findings and the themes that emerged from the data. From the data, I was able to identify how the teachers taught writing in their respective grades and explored the factors that influenced their teacher practices. I was able to establish that the teachers' planning process influenced how they presented their lessons and that the kind of learners that they taught influenced the kinds of writing activities that they used. I also established the methods and strategies that they used to present their lessons. I have also identified that there is a need for teachers to be trained on aspects such as writing strategies that are suited for learners who are taught writing in ESL and differentiated instruction to accommodate learners who experience learning challenges over and above the writing challenges. In the next chapter, I will discuss findings, highlight the recommendations and conclusions.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented the data generated from multiple case study methods through observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Data was analysed thematically and presented in themes and sub-themes. In this chapter, I summarise and synthesise the study, discuss the research findings in response to the research questions stated in Chapter 1, present the conclusions and recommendations of the study according to the different stakeholders in education, and lastly conclude the chapter.

5.2 Summary and synthesis of the study

The learners in this study came from township schools. Township schools exist in a low-income context (Manyike & Lemmer, 2014) and, in most cases, have challenges with teaching and learning resources. Learners are not exposed to literacy materials to enhance their language skills at home and in their communities. As a result, they are socialised into accessing literacy materials at school. This limited access to resources is exacerbated when the school lacks resources. This means that the child's development is influenced by the resources available at the school. This challenge is applicable to the learners in this study as the learners were only exposed to the teaching provided to them by teachers in a context where there was a shortage of resources. This practice aligns with sociocultural theory (Panhwar *et al.*, 2016) which is set on the premise that culture and the way that the learner is socialised influences the child's development.

The findings showed that the low level of the learners' language proficiency influenced how the teachers presented the content to them. Many learners found it challenging to follow English conversations yet they were able to follow when the teachers code-switched. Some of the learners struggled to construct sentences in English and resorted to writing sentences in their home language. This suggests what CAPS advocates for additive bilingualism (DBE, 2011), that is, allowing teachers to use the skills learnt in learners' home language to develop ESL, is beneficial to learners provided that the teachers are aware of this curriculum prescript and are capacitated to implement it.

The teachers presented writing lessons according to their knowledge and expertise. Aspects like the understanding of writing activities required by the curriculum put teachers in a position to impart to learners the kinds of activities expected by the curriculum. The teachers were in a position to shape the learners' cognitive development by exposing the learners to writing activities. This finding aligns with Cole *et al.'s* (1978) belief that writing is a psychological tool required for cognitive development.

The manner in which teachers facilitated their lessons showed that they addressed the three levels of regulation. First, the learners relied on the teachers to teach them how to write and through the shared writing activities the learners shared ideas on how to write sentences, which meant that the learners engaged in regulation by others. Secondly, the teachers provided the learners with pictures as objects to regulate their writing activities. Lastly, the learners engaged in individual activities by drawing pictures and writing sentences for their pictures; at this level, the learners self-regulated.

Scaffolding was presented in different forms in this study. First, this was done through understanding the areas in which the learners struggled (Panhwar *et al.*, 2016). The teachers identified that the learners had low language proficiency related to their limited vocabulary and their inability to express themselves in English. Alphabet charts and phonic words were displayed in all the classrooms to expose the learners to vocabulary. Visual literacy scaffolded the learners to develop the vocabulary to develop sentences.

The second form of scaffolding was done through the support provided to the learners (Lantolf, 2000; Turuk, 2008). The ATPs that the teachers used to plan their writing lessons advocated modelling as an instructional strategy. The teachers modelled how to write a sentence to the learners. This finding acknowledges that support in writing was planned for. Teachers writing sentences for learners might be taken to be the start of scaffolding for learners to gradually get to a stage of them writing their own sentences. There was a limitation to consider in the extent to which the teachers provided support to the learners. The study took place in term two meaning that the learners might have been scaffolded to the next level in an attempt to develop their own sentences and be exposed to different text types.

Thirdly, writing lessons were facilitated through shared writing or joint construction (Oliveira & Lan, 2014; Agesta & Cahyono, 2017) in which the whole class developed sentences, the

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teachers assisted the learners with the vocabulary when the learners struggled, and the teachers wrote what the learners presented orally to the teachers. In sociocultural theory, enculturation through social interaction, negotiation, and collaboration are vital (Scott & Palincsar, 2013). The classrooms provided a relaxed atmosphere for learner interaction. Good rapport amongst the teachers and learners made it easier for the learners to negotiate meaning and collaborate through whole-class activities. Facilitation of lessons in a whole-class setting provided opportunities for learner interaction.

Writing is a psychological tool used for learning which is modified to suit a communicative need (Lantolf *et al.,* 2015). The teachers in the study played the role of mediation by exposing the learners to writing activities through shared writing. By expressing themselves in writing, the learners were building towards being competent and fluent in their writing skills. This finding supports Kozulin (2004) on the role that teachers play in exposing learners to the target language, which Lantolf *et al.* (2015) refer to as regulation by others.

The classrooms had basic language resources like alphabet charts and phonic words, even though the teachers did not guide the learners on how to use them to enhance their writing development. The display of the charts provided room for incidental learning. This suggests that the teachers provided classrooms that were writing-rich based on the pedagogic knowledge they possessed. This explains that the teachers' pedagogic knowledge influenced the learning environment.

5.3 Discussion of research findings

The findings are presented next, guided by the research questions captured in Chapter 1 as follows:

1. What teaching methods do Foundation Phase teachers use to teach writing in ESL?
2. How do Foundation Phase teachers plan for the writing lessons in ESL?
3. Why do Foundation Phase teachers teach writing in ESL the way they do?

Below is the discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions.

5.3.1 What teaching methods do Foundation Phase teachers use to teach writing in English second language?

The teachers had limited understanding of other curriculum prescripts. The curriculum suggests that teachers assist learners to write sentences, but these teachers wrote the sentences for the learners. In other situations, the teachers wrote the sentences on the board for the learners to caption the pictures they had drawn in relation to the lesson topic. In view of these findings, a possible explanation could be that the curriculum was not mediated for teachers to fully understand the curriculum requirements. This finding suggests that learners are not benefiting from the appropriate scaffolding to develop their writing skills.

The majority of the teachers mostly taught the writing conventions when they presented their lessons. The focus of the lessons was on writing orientation, sentence construction, and building vocabulary. It seems that the teachers were comfortable with traditional writing instruction. A possible explanation for this finding might be the limited knowledge or exposure that the teachers had on writing approaches. This finding is consistent with the finding that teachers are not aware of the writing approaches advocated by the curriculum (Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014; Akinyeye & Plüddemann, 2016; Mpiti, 2016) and approaches that they could use to teach writing was not limited to home language but also in ESL. Research by Jumba (2016) reveals that teachers see the introduction of contemporary methods as a waste of time.

The teachers knew the writing activities suggested by CAPS for their respective grades and observation of the learners' books reflected that the teachers implemented these writing activities. However, there were other aspects of the curriculum that the teachers found challenging to implement. The teachers lacked innovation in exposing the learners to the different text types suggested by CAPS, they had limited understanding of additive bilingualism, and they failed to see that the way they taught writing in the home language did not differ from teaching a second language.

Across the grades, shared writing was the teaching method that the teachers used to teach writing. Shared writing was used to model writing tasks, such as making lists, sentence writing, and writing paragraphs. The role that shared writing played in the development of the primary school learners' writing development is reflected in the different instructional

models used in teaching writing. In interactive writing instruction, shared writing elevates learner collaboration (Roth & Dabrowski, 2014). It is one of the steps that teachers follow to scaffold learners' writing in the IMSCI model (Read, 2010), and, in the genre approach, it is part of the joint construction that learners use to collaborate when writing (Oliveira & Lan, 2014). The use of shared writing by the teachers in this study assisted in supporting the learners to develop an interest and confidence in engaging with writing tasks. There should be a coherent structure on how writing is taught at different levels within the schooling system for learners to get the writing instruction they deserve (Graham, 2019).

5.3.2 How do Foundation Phase teachers plan for writing lessons in English second language?

In this study, the teachers stated different processes that they engaged in when planning their lessons. The responses indicated that they knew other aspects to be covered in the lesson plan like teaching methods, learning activities, and resources. However, the teachers lacked innovation in addressing those aspects that were not covered by the lesson plans provided to them or the lesson plans that they had developed. The study resolved that the teachers did not cover some of the main aspects of the planning process.

The study also identified that the teachers relied heavily on the ATPs to guide their planning processes. The district lesson plans and the lesson plans that the teachers planned lacked other aspects of lesson planning, namely lesson objectives, teacher activities, and expanded opportunities. On the lesson plans provided by the district, even though there was a section for reflection, the teachers did not complete the section that would have reflected how their lessons went or captured aspects that they needed to improve on. This implies that the teachers had limited understanding of why they should have reflected after the presentation of their lessons.

Lesson plans from the district and those developed by the teachers covered learning activities, teaching methods, and resources and these are some of the aspects that should have been in the lesson plans (Farrell, 2016; Ayua, 2017). The study identified that there were aspects of lesson planning that teachers neglected to cover in their lesson planning which included lesson objectives, teacher activities, and expanded opportunities. The literature highlights the role that lesson objectives play in lesson planning that can assist teachers to determine teaching strategies (Milkova, 2020) and guide them on the content

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to cover (Uhrmacher *et al.,* 2013). As identified by Sikki *et al.* (2013), the teachers in this study lacked lesson planning competency.

5.3.3 Why do Foundation Phase teachers teach writing in English second language the way they do?

The teachers shared their frustrations about the instructional and learner challenges that they experienced. The challenges contributed to their writing instruction practices. Lack of expertise in dealing with learner challenges made it challenging for the teachers to address areas that the learners had learning difficulties with. Some learners' books reflected that they wrote sentences in their home language instead of English. The teachers were not exposed to pedagogies like translanguaging to assist learners who came from a multicultural background with strategies to build on the knowledge from their home language to learn English. This implies that the teachers had limited training on differentiated instruction to address the learners' challenges.

The teachers were not well equipped to teach writing in their respective grades. The teachers were not aware of the writing approach advocated by CAPS for the grades they taught. A possible explanation for this finding is that the teachers were provided with the ATPs and lesson plans, so they did not see the need to read through the CAPS document themselves to pick up aspects that might have assisted them to improve their practices.

The ATPs provided to teachers had modelling as an instructional strategy to show how they were supposed to teach writing in the different grades. The teachers in the study wrote model sentences for the learners to copy instead of modelling how to write the sentences and allowing the learners to attempt to write their own sentences. In other instances, the teachers allowed the learners to create their own drawings but gave the learners sentences to write for the captions. The teachers did not have a clear understanding of how to facilitate writing lessons using modelling. Setiadi (2020) had a similar finding that learners wrote sentences or paragraphs dictated by the teacher.

The teachers found it challenging to identify the writing strategies they used to teach writing. However, when they presented the writing lessons, shared writing was the writing strategy that most teachers used, but it was apparent that the teachers were not aware of the writing strategies they used to teach writing. In some instances, the strategy was not implemented

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as required. This means that the teachers did not have a full understanding of what shared writing is and how they should facilitate their lessons to implement it to the benefit of the learners.

When planning and presenting lessons, the teachers considered the learners' needs and scaffolded their writing activities, for example, by using pictures. The teachers understood the role that the resources played in supporting the learners to develop writing skills. Teacher instruction to support learners aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory's tenets of scaffolding to support learners to their ZPD (Lantolf *et al.,* 2015).

By contrast, the teachers did not display the resources on the classroom walls in a way that assisted learners to develop their writing proficiency. The teachers needed to model the use of those resources to the learners for them to benefit from the resources in class (Bingham *et al.,* 2018*).* An explanation could be that the teachers were not capacitated on how to use the resources in class to the benefit of their teaching practices.

In attending to the learners' language challenges, the teachers felt that the use of visual literacy assisted them to motivate learners to write. Pictures assisted the learners with the vocabulary. The teachers used pictures to help the learners with the vocabulary required to construct sentences and to check the learners' levels of understanding of the story that was read to them prior to them writing their own stories (Abdulla & Yunus, 2019), even though research proves that learners learning ESL benefit from use of pictures to learn language skills. It was evident from the learners' books that too much emphasis was placed on the use of pictures to encourage the learners to write. The learners' books reflected that the learners drew pictures for most of their writing activities and there was no variety of resources.

The classrooms were not writing-rich to enhance writing development or expose the learners to different types of writing. The classrooms had mostly alphabet and phonic charts. The learners were not exposed to a variety of writing media. This finding explains why there was an overemphasis on the use of pictures in the lesson presentations and learners' books. There was a shortage of resources, or possibly the teachers were not exposed to other writing materials in order to develop their own resources or send in requisitions for the school to purchase such resources. It is possible that the teachers presented their lessons based only on the resources they were exposed to.

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5.4 Conclusions of the study

The study has shown that the teachers modelled writing to the learners through shared writing. Whole-class teaching was used to facilitate lessons. The focus of the lessons was on writing conventions and the writing activities given to the learners were limited to lists and sentences related to the lesson topics. The learners drew pictures and wrote sentences related to lesson topics but were not awarded opportunities to go beyond writing sentences relayed to them by their teachers. The types of writing activities given to the learners limited their knowledge to explore different text types.

The findings indicate that several factors contributed to teacher practices in teaching writing. First, the teachers were not aware of the writing approach advocated by the curriculum nor the approach they used to teach writing in the Foundation Phase. Secondly, they were not aware that the strategy they used to teach writing was shared writing. Thirdly, the findings indicated that the teachers did not consider learning outcomes, reflect on how to plan accordingly for the writing skills, or reflect on their practices. Lastly, the teachers found it challenging to teach writing to learners with low ESL proficiency.

The research concludes that the Foundation Phase teachers used modelling instruction through a shared writing strategy to teach writing in ESL but were not even aware that the writing strategy they used was shared writing. It can be concluded that the teachers were not properly trained to gain an understanding of what the curriculum document requires. In addition, the teachers did not cross-examine the content of the CAPS documents and seek clarity in instances where they did not understand.

Teachers are provided with ATPs and lesson plans. The provision of planning documents resulted in the teachers not taking important aspects of planning into consideration, like lesson objectives or reflecting on previous lessons to address areas that they needed to improve on. It can be concluded that the way that teachers plan contributes to how they teach writing in their classrooms.

The learners' writing activities reflected that the learners were not exposed to different text types. The writing activities were solely based on pictures. It appears that the kind of activities that the learners were exposed to was informed by the traditional writing approach that the teachers used to teach writing. The teachers' lack of awareness of the writing

approach advocated by the curriculum contributed to the learners' limited exposure to the text types. The learners were not exposed to the writing process to learn the linguistic skills of pre-writing, drafting, evaluating, and revising.

The learners' low language proficiency in ESL challenged the teachers' handling of how they taught the learners to write in English. The teachers had some knowledge of how to provide support for learners' language challenges but it was limited to the use of pictures. The limit to the different strategies in supporting the learners reflected that the teachers had limited knowledge of the pedagogies for teaching writing to primary school learners.

5.5 Recommendations

The findings suggest that there are challenges in the teaching and learning of writing in ESL in the Foundation Phase. The following recommendations are suggested to alleviate the challenges, improve teachers' practices, and improve learners' literacy skills overall. The recommendations are presented to the different stakeholders in the DoE for further research and recommendations on the body of knowledge.

5.5.1 Recommendations for policymakers

Based on the teachers' responses concerning the writing approach advocated by the curriculum, it was clear that CAPS is not clear on the writing approach advocated by the curriculum. A policy review will help to clearly define the suggested writing approaches and the writing strategies that teachers should use to develop learners' writing skills.

The DoE developed the handbook, *Teaching reading in early grades* (DoE, 2008), to guide teachers on the teaching of reading. The findings of this study reveal that there is a need to also develop a guideline document on the teaching of writing to assist teachers to effectively teach writing.

5.5.2 Recommendations for the Department of Education

Language subject advisors should mediate the curriculum prescripts to capacitate teachers on how to implement the expectations of the curriculum. In collaboration with subject advisors, teacher development officials should the identify instructional knowledge and skills required by teachers and provide in-service workshops that are specific to teachers'

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professional development needs. In this case, the instructional knowledge and skills include the development of lesson plans that cover important aspects to guide teachers on how to present writing lessons and the strategies that teachers should use to teach writing in ESL.

5.5.3 Recommendations for school management teams

School management teams should identify resources that teachers require and procure the resources for teachers to enable them to implement the curriculum without the challenge of a lack of resources. They should also guide teachers on the strategies to use to teach writing and provide support within the school.

5.5.4 Recommendations for teachers

It came out from the findings that teachers overemphasise the use of pictures as resources for teaching writing. It is recommended that teachers identify resources required to teach writing in their respective grades and guide the school management teams on which resources they require to teach writing. Teachers should infuse the resources into the presentation of the writing lessons. Teachers should expose the learners to the resources and guide them on how to use the resources to enhance their writing development.

The learners in the study had low language proficiency and this required the teachers to have the knowledge and skills to address such challenges. Teachers need to equip themselves with different strategies for teaching writing in order to address challenges that learners bring in the development of writing skills and literacy skills as a whole.

5.5.5 Recommendations for further research

In this study, the teachers found it challenging to model writing to learners as expected by the ATPs. A study needs to be conducted with teachers that implements modelling correctly to determine the impact that the correct use of strategy has on the quality of writing activities that learners produce and to fully understand the implication that teacher practices have on the development of learners' writing skills.

5.5.6 Recommendation on the body of knowledge

The literature review in this study identified instructional models to guide the teaching of writing. A study could be conducted to test the implementation of one of the instructional

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models in the context of township schools where there are limited resources and learners have low language proficiency. In addition, the teachers in the study facilitated lessons with a whole-class method. An experimental research approach could be conducted on the effectiveness of an instructional model in a whole-class setting.

5.6 Concluding remarks

This study set out to explore how Foundation Phase teachers teach writing in ESL in their classrooms. The findings of the study cannot be generalised due to the small sample size. However, the findings of this study provide insight into the teaching of writing, which should not be underestimated but should be taught with prominence as it contributes to the development of learners' literacy skills.

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Appendix A: Gauteng Department of Education letter

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	01 February 2021
Validity of Research Approval:	08 February 2021– 30 September 2021 2021/20
Name of Researcher:	Sithole BN
Address of Researcher:	47 MANGROVE STREET
	ORMONDE EXTENSION 21
Telephone Number:	082 709 2291
Email address:	u20751363@tuks.co.za
Research Topic:	Exploring the Pedagogy of Writing in English Second Language Classrooms in the Foundation Phase
Type of qualification	MASTER OF EDUCATION
Number and type of schools:	2 Primary Schools
District/s/HO	Johannesburg North

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

16/02/2021

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

1. Letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.

Making education a societal priority

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

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1. Letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. Because of COVID 19 pandemic researchers can ONLY collect data online, telephonically or may make arrangements for Zoom with the school Principal. Requests for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Education Research and Knowledge Management directorate. The approval letter will then indicate the type of arrangements that have been made with the school.
4. The Researchers are advised to make arrangements with the schools via Fax, email or telephonically with the Principal.
5. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
6. A letter / document that outline the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
7. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
8. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
9. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
10. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
11. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
12. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
13. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
14. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
15. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
16. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

Mr Gumani Mukatuni
Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 16/02/2021

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
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Appendix B: Letter to the school principals

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDCUT A RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

Research Title: Exploring the pedagogy of writing in English Second Language Classrooms in the Foundation Phase

Dear Principal,

I am a registered master's degree student in the Humanities Education Department at the University of Pretoria. I would like to request permission to conduct research at your school for the research study as titled above that I will be conducting.

The purpose of the study is to explore how Foundation Phase teachers teach writing in English Second Language (ESL) in their classrooms. As I seek to find out the writing instructions used by teachers, teachers will be exposed to different teaching methods to teach writing as means to improve practice thereby improving learner writing skills and in the end improve performance in literacy skills.

The information gathered through this research will expose teachers to pedagogies to improve the teaching of writing as part of the literacy skills required for learners to be proficient in ESL. The information will also guide Heads of Department (HoDs), subject advisors and school evaluators on the writing instruction mostly used by teachers, challenges faced by teachers when teaching writing and the kind of support that teachers require in teaching writing skill in ESL in the Foundation Phase to assist teachers to improve practices and improve learner proficiency.

Research procedures

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1. Lesson Observation

Lesson observation will be the primary source of the data collection processes. The school's timetable will be used as a schedule to observe the lesson in order not to disturb the smooth running of the school's timetable. I will be a non-participant in the lessons. Whilst observing I will be taking some notes. I will observe teachers teach an English second language lesson with the focus on how they teach writing within English lessons. Learner interaction will be observed to understand the teaching approaches teachers use when teaching writing. Part of the observation will be to get to understand a theory that underpins teaching practices when teachers teach writing in second language lessons.

2. Document analysis

Curriculum documents that relate to the teaching of writing in English second language will be analysed. I will look at the curriculum documents that teachers use to teach writing in ESL such as lesson plans, teacher and learner resources, learner performance in ESL with the focus on the writing skill and the support provided to assist you with pedagogies to teach writing in ESL. Field notes will be recorded to capture the information gathered.

3. Individual Interview

After the lesson observation and document analysis I will conduct a one-on-one semi-structured interview. A semi- structured interview is an interview with pre-determined open-ended questions with follow-up questions. The interview will be conducted after learners' contact time. The duration of the interviews will be 30 to 45 minutes. I will use a voice recorder and take some notes during the interview. The information recorded is confidential, and no one else except me will have access to the information documented during interviews.

Other information to consider

A summary of the findings will be shared with participants in the study. Teachers' participation in the study in voluntary. Teachers are allowed to withdraw from the study at any time they wish to. Confidentiality is assured. Nowhere will teachers' names and that of your school be mentioned in the study. Should you give permission to conduct the study at your school, please complete the declaration section of this document.

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Should you require further information, feel free to contact me or my supervisor on the contact details given below.

Researcher: Ms. B.N Sithole

Supervisor: Mr. X. Khohliso

Cell: 066 487 2780

Cell: 083 408 8248

Email address: u20751363@tuks.co.za

xolani.khohliso@up.ac.za

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Faculty of Education

Declaration

I, _____ (Name and surname) hereby grant permission to Mrs B.N Sithole to conduct research at my school. I declare that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project.

_____   _____

Principal's signature   Date

_____   _____

Researcher's signature   Date

Appendix C: Letter to the teacher participants

Faculty of Education

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Research Title: Exploring the pedagogy of writing in English Second Language Classrooms in the Foundation Phase

Dear Teacher

I am a registered master's degree student in the Humanities Education Department at the University of Pretoria. I would like to request you to agree to participate in the research study as titled above that I will be conducting.

The purpose of the study is to explore how Foundation Phase teachers teach writing in English Second Language in their classrooms. As I seek to find out the writing instructions used by teachers, teachers will be exposed to different teaching methods to teach writing as means to improve practice thereby improving learner writing skills and in the end improve performance in literacy skills.

The information gathered through this research will expose teachers to pedagogies to improve the teaching of writing as part of the literacy skills required for learners to be proficient in ESL. The information will also guide Heads of Department (HoDs), subject advisors and school evaluators on the writing instruction mostly used by teachers, challenges faced by teachers when teaching writing and the kind of support that teachers require in teaching writing skill in ESL in the Foundation Phase to assist teachers to improve practices and improve learner proficiency.

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Research procedures

1. Lesson Observation

Lesson observation will be the primary source of the data collection processes. The school's timetable will be used as a schedule to observe the lesson in order not to disturb the smooth running of the school's timetable. I will be a non-participant in your lesson. Whilst observing I will be taking some notes. I will observe you teach an English second language lesson with the focus on how you teach writing within an English lesson. Learner interaction will be observed to understand the teaching approaches you use when teaching writing. Part of the observation will be to get to understand a theory that underpins your teaching practice when teaching writing in a second language lesson.

2. Document analysis

Curriculum documents that relate to the teaching of writing in English second language will be analysed. I will look at the curriculum documents that you use to teach writing in ESL such as lesson plans, teacher and learner resources, learner performance in ESL with the focus on the writing skill and the support provided to assist you with pedagogies to teach writing in ESL. Field notes will be recorded to capture the information gathered.

3. Individual Interview

After the lesson observation and document analysis I will conduct a one-on-one semi-structured interview. A semi- structured interview is an interview with pre-determined open-ended questions with follow-up questions. The interview will be conducted after the learners' contact time. The duration of the interview will be 30 to 45 minutes. You are requested to answer all the questions as honestly as possible. Feel free to ask for clarity where you do not understand. I will use a voice recorder and take some notes during the interview. The information recorded is confidential, and no one else except me will have access to the information documented during your interview. You will not be identified by name on the voice recording. The recording will be kept in my Google Drive whilst the research is in progress. On completion of the research the recording will be safely stored at the University of Pretoria's storage for a period of time thereafter, it shall be destroyed.

4. Other information to consider

I would conduct member checks to verify if the information captured represent you as a participant. Follow-up interaction might be requested where I need clarity on data collected. A summary of the findings will be shared with you as a participant in the study. Your participation in the study is voluntary. You are allowed to withdraw from the study at any time you wish to. You are assured confidentiality. Nowhere will your name and that of your school be mentioned in the study. The information gathered through the data collections sources will be used solely for this research. Should you agree to participate in the study, please complete the declaration section of this document.

Furthermore, as the University of Pretoria we also would like to request your permission to use your data, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data sets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

Should you require further information, feel free to contact me or my supervisor on the contact details given below.

Researcher: Ms. B.N Sithole   Supervisor: Mr. X. Khohliso

Cell: 066 487 2780   Cell: 083 408 8248

Email address: u20751363@tuks.co.za   xolani.khohliso@up.ac.za

© University of Pretoria

Declaration

I, _____ (name
and surname) hereby voluntarily grant my permission to participate in the project, and I
understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project.

_____   _____

Participant's signature   Date

_____   _____

Researcher's signature   Date

Appendix D: Letter to parents of the Foundation Phase Learners

Faculty of Education

LETTER OF CONSENT BY PARENTS

Re: Informed consent for learners to take part in the study

I am a registered master's degree student in the Humanities Education Department at the University of Pretoria. The proposed title of my study is *"Exploring Pedagogy of Writing in English Second Language Classrooms in the Foundation Phase".* The focus of my research is to explore the pedagogies that teachers use to teach writing in English Second Language lessons. The study aims to explore the teaching methods that teachers use to teach writing in their English Second Language lessons. The findings will assist teachers with methods to improve their teaching practices and thereby improve learners' writing skills in English Second Language.

Your child's school has been approached to participate in this study. The teacher who teaches your child agreed to participate in the study as a result your child will be part of the lessons that will be observed for the study. Your child will be a secondary participant in one of the lessons that will be observed. This requires you as a parent to give consent for your child to participate in the study. Find attached the consent form attached on this letter.

Furthermore, as the University of Pretoria we also would like to request your permission to use your child's data, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data sets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

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During the progress of the lessons, I will observe the learners' response to the teaching approaches that teachers use to teach writing in English Second Language lessons. I will also observe how the learners use the learning materials and how they respond to the writing activities given by the teacher.

Kindly note that your child's name and the name of the institution will not be mentioned anywhere in the study. Your child's participation in the lesson observation activity is voluntary. Therefore, your child is free to withdraw from the study at any point they feel uncomfortable. If you choose not to let your child participate in the study, he/she will not be disadvantaged in his/her learning activities/ environment.

Should you require further information feel free to contact me or my supervisor on the contact details provided below.

Researcher: Ms. B.N Sithole   Supervisor: Mr. X. Khohliso

Cell: 066 487 2780   Cell: 083 408 8248

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Informed Consent for learner participation in the lesson observation

Please sign the consent form and return it to your child's class teacher

I, _____ (name and surname)_____

parent/ legal guardian of _____ in Grade: ___

herby, **give/ do not give** (circle your answer) the consent for my child to participate in a lesson that will be observed for the study titled ***"Exploring Pedagogy of Writing in English Second Language Classrooms in the Foundation Phase".*** I acknowledge that I fully understand the purpose of the study and the activities that my child will be involved in for the above-mentioned study.

Signed at: _____

_____   _____

Parent signature   Date:

_____   _____

Researcher's signature   Date

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Appendix E: Lesson Observation Tool

Faculty of Education

LESSON OBSERVATION TOOL

Researcher's Name				
School		Date		
Teacher		Grade		
Writing Time Allocation	Minimum		Maximum	ESL Lesson Duration

Theme/ Topic Covered: _____

Component	Description	Observation/ Comments	Coding
Learning Environment	Learning Space • What sitting arrangement is used by the teacher? • Does the learning space promote individual / cooperative learning?		
	Resources • What resources are on classroom display that promote the writing skill? • What resources does the teacher use to enhance the teaching of writing? • What resources do learners use to enhance the learning of writing? • Is the classroom adequately resourced with materials that enhances writing?		

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Lesson Structure	• What teaching pedagogies does the teacher use when teaching writing? • What writing approaches does the teacher use? • What strategies does the teacher use to teach writing? • What writing activities does the teacher engages learners in when writing? • What theoretical framework underpins the teacher practices in teaching writing?		
Learner involvement	• Do learners participate actively in the writing activities? • Are learners encouraged to exchange ideas whilst learning?		
• Other observations/comments			

Appendix F: Teacher Interview Protocol

Faculty of Education

Teacher Interview Protocol

Research Questions
Main Research Question: How do Foundation Phase teachers teach writing in English second language? Sub-questions • What teaching methods do teachers use to teach writing in English Second Language • How do teachers plan for the writing lessons in English second language? • Why do teachers teach writing in English Second Language the way they do?
Interview Questions

1. Can you take me through your process of planning for the writing component in your English Second Language lesson?
2. What writing approaches are recommended by CAPS for the grade that you teach?
3. What teaching approaches do you use to teach writing in your grade?
4. Why do you use the approaches you mentioned?
5. How do you teach writing in the grade that you teach?
6. Tell me about the kinds of writing activities that you give to learners?
7. What teaching strategies are you most comfortable to use to teach writing in ESL?
8. Why are you comfortable with these strategies?
9. What are the benefits of these teaching strategies?
10. What strategies do you think are most suitable to teach writing in English second language?
11. Is there a difference in the way you teach writing in home language and in English second language? Kindly elaborate on your response.
12. Do you feel academically or pedagogically well equipped to teach the writing skills?
13. Do you feel you need more training or guidance in teaching their writing skills?
14. What do you think are the characteristics of a good writing teacher?
15. As a teacher what do you have difficulty with when teaching writing?
16. What do you have difficulty with when teaching learners writing?

Appendix G: Sample of teacher Interview transcript

Faculty of Education

TZ2 Interview Transcript

Grade: 2	Teacher:TZ2
Venue: Teacher's Classroom Date: 3 June 2020	
Time: 13H55 Interview Duration: 15:35	

No	Who	Discussion
1.	Researcher	Good afternoon, ma'am. Thank you so much for participating in the research and I've observed you teaching and I've also gone through your documents. So, we've come to the next part of the data collection, which is the interview. Again, thank you so much for participating in the interview. Your information will be valued. Can we start with the questions, now?
2.	TZ2	Yes. ma'am.
3.	Researcher	Okay. Can you take me through your process of planning for the writing component in your English Second Language lesson?

4.	TZ2	Am, ma'am. Firstly, I prepare and design the lesson using the ATP together with CAPS and then do flash cards and pictures. After I make sure that the classroom is print-rich based on the lesson that I'm going to teach.
5.	Researcher	Okay. Thank you, Ma'am. How do you teach writing in the grade that you teach?
6.	TZ2	Yoh! You know ma'am, it's not that easy but eh, normally we use pictures because they they're not used to this language. Firstly, we discuss the picture to get vocabulary words. After, we discuss those vocabulary words and then I remind them the capital letter and the full stop, the punctuations when they write sentences.
7.	Researcher	Tell me about the kinds of writing activities that you give to learners?
8.	TZ2	Okay. Number one, naming the pictures, writing paragraph with at least three sentences. Completing sentences by filling in the missing words and built own word bank.
9.	Researcher	What teaching approaches or methods do you use to teach writing in your grade?
10.	TZ2	Number one, question, and answer. Look and say. Sometimes oral rehearsing sentences or words.
11.	Researcher	Why do you use the approaches that you've mentioned?
12.	TZ2	Normally it develops learners' ability to understand the language and speak it. And it also helps me to check their knowledge, what they know. And then after that so that (I can) I can. In Xitsonga (so that I am able refer to the learners' knowledge) what to teach them.

13.	Researcher	Okay, is that all ma'am?
14.	TZ2	Yes.
15.	Researcher	Okay. Do you feel you are academically or pedagogically well equipped to teach writing skills?
16.	TZ2	No
17.	Researcher	Why is that ma'am?
18.	TZ2	Ay! According to these learners, they need, I still need more training, cos (they) they don't understand what I'm, they don't understand the method that I'm using now. So, I feel like I need more training, more method to use.
19.	Researcher	Okay. So, you need guidance in this area of teaching writing?
20.	TZ2	Yes.
21.	Researcher	Okay. why, what do you think are the characteristics of a good writing teacher?
22.	TZ2	Please. Can you please come again?
23.	Researcher	What do you think are the characteristics of a good writing teacher?
24.	TZ2	A good teacher has to listen hard and then use what they hear to improve the method of teaching. And then the ability to develop strong relationships with learners. And that teacher has to be easy to be approached.
25.	Researcher	Okay, what do you have difficulty with when teaching writing?

26.	TZ2	Learners struggle to use punctuations, and to do direct translation. And they also struggle to use past tense when writing for me in English.
27.	Researcher	Okay. Is there a difference in the way you teach writing in HL and in English Second language?
28.	TZ2	Yes.
29.	Researcher	Can you kindly elaborate on your response?
30.	TZ2	Home language, they speak it home. They're used to it. They know the foundation. So, when I teach Home Language I go deep in details. They write stories. They understand, they are fast to understand when I teach them stories and long sentences because they speak the language.
31.	Researcher	And in English Second Language?
32.	TZ2	In English they're not used to language. Some of them, they don't speak the language at home. So, when I teach, I teach them the, I start from the basics. And then teach them the simple sentences and then and I use pictures the most to help them understand.
33.	Researcher	What writing approaches are recommended by CAPS for the grade that you teach?
34.	TZ2	Uses punctuations already taught in Home Language. Write sentences using a frame. Example like "I like…" and then they complete the sentence. And then write sentences using words containing the phonic sound and common sight words. And puts jumbled sentences in the right order to make a paragraph or copy it.

35.	Researcher	What, teaching strategies or methods are you most comfortable to use to teach writing in English?
36.	TZ2	It's orally rehearsing sentences and then writing them down.
37.	Researcher	Why are you comfortable with this strategy?
38.	TZ2	Learners in this grade are more comfortable in writing something that was done together as a class. It also makes me comfortable because at the end of the day, learners know exactly what is expected from them.
39.	Researcher	Then, what are the benefits of this teaching method?
40.	TZ2	Learners learn to interact with the teacher and their classmates. They are able to construct meaningful sentences as the corrections are done orally before they write them on their books.
41.	Researcher	What methods do you think are most suitable to teach writing in English second language?
42.	TZ2	Mind maps. Completing sentences with words to replace pictures. Filling in the missing vocabulary. Oral rehearsing sentences and then writing them down.
43.	Researcher	Thank you, ma'am. Now we've come to the questions that I'm going to ask you based on the lessons that I've observed. Okay.

The lesson template that you use, it only shows the learner activities and it doesn't show the teacher activities. Can I ask you why are you planning that way? |
| 44. | TZ2 | Can you please come again? |
| 45. | Researcher | Okay. The lesson template that you are using, it shows the activities for the learners. It doesn't show the activities that the teacher is going |

		to use. So, I just want to check. Why are you planning that way? Don't you think it's important for you to in your planning to have the activities that you go to use and activities that the learners are going to engage with?
46.	TZ2	Yes, it is important, ma'am.
47.	Researcher	Okay, so you're not comfortable answering that question, it's fine ma'am. Let's move to the next question. But before we move, the template that you are using were you part of the development of the lesson preparation template, or was it just given to you to use?
48.	TZ2	I was the part of it.
49.	Researcher	Okay. So, you agreed that it is a good template to use for planning?
50.	TZ2	Yes.
51.	Researcher	Okay? Have you ever had a visit from a subject advisor to give you support on writing, teaching English or teaching writing in English?
52.	TZ2	No.
53.	Researcher	Okay. And the support by the HoD. Have you been provided support by the HoD on how to teach writing in English?
54.	TZ2	Yes.
55.	Researcher	What kind of support was provided?
56.	TZ2	It was a workshop. And then they showed us how to how to teach comprehension.

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57.	Researcher	Okay. Now let's go back to your lesson, now. I saw that your learners are seated in rows. Do you, when you teach writing do you also expose learners to group work, while you are teaching writing?
58.	TZ2	Now, No.
59.	Researcher	Okay. Why are you saying now?
60.	TZ2	Because of this, because of these are Covid-19 rules.
61.	Researcher	Okay. But previously, how did you teach group work when teaching writing?
62.	TZ2	I group them, according to their abilities and for the reading and for writing, I mix them.
63.	Researcher	Okay. Thank you. Then, now let's come to the resources for teaching writing. Do you feel that you have enough resources to teach writing?
64.		No.
65.	Researcher	Okay. What kind of resources would you like to have to teach writing?
66.	TZ2	Pictures, flashcards. Also, the Internet.
67.	Researcher	Okay? Would like to have access to Internet.
68.	TZ2	Yes.
69.	Researcher	Okay. Okay. Then the last question. Ma'am. I noticed that you're using the trimmed curriculum to teach English. Were you trained on how to use this trimmed curriculum?

70.	TZ2	No.
71.	Researcher	You were not trained?
72.	TZ2	Yes.
73.	Researcher	Okay. Are you aware of any changes that we made for writing for your grade?
74.	TZ2	No.
75.	Researcher	Okay. Okay ma'am, thank you so much. We've come to the end of the interview. I really appreciate your time and your commitment with the research. It's really appreciated. Thank you so much.
76.	TZ2	Thank you, ma'am.