

**Teaching of idioms as part of imaginative language in
Grade 3 Setswana classes**

by

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DECLARATION

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

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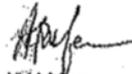
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Teaching idioms as part of imaginative language in Grade 3 Setswana classes

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DEDICATION

*I dedicate this PhD to God
Almighty, who made it
possible for me to complete
this difficult journey.*

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SUMMARY

The teaching of imaginative language (including idioms) is not only a requirement of the Home Language curriculum; the correct use of idioms expresses inherent cultural values and improves language proficiency.

Phase One of this study surveyed the state of instruction in imaginative language. Following a qualitative approach from an interpretivist perspective, the aim was to establish a theoretical basis for a possible intervention. In a case study of an urban school, a semi-rural school and three Grade 3 Setswana Home Language teachers, shortcomings in the syllabus, teacher training and abilities and frequent interference by neighbouring languages were identified as impediments. These served as a starting point for a programme compiled to facilitate a method of teaching idioms beneficial to teachers as well as learners.

Phase Two entailed the design and implementation of a programme of Setswana idioms in picture form and flashcards with idioms and meanings. After a demonstration by the researcher, the teachers were observed for a month, after which the results were evaluated. Setswana Home Language teachers in higher grades were also interviewed.

Constructivist and decoding theories were assessed in this study in terms of their link to education models in South Africa in regard to teaching Home Language.

The programme was successful in eliciting an enthusiastic learner response, empowering teachers to teach Setswana idioms effectively and ensuring a high degree of content retention in the learners through participative instruction.

KEY WORDS

- Constructivism
- Functional approach
- Home Language
- Idioms
- Indigenous language
- Learning
- Setswana
- Sociolinguistics
- Teaching idioms
- Traditional approach

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EU	European Union
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DIR	Dual Idiom Representation
EE	Empowerment Evaluation
FAL	First Additional Language
FP	Foundation Phase
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
OBE	Outcomes-Based Education
PanSALB	The Pan South African Language Board
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SACE	South African Council for Educators
TOEFL	Teaching of English as a Foreign Language
UNESCO	United Nation Education and Scientific Organisation
UNISA	University of South Africa
UN	United Nations
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Idioms are categorised as imaginative language and as “devices used to add spice to a language and instill appreciation of the beauty of one’s language” (Seboni, 1980:iv). Idioms have a unique structure in the international context, but in the African context idioms are formulaic if compared to the Western languages (Liu 2003). Furthermore, idioms are also part of everyday speech and used in literature, including literature for young children. Learners lose their indigenous languages, which are the carriers of their culture, if they are not taught idioms properly. Since idioms are carriers of cultural values, customs, practices, rituals, traditions and symbols, their importance in teaching language proficiency is self-evident. African languages are by nature idiomatic languages. Idiomatic language often challenges one to use one’s imagination fully in order to grasp the meaning of sentences or statements used in everyday communication effectively.

As this study focused on how Grade 3 Setswana teachers teach idioms and how the learners decode idioms, I need to put the study into the South African context. The curriculum for Home Language, i.e. the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), in South Africa states (Department of Basic Education, 2011) that teaching of imaginative language has to be an integral part of language teaching. However, there are discrepancies between policy and practice. According to the CAPS glossary, “Image is a picture or visual representation of something” while “imagery” is defined as “words, phrases and sentences which create images in our mind such as similes, metaphors, personification” (Department of Basic Education, 2011:94). However, the above definition does not explain what constitutes imaginative language. A person who is highly imaginative is capable of conceptualising new ideas or ideas based on exciting things with ease. Collins Cobuld Essential Dictionary (1989:390) defines imagination aptly as follows:

“Imagination, also called the faculty of imagining, is the ability of forming mental images, sensations and concepts, in a moment when they are perceived through sight, hearing or other senses. Imagination is the work of the mind that helps create. Imagination helps provide meaning to understanding of knowledge; it is the fundamental facility through which people make sense of the world.”

(<http://www.dictionary30.com/meaning/Imaginative>)

The above definitions imply that Home Language usually consists of idioms, proverbs, figures of speech, sayings and riddles which are the constituent parts that make a language idiomatic and poetic. On the same page of the CAPS document (2011:94) where the definition of imagery is given, another dimension is added to the meaning of imaginative language when the word “image” is explained as a picture or visual representation. Webster’s New World Dictionary (2010:396) says that imaginative language is “the act or power of creating mental images or ideas by combining previous experiences or creative power” and the purpose of using imaginative language is to enable one to write creatively in such a way that people can see the scenes you describe in their minds or imagination. This can be achieved by using idioms, proverbs and figures of speech, which aids in language proficiency.

The study sought to investigate how teachers understood and taught idioms as part of imaginative language. In addition, the study wanted to find out how teachers teach Setswana Grade 3 idioms as part of imaginative language as well as the type of resources used, and the effect this has on the language use of learners. However, I found that teachers were not teaching idioms and were not aware that idioms were included in the national curriculum. I regard this research venture as Phase One. The data gathered from this phase of the study prompted me to design a programme for teaching idioms, and this programme became Phase Two of the study.

This study, which is qualitative, used an evaluation empowerment methodology to implement a programme for teaching idioms in a Grade 3 classroom in the second phase. According to Fetterman (2002:4), “empowerment evaluation is the use of concepts, techniques, and findings to foster improvement and self-determination of

respondents.” Therefore this study aimed at evaluating how teachers teach idioms and how learners use idioms in their everyday speech. The study was underpinned by the following question: How do Grade 3 Setswana teachers teach idioms as part of imaginative language?

According to Somerville and Perkins (2010:10), children should be provided with toys and materials that help them to make use of their problem solving skills as well as activities that ignite their imagination, and adds that adults (teachers, in this context) should encourage the learners to value and explore culture through role play. Take, for example, the riddle: *Sa tampatampa sa ya go tsalela fale!* This literally means: it wobbled and went to give birth over there. If one is very observant of nature and plants, one would notice that a pumpkin is planted at one point but spreads further as it grows; and the fruit it bears will usually be far from its main root. If children are not observant of what surrounds them, they will not be able to use their imagination to reflect symbolically on, for example, a plant stretching out first and then bearing fruit.

If riddles, idioms, proverbs and other figures of speech are not used daily in conversations or when teaching Setswana in class, Setswana will slowly be stripped of its essence and the beauty these language devices add to the language as well as the rich vocabulary found in them. Kembo-Sure (2002:29) states that “all languages are repositories of community wisdom, pleasure, spiritual edification and knowledge. Every language has an infinite versatility with which meaning, thought, and intention can be expressed”. For example, “*Sego sa metsi*”, commonly known as a calabash in English, is used for storing and drinking water. This utensil is used idiomatically in *bogadi* (dowry) negotiations. During the *bogadi* negotiation the in-laws-to-be, on the male’s side, normally broach the subject of the negotiation by saying: “*Re tlile go kopa sego sa metsi*”, literally meaning ‘we have come to ask for a water calabash’. Fetching water from the river is associated with hard-working girls and women. This symbolically means that the son’s family is not looking for a lazy daughter-in-law.

When a person has passed away it is often said: “*O ithobaletse* (she or he is sleeping), *O ile badimong* (she or he has gone to the ancestors), *O ile bo-ya-batho* (He/she has gone to where everyone goes), *O ragile kgamelo* (She or he has kicked

the bucket).” When people are about to leave, especially during *bogadi* negotiations, they will normally say: “*Re kopa tsela*” (we are asking for the road). These are the expressions that bond people together, as they are part of everyday language. Idioms are interwoven with the sociocultural ideology of speakers of a specific language since time immemorial. Idioms, proverbs and sayings reflect different aspects of life of a people, namely their political life, economic activities, sociocultural aspects and their religious beliefs. Bujo (2001:24) noted that “proverbs play a decisive role in communicating ethical goods and correct behaviour” in a community.

The language contact situation in which Setswana finds itself creates a scenario in which the rich symbolic imaginative language is no longer used. Thus it is the responsibility of Setswana language teachers to teach learners the idiomatic language of Setswana. In this study, I explored the possibility of introducing imaginative language (idioms) through a programme that includes strategies teachers in Grade 3 classes can apply when teaching the use of idioms in everyday language. The programme is described in Chapter 4.

In the next sections, the core concepts will be clarified and their importance elaborated.

1.2 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPT

To avoid misinterpretations and misunderstanding, key concepts that are frequently used in this study are discussed below:

1.2.1 Idioms

Defining an idiom is rather problematic. I proceeded from the premise that the definition of an idiom differs from one researcher to another and that it is also influenced by different languages and cultures. Many researchers, such as Miruka (1994), Moon (1998), Liu (2003) and Bauer and Brown (2001), describe what an idiom entails. Therefore, it is difficult to construct a concise definition of an idiom. As a working definition, I define an idiom as a fixed phrase; in Setswana a fixed phrase is a phrase that is known as an idiom or a proverb.

1.2.2 Idiomatic language

“Idiomatic language” is an umbrella term for figures of speech, idioms, proverbs, jokes and riddles (Cooper, 1998). These language aspects are part of everyday life.

1.2.3 The traditional approach to teaching

The traditional approach encouraged the mere gathering of knowledge, without focusing on the application of knowledge, skills and values and of norms and attitudes. This was an approach that focussed on *what* was taught (i.e., it was content driven). Van den Berg (2004:18) states that the content taught was not relevant to the life world of learners. The sources were mainly textbooks and the teacher; the approach was predominately teacher-centred and the learners were prepared only for matriculation examinations.

1.2.4 The functional approach to teaching

A functional approach implies a method where the “living language” forms the basis for the study of linguistic phenomena. It does not permit forced, unnatural language usage, even though the language may be grammatically correct. Leading questions play a very important role. The teacher exposes the learners to a specific grammatical form and helps them to discover the relevant linguistic rules. She or he leads the learners from what they already know to the unknown, and the important point here is that this new knowledge and insight are acquired by means of discovery (Ramagoshi, 2010:39-45).

1.2.5 The South African national curriculum (NCS, 2002a)

Before 1994, South Africa implemented an education policy of separate systems of education where schools were divided according to race, culture and ethnicity (Sebate 2011:1). This system led to different curricula for each ethnic group. The transformation of education was implemented with the advent of the new democracy in 1994. This led to changes in the curriculum. This curriculum (NCS, 2002a) focussed on a new political vision and the principle of non-racism, non-sexism, democracy, equality and redress of past injustices caused by the Bantu Education Policy of 1953 (Harley & Wedekind, 2006:260). It gave teachers/educators

guidelines on the aims and objectives of teaching languages; critical outcomes; learning outcomes and assessment.

Due to criticism levelled against the flaws in the National Curriculum Statement 2005 (C2005), which implemented the philosophy of outcomes-based education (OBE), the Curriculum 2005 was reviewed and the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) for the General Education and Training Band (Grades R-9) was introduced in 2005. The aim of the revision was to address the lack of essential learning content of the previous curriculum. The success of these changes was achieved by adding assessment standards and various forms of content frameworks, which delivered the content that the teachers were to teach according to the RNCS (Department of Education, 2009:13-15). Although teachers were under the impression that it was again a totally new curriculum, it was basically the same as the 2005 curriculum.

The latest Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) is a brief, all-inclusive policy document containing specifics concerning what needs to be taught and assessed in the different grades and subjects (Department of Basic Education, 2011). In this document idioms and the teaching thereof are not described clearly, except that learners should be taught imaginative language (Department of Basic Education, 2011:94). It is a simplified version of the 2005 curriculum. Learning content is clearly specified – thus the teachers know exactly what to teach.

1.2.6 The teacher

The Department of Education (2003:2) describes a teacher as “any person who teaches or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education, psychological services at any public school, further education and training institution, departmental office or adult basic education centre, who is appointed in a post on any education establishment under employment according to the Education Act 76 of 1998.” In The National Curriculum Statement (Department of Education, 2003:5), the teacher is described as, amongst others, a person who sees himself/herself as a leader, designer, mediator of learning, an interpreter, a manager and administrator, a scholar, researcher, lifelong learner, community member, citizen and pastor, assessor and subject specialist.

From the above definitions, one can assume that besides scholarship and natural and acquired teaching ability; a teacher should show devotion to the learner and the content of the curriculum.

1.2.7 The learner

Sebate (2011:20) describes a learner as “a person who receives information, knowledge, skills and values from a teacher”. On the other hand, Joubert and Prinsloo (1999:5) describe a learner as a person who is taught or trained by a teacher. This implies that the teacher shapes and directs the lives of the coming generations. In this study the learner in Grade 3 is \pm 9 years old and in the first phase of formal school, i.e. the Foundation Phase.

1.2.8 Terminology related to language

- **Language learning**

Learning can be viewed as a direct instruction lesson in which an exchange between the teacher and the learner, a small group of learners or an entire class takes place. (Salkind, 1990) and Bloomfield (in Rivers 1981) are of the opinion that language acquisition in babies begins when a baby learns its mother’s language when still in its mother’s womb. This implies that idioms can be learnt at an early stage of language acquisition.

- **Indigenous language**

Indigenous languages are the original languages spoken in a specific country or area. Ball (1990) calls indigenous languages vernacular languages and regards an indigenous language as “the form of a language that a regional or other group of speakers uses naturally, especially in informal situations - a localised variety of a language” (Ball, 1990:63).

- **Home Language**

Ball (2000:64) regards a home language as a language spoken in the home. Ball equates (to a certain degree) the First Language (L1) ,with a home language. She describes it as “a native language (also called mother tongue, home language, local language)”. They are language(s) learned from birth and therefore also referred to as

the mother tongue. South Africa is a multilingual country, with 11 official languages, of which 9 are African languages. In South Africa, the national curriculum uses the term “home language”, which will therefore be used in this study and will refer specifically to Setswana.

- **Additional language: First Additional Language**

According to the National Curriculum and Assessment Statement, “First Additional Language level assumes that learners do not necessarily have any knowledge of the language when they arrive at school. The language proficiency of this cohort is basic, thus they cannot communicate effectively in the language” (Department of Basic Education, 2011:6). This is important, because some of the learners in Setswana as Home Language classes are not speakers of Setswana at home.

- **Pretoria Sotho**

Pretoria Sotho is a non-standard communicative language that is recognised as a Sotho language. Its basis is Sekgatla, one of Setswana dialects. It uses a high number of Afrikaans, English, and Zulu vocabulary (Schuring, 1981).

- **Setswana Home Language**

Setswana is one of the 11 official languages of the Republic of South Africa. It is spoken by 8% of the population of South Africa (Statistics South Africa, Census 2001 and Ethnologue). Aptly put by Sebate (2011:21), Setswana is a “vehicular cross-border language spoken in four Southern African countries, namely Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana.” It is regarded as a minority language in Zimbabwe and Namibia, while in both Botswana and South Africa it enjoys the status of an official language. In South Africa Setswana is taught from Grade R-12, thus it forms part of the eight learning areas.

1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING IDIOMS AS IMAGINATIVE LANGUAGE

As a researcher, during my observation of teaching and learning Setswana, I realised the importance of empowering teachers with effective teaching skills because they are the key to a successful teaching and learning situation. Without competent and effective teachers the learners will not realise or actualise their

potential language proficiency regarding aspects of creative thinking which demand imagination and the ability to formulate meaningful ideas. An empowered teacher will be capable of teaching idioms in such a way that he or she inspires learners to become imaginative language users. Imaginative language, such as the use of idioms, proverbs and figures of speech, must be taught and used by teachers and learners in their daily communication in class and outside the classroom in order to improve their language proficiency. In the teaching of African languages, the teaching of idioms, sayings, proverbs and figures of speech, as well as other cultural aspects such as riddles, which help learners to observe what surrounds them and force them to think on their feet, seems to be on the decline. Idioms, proverbs and figures of speech are supposed to be part of the inductive learning which the teacher is expected to hear from learners to gauge how much of the imaginative language they have already acquired at home and in their community before their classroom learning starts.

Idioms are language aspects that are part of everyday experiences; they result from a person's observation of what surrounds her or him in her or his environment. The purpose of using idioms is, among others, to enrich language. To succeed in using idiomatic language, one has to use one's imagination and be able to be witty with words. This will help improve the language proficiency of the Home Language or mother-tongue speakers of Setswana. However, there are various factors that affect the teaching and learning of idioms as imaginative language.

1.3.1 Factors disempowering teachers from teaching Setswana idioms

In reviewing factors that make teachers not keen to teach Setswana idioms, attitudes of teachers and learners to African languages, the dominance of English in South Africa, the location of schools and lack of teaching skills on the part of teachers will be considered.

In the Sunday Times of 3 September (2009:11), Dr Mamphela Ramphele, former vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town, in an article titled: "Here mother tongue clashes with her mother's tongue," cautioned against the constant erosion of African languages. She laments the fact that African languages are taught by

teachers who are not competent users of these languages. The inference is that the nuances that underpin the teaching and learning of African languages might be compromised. She emphasises the fact that a language is not only a medium of communication, but also an expression of cultural heritage, which means aspects such as folktales, riddles, idioms, sayings, proverbs and figures of speech should be transmitted from generation to generation.

In addition Thandeka Mpapi, in the *Mail & Guardian* (15-21 October 2010, p 42-43), referred to a study to determine the attitude of African learners towards African languages. One learner commented that “[i]f you speak English well, people respect you. But if you speak isiXhosa, it does not matter how well you speak it, no one looks at you differently.” Mpapi comments that these learners give the impression that African languages are boring and insignificant. Mabule (1992), in a study conducted on the attitudes of learners regarding the mother tongue, also remarks that learners seemed to be afraid to speak Sepedi, because their friends laughed at them.

Furthermore, De Kadt (2005:19) remarks that:

“English as a language of learning and teaching has been shown to be spreading beyond the classroom and to be displacing the various indigenous mother tongues in social contexts and ultimately in the home.”

From the above remarks the following specific factors are identified:

Sustaining of African Languages in black townships schools becomes problematic in that learners who attend school in these areas, although an African language is to them a Home-Language, English is the medium of learning and teaching and is their First Additional Language (FAL) (De Kadt, 2005:19). The Home Language was offered as a subject only during one period (plus-minus forty-five minutes to an hour per day) (RNCS, 2003b). This was not supposed to be the case after the 1994 elections; learners in the Foundation Phase, i.e. from Grade R to 3, are supposed to be taught in their respective home languages. Therefore, as a medium of instruction, English occupies a pivotal place in teaching and learning in the minds of the learner, the teacher, the parent and the school at large. African languages do not enjoy pride

of place as crucial indigenous languages and are not given their rightful place as official languages. This is the context in which the research into the teaching and learning of idioms in Setswana took place.

Teachers' and learners' negative attitudes towards African Language are another factor that discourages interest, creativity and initiative in the teaching of Setswana (Mamphole Ramaphole (2009), Malimabe (1990), Mabule (1992). There are some teachers who believe that as early as Grade R learners should be taught in English and not Setswana. Some teachers of other subjects ridicule learners and teachers of African languages. Learners feel that African languages are not regarded as economically viable and that they will not secure them better jobs as compared with English. Learners and parents also believe that there is no bright future or career advancement for anybody who studies an African language as a major subject (Malimabe 1990).

The following is a brief discussion of reasons for my evaluation of earlier studies regarding unqualified teachers of African languages. There are no significant studies to date that have critically assessed the position of teachers and the level of language proficiency. I could not find any study that was aimed at introducing an idiom programme in African languages in the South African context except the idiom pictures in Afrikaans. In the old dispensation, with the establishment of Vista Universities, teachers registered for the sake of being certified instead of improving how they taught in the classroom. This resulted in the majority of teachers majoring in African languages – thus the other subjects were left unattended. After completion, a number of these teachers resorted to accepting teaching posts to teach African languages as they could not be employed to teach subjects of their choice or only because they were mother-tongue speakers of these African languages, not that they had studied them nor had a passion for African languages (Malimabe, 1990:71).

On the other hand, even certified teachers who came to the In-Service Training facility in Shoshanguve (Pretoria) then could not interpret the curriculum accurately and had problems with approaches to teaching African languages, including the

teaching of idioms. Snyman et al. (1996:152) indicated that the shortcomings in the curriculum at the teacher training colleges in South Africa were due to the fact that:

- 90% of the time was spent on the theories of grammar or literature and on the history of languages, and.
- only 10% of the time was spent on different skills/methods of teaching Setswana grammar and literature.

1.3.2 Impediments to the teaching of Setswana idioms

In my professional experience as a teacher and lecturer, and now lately as a researcher of Grade 3 classes, I observed the following impediments to the teaching of Setswana idioms:

- The advent of the democratic dispensation in 1994 has led to the desegregation of schools (De Kadt, 2005; Vandeyar & Killen, 2006). The implications of these changes, though positive in that learners could attend a school of their choice anywhere in South Africa, created an imbalance in that there was an influx of black African learners into former Model C schools only (Soudien, 1998; De Kadt, 2005). This skewed development created a socioeconomic burden whereby African learners who migrated to these schools strived, and still strive, to understand and grasp English – both as a purported home language and as a medium of instruction (Soudien, 1998). This scenario impacts on the learners' proficiency in Setswana.
- I observed that the National Curriculum Statements of 2002 introduced by the Department of Education were not specific about what to teach as regards idioms in the Foundation Phase curriculum. However, this has been attended to in the new CAPS curriculum. The curriculum still makes use of inexplicit words that are foreign to the teachers - hence idioms are not taught in the classroom.
- Brinton et al. (1985) did a study that proved that elementary school (Grade 2 - 6) learners were able to comprehend specific selected idioms that were used in their study. On the other hand, Lodge and Leach (1975:528-29) and Cooper (1998:257) are of the opinion that children under the age of nine tend

to give the literal interpretation of an idiom, unlike a nine-year-old who already understands the semantic duality which is often characteristic of adult language. They emphasise the selection of idioms suitable for a given grade. The selection of idioms suitable for a given age and grade will be elaborated further in Chapter 2.

Therefore, the relevance of this study is based on the fact that research on the teaching of idioms will also be conducted in the Foundation Phase (Grade 3).

- The CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2011) document only mentions the teaching of imaginative language, a broad concept that is not specific in terms of teaching idioms. The teacher might be selective as regards what he or she teaches and leave out idioms. There is a lack of instructional material for teaching figurative language, idioms in particular, in Setswana. Although idioms are aspects of language, they are neglected in the South African curricula post-1994. Nothing is mentioned about: (1) when they should be taught; (2) how they are selected according to grades in terms of the degree of difficulty; and (3) to which age group they should be taught.
- Mistranslations in the curriculum documents and some textbooks: There are some inaccuracies in the policy documents – and this is partly due to the fact that policy documents are written first in English and then translated into various languages. For example: STOP as a traffic sign was translated as EMA in Setswana. This should have been translated as *Letshwao la go ema ke STOP*, meaning the sign for ‘stop’ is ‘stop’, as all the traffic signs are only found in English. Some prescribed books are also translated from English into Setswana instead of being versioned; thus they lose the essence of what they are supposed to portray

The abovementioned impediments to the teaching of idioms may give the teachers the false impression that it is not important to teach idioms in the lower grades. Thus the aim of this study was to find and introduce effective methods for teaching idioms in Grade 3 by providing teachers with appropriate strategies for teaching Setswana idioms.

1.3.3 Advantages of teaching idioms as a means of preserving Setswana

The core aim in teaching a home language is to develop learners' language skills, which will enable them to communicate as effectively as possible; i.e. to the extent that they will be able to listen, read, speak and write on a more academic level in their home language. The specific language phenomena to be taught must feature prominently in the action (spoken language). Thus the aim of the Home Language course is to refine their written and spoken proficiency and not to provide initial language tuition (Viljoen, 1996:5).

Cultural identity is confusing to learners growing up in a multicultural and multilingual society. People living in urban areas, especially townships (informal settlements, in the South African context) come from different sociocultural backgrounds as well as from different walks of life. In most cases, they have to adapt to a different culture than their own; they speak different languages and have different cultural backgrounds. Where neighbours or members of a specific community speak different languages, more often than not, they learn to speak one another's languages for the purpose of effective communication. As a result of this versatility, most urban residents are multilingual.

Furthermore, learners as well as teachers who come from such heterogeneous environments may end up speaking a mixed, made-up language. In cases where more than two languages exist, the influence can give birth to a Koine language like Pretoria Sotho, as Schuring (1985) showed in his research on Pretoria Sotho and Malimabe (1990) in her study on the influence of non-standard varieties on standard Setswana among high school learners. According to Schuring (1985:2), Pretoria Sotho is a non-standard communicative language that is recognised as a Sotho language because its basis is Sekgatla (one of the Setswana dialects) even if it uses a high number of Afrikaans, English, and isiZulu words. As it is regarded as a Sotho language, it is often used as a medium of instruction instead of Setswana, and this affects the level of command of the standard Setswana on the part of learners.

Ball (2009:63) states that, if a learner learns another language in addition to her or his home language, the second language will "contain elements of the first and

second language as well as its own distinctive ones”. This is common in multilingual countries like South Africa. However, the problem arises when the elements of the second language do not adhere to the grammatical structure of the first language, especially when “loaning” of words takes place.

Because of the threat of the disappearance of indigenous languages because of language contact, international structures such as UNESCO have encouraged research on enhancing the learning of children from diverse linguistic backgrounds in mother-tongue-based bilingual or multilingual education in early childhood and during early primary school years (Ball, 2010:10). Ball (ibid.) also observed that different cultural groups are now sensitive to ensuring that their children are taught their linguistic heritage. This is one of the measures to help children learn and retain their mother-tongue.

Nationally, structures such as The Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB), assisted in the empowerment of teachers of African languages. This structure was established in terms of the Pan South African Board Act 59 of 1995, amended as the PanSALB Amendment Act of 1999. This Board supports the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 106 of 1996) in promoting and creating conditions for the development and use of official languages, the Khoi and San languages and sign language, promoting and ensuring respect for all languages commonly used by communities in South Africa, including German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telegu, Urdu and Arabic, Hebrew, Sanskrit, and other languages used for religious purposes in South Africa (PANSALB News, 2011:1).

Another national structure for all the 11 official languages is UMALUSI, which is a Council of Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training and sets and monitors standards for education and training in the Republic of South Africa. This is done in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework Act No. 67 of 2008 and the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act No.58 of 2001. The UMALUSI Council ensures that the providers of education and training in official languages, including the nine African languages, have the capacity to deliver learning programmes in accordance with the expected standards of quality (UMALUSI, 2000-2012:1).

An intensive programme to promote nine South African indigenous languages, of which Setswana is one, was launched in 2011 in South Africa by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in partnership with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) with the aid of an EU grant to strengthen Foundation Phase (FP) teacher education. The project also assisted to empower teachers of African languages through materials produced that can be used by teachers and student teachers in home language teaching.

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) is a body that was established by the government to support the teaching profession. The aim of SACE is to focus on the promotion and facilitation of professional development of teachers, because teachers need to improve their knowledge and skills throughout their teaching career. Thus SACE wants to make teachers aware that “teaching requires deep knowledge which is continuously updated and widened, and it involves complex skills that need to be continually adapted to new circumstances”. (SACE 2014:2). This establishment will also help promote the teaching and learning of African languages.

Given the above observations, the study set out to explore how teachers, if empowered to teach idioms as part of imaginative language in Grade 3, are able to teach Setswana idioms to learners.

1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

This study is divided into two phases. The first phase documents how teachers teach idioms in their Setswana lessons. It was found that teachers did not understand what idioms are. Moreover, teachers were adamant that CAPS curriculum documents do not specifically mention the teaching of idioms, and their subject coaches from the districts tell them what to teach, and they are not supposed to deviate from that, so teachers do not teach idioms as part of imaginative language in Setswana.

Therefore, it was important to design an idiom programme to empower teachers so that they could begin to address idioms as an important aspect in a language. The second phase suggested creative methods, strategies and techniques that teachers

can use to teach Setswana idioms to Grade 3 learners which the current curriculum (CAPS) does not address adequately, which may lead to problems in interpreting the syllabus. Such shortcomings negatively affect the teacher's ability to teach. The other factor is that in a situation where teachers are less enthusiastic and their attitudes are negative towards Setswana or the teaching of Setswana, their understanding of the Setswana idioms would be limited and they would also lack the necessary insight to choose the correct level of idioms for the learners.

An additional reason for doing this research project was based on my previous experience. I conducted a pilot study in 2005-2006 in which the linguistic realities of standard Sepedi and Setswana were investigated in schools around Mamelodi, Atteridgeville and Soshanguve (townships in the province of Gauteng, Republic of South Africa). I was surprised by the non-standard language that was used in class. The lesson I listened to was supposed to be in standard Sepedi or Setswana with an acceptable usage of idiomatic expressions suitable to the grade being taught. Instead the teacher used code-switching between Pretoria Sotho and English, i.e. instead of standard Sepedi or Setswana the teacher used Pretoria Sotho and code-switched between English and Sepedi (Ramagoshi and Webb, 2007).

Besides the fact that Phase One of the study revealed that teachers did not teach idioms, there were other reasons for conducting the study:

When marking assignments of student teachers on the teaching of African languages at the University of South Africa (UNISA), I noticed that both experienced and inexperienced teachers tended to provide very little context in their lessons on idioms and proverbs. They even tended to use English proverbs instead of African language ones. Their lessons were not well structured and they lacked content. All the examples of the proverbs given and explained were English and yet all the lessons were for the teaching of African languages. The strategies or methods used to teach the proverbs or idioms were not well structured or explained in such a way that it would convince an assessor that the Lesson Outcomes would be reached in those lessons. Both experienced and inexperienced teachers lacked techniques and exciting methods to teach proverbs, idioms and other expressions such as figures of speech. As stated by Barber and Mourshed (2007:1), "the quality of an education

system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers and that the only way to improve outcomes is to improve instruction”.

Teachers who came to the College of Continuing Training in Soshanguve while I was lecturer there struggled more with the methods of teaching an African language than the content of different aspects of grammar and literature, because they could not interpret the syllabus correctly. The same problem occurred with the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) curriculum of 2005 (C2005) (Department of Education 2000:38) and CAPS.

Before 1984, most of the teachers in African languages used the audio-lingualism theory, which encouraged the drill method, repetition, habit formation and rote learning. As a result, the distinction between first language and second language teaching was not made (own observation at the College for Continuing Training). C2005 aimed to develop creative, critical and literate citizens; however, it came with the problem of complex and burdensome terminology that led to misinterpretations and consequently left teachers afraid of change (own observation at the College for Continuing Training). This called for a review that resulted in the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), with each learning outcome broken up to include assessment standards. The NCS was immediately followed by the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS). These revised curricula also came teeming with problems such as too much administration on the part of the teacher instead of actual teaching in the classroom. The changing curriculum became a bone of contention until 2011, when the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) was introduced with the aim to lighten the burden in multi-grade teaching. Ntjotini (2013:6) praises CAPS because it offers “grade-by-grade structured and detailed content layout”. She further states that the questions of content, concept and skills are designed and set out properly within teaching times.

Recently, as part of a lecture on the method of teaching African languages at the university, I assessed teachers to find out their skills in teaching imaginative language. In one of my classes, while teaching pre-essay writing activities using the five senses, the researcher discovered that all teachers (her students) could not use figures of speech such as metaphors and similes to describe what they see or hear

in their respective mother-tongues. For example: In English you hear a bird chirping. In Setswana, Sepedi and Sesotho you say: *Ke utlwa nonyane e re tswiritswiri!* (I hear a bird saying *tswiritswiri*). A green tree will be described as follows: *Ke bona setlhare se setala se re talaa!* (I see a green tree saying *talaa!* (literal translation)). '*Talaa!*' is an ideophone describing a green colour. This shows the rich idiomatic language of Setswana and the many aspects that are not explored in teaching Setswana language proficiency; however my students were unable to do that in Setswana.

The following activity I did with the teachers at the In-service Training Centre motivated me to conduct this study on teaching Setswana idioms. As a lecturer, I gave the teachers an activity in which they had to be divided into four groups, with each group having a specific task to perform.

The first group had to write down any ten proverbs of their choice. The researcher discovered that their proverbs were incomplete. For example, in Setswana: *Ngaka mosadi mooka (o nya le mariga): Bogosi Kupe (ga bo itlolwe e se letsoku and Mogolo o rongwa a eme (a ema, matsutsuba).*

The second group struggled to explain the meanings of the proverbs. They gave literal meanings like 'When you are going to town, do not forget an umbrella because it might rain'. The proverb in question was: *Ditlamelwana tsa pula di baakangwa go sa le gale* (Things used for rain are prepared in time). The answer that was expected from them was: 'One always needs to be prepared for anything in life, like studying'. You cannot expect to pass your examinations if you did not study the whole year. The third group could not use the proverbs appropriately in correct sentences. The last group was to take all the proverbs created by group one, formulate their own topic and write a paragraph or two using only the proverbs that had been formulated. They were also instructed not to use any idioms or figures of speech. This group could not at all construct a paragraph using the proverbs in their own creative way and using a topic that was chosen by them.

When I enquired why their performance in the teaching of proverbs was so poor, the responses were the following:

- They never teach figurative language (be it idioms or proverbs) because, according to the curriculum, these are not set in the examination at the end of the year.
- There is a general assumption that the learners are mother-tongue speakers of Setswana, so they should know the Setswana idioms, proverbs and folk tales.
- The teacher in Grade 12, for example, assumed that teachers in the preceding classes must have taught these aspects of language. Thus the Grade 12 teacher was not going to teach them, but expected language proficiency in speaking and in the use of idioms and proverbs, especially in their essay writing.

Most of the examples that were used above are part of the idiomatic language that is supposed to be used daily by a teacher in class, depending on their context and use. They are not supposed to be taught in isolation but in the context of meaningful sentences. This prompted the present research on idioms. How were idioms, which are less difficult than proverbs, taught at lower classes such as Grade 3? Lodge and Leach (1975:528-529) and Cooper (1998:257) proved in their research that children in the early grades can be taught idioms as long as a selection of suitable idioms for a given age and grade is taught; hence the question why this was not happening.

This research is important because the findings might have wider implications for curriculum design and instructional models that foster realistic ways of teaching idioms and the learning of idioms by learners in any home language. Cooper (1998) argued that language teachers need a systematic plan for teaching idioms to home language learners. Furthermore, the study could contribute to the revision of curriculum statements to include strategies and tactics for teaching idioms. Specifically, the findings would provide an understanding of problems encountered by teachers in:

- decoding the curriculum, with specific reference to the teaching of Setswana
- selecting content suitable for Grade 3 Setswana learners in their lesson plans

- addressing issues of non-standard language, code-switching and mixing of idioms with other parts of speech when teaching Setswana idioms
- empowering teachers through a programme on the teaching of idioms.

Learners in the Foundation Phase are still grappling with the techniques of language acquisition, that is, how to read, to write, to speak and to appreciate their home languages. The aim in teaching Home Language is to develop the learners' language proficiency, which will enable them to communicate effectively and with confidence. Going beyond the mundane teaching of language to the teaching of idioms as imaginative language could inculcate skills that could be used to enhance second language acquisition. On the basis that values in Setswana are also embedded in idioms, the teaching of idioms from Grade 3 onward seems realistic and appropriate. The findings from this research process would inform suggestions and recommendations for future studies.

1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Because of the detrimental influence of other foreign languages, research on enhancing the teaching and learning of Setswana Home Language is significant (Malibabe, 1990). According to Ball (2010:10), different cultural groups are now sensitive to ensuring that their children are taught their linguistic heritage. This helps children to learn and retain their home languages. The same sentiment was expressed by the Minister of Education, Mr Blade Nzimande, namely that the teaching of African languages is necessary for the human rights and dignity of people as well as for preservation of culture (SABC TV3, October 2010). He also said that the input of teachers in changing the perception that these languages are unfit to be used as for higher functions is invaluable within the African community. Teachers must be empowered because they are the key to a successful teaching and learning situation. Without competent and effective teachers, learners will not realise or actualise their language proficiency potential as regards aspects of creative thinking, which demands imagination and the ability to compose meaningful ideas. An empowered teacher will be capable of teaching idioms in a way that inspires learners to be imaginative language users. This study therefore sort to

investigate how teachers teach Setswana idioms to the Grade 3 learners and how the learners decode idioms as part of imaginative language.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions underpin this study.

1.6.1 Primary research question

To what extent can a *Setswana idioms in picture-form* programme empower teachers to teach idioms to Grade 3 Setswana learners as part of imaginative language?

1.6.2 Secondary research questions

- How do Grade 3 teachers use Setswana language daily in the classroom?
- What is the understanding of Grade 3 Setswana teachers as regards idioms as part of Home Language teaching and learning?
- How do teachers make learners master the use of idioms as part of a programme in their language learning within the classroom?
- What are the learner's responses to the teaching of idioms as part of a programme in Setswana Grade 3 classes?
- What will constitute a programme that empowers teachers to teach idioms as imaginative language?

1.7 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to investigate how an idiom programme could empower teachers to teach Setswana idioms as imaginative language daily in Grade 3. With this programme, designed on the basis of the research findings of Phase One in 2013, I intend to instil the knowledge and skills to teach and love idioms and idiomatic language in both teachers and learners. This will help improve their language proficiency in Setswana Home Language.

By designing and introducing the programme, I hope to:

- introduce and observe the strategies and techniques that empower teachers to teach a programme on idioms during language lessons so as to build the learner's confidence and proficiency in the use of idioms;
- observe how teachers teach and understand idioms;
- observe how teachers are empowered and to build on the theory of teaching idioms as imaginative language, as required by the national curriculum of South Africa;
- study how learners master the use of idioms and whether the idioms are incorporated in their language learning within the classroom;.
- observe how teachers use Setswana in their teaching.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research is important because its findings might have wider implications for curriculum design and instructional models that foster effective ways of teaching idioms in Setswana and other languages, specifically in the Foundation Phase. Cooper (1998) argues that language teachers need a systematic plan for teaching idioms to Home Language learners. Furthermore, this study will contribute towards the revision of curriculum statements – firstly in order to securing the use of the language and culture embedded in indigenous languages and secondly to include strategies and techniques for the teaching of idioms. Specifically, the findings will provide an understanding of problems encountered by teachers in:

- interpreting the South African curriculum, with specific reference to the teaching of Setswana idioms;
- selecting idioms suitable for Grade 3 Setswana learners in their lesson plans;
- addressing issues of non-standard language, code-switching and mixing of idioms with other parts of speech when teaching Setswana idioms;.
- introducing a new programme designed based on data collected during Phase One of the study on the teaching of idioms with the aim of empowering teachers while building on theory in the teaching of idioms.

Learners in the Foundation Phase are still grappling with the techniques of language acquisition, that is, how to read, to write, to speak and to appreciate their home languages. The aim in teaching Home Language is to develop the learners' language proficiency, which will enable them to communicate effectively and with confidence. Going beyond the mundane teaching of a language to the teaching of idioms as imaginative language could inculcate skills that could be applied to enhance second or additional language acquisition, because if a learner is competent in her or his home language, the skills acquired in her or his home language can be used as a bridge to second language acquisition. Preserving Setswana as a language fulfils the Constitutional requirements of being an official language which is used in key societal domains, for example in health, the economy and politics (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 106, 1996). Moreover, it would contribute to society's cultural richness and resources needed in various communities of the country. Thus it assists the learners to tap into their existing linguistic and cultural knowledge in various contexts (Snyder, 2008; Cummins, 1994; Skunabb-Kangas, 1995).

Since values in Setswana are also embedded in idioms, the teaching of idioms from Grade 3 onward seems realistic and appropriate. This research will investigate whether teachers are well guided in the teaching of Setswana idioms as imaginative language in Grade 3 and introduce a programme to empower teachers with skills to teach idioms. The findings from this research process will inform suggestions and recommendations for future studies.

1.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework on which the study is based will encompass both constructivism theory and the theoretical framework whereby learners decode idioms.

Constructivism theory encourages the engagement and sharing of ideas between people of different views and opinions. Hmelo-Silver (2014:2) asserts that constructivism has deep historical roots that connect it to researchers such as Socrates who believed that a student constructs meaning on their own rather than

that a teacher transmits information to them. Thus teachers act as facilitators in the learning process. Furthermore, according to Hmelo-Silver (ibid.), “constructivism can take many forms based on the instructor’s theoretical commitments. Constructivist teaching at its core focuses on the student’s active role in their own learning as they build and organize their knowledge.”

Linking to constructivism, Liu (2008) highlights five major theoretical frameworks that have been applied in actualising Home Language idiom comprehension. These theories are (1) the literal first or idiom list hypothesis; (2) the simultaneous processing or lexical representation hypothesis; (3) the figurative first or direct access hypothesis; (4) the compositional analysis hypothesis; and (5) the dual idiom representation model. Both the constructivist theory and the theory of decoding idioms by learners will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3 (see emerging theoretical model in section 3.8).

1.10 RESEARCH DESIGN

This is a qualitative research design approached from an interpretivist perspective to interpret teachers’ use of idioms (Phase One) and the design and implementation of a programme for idioms as imaginative language (Phase Two). This approach was preferred because it assumes that “access to reality (given or socially constructed) is only through social construction such as language (including text and symbols), consciousness and shared meanings” (Nieuwenhuis, 2010:59). Ragin et.al, (1994:82) argues that in the qualitative research approach, the researcher often gets involved in the events or activities of the research subject to observe and identify the common patterns shared by the research subjects. Collins et.al, (2000:89) hold the view that qualitative research studies the object within unique and meaningful human situations or interactions. Therefore, in an attempt to elucidate whether teachers teach idioms and learners learn the use and interpretation of idioms, in Phase One I became a participant observer in Grade 3 Setswana classes. In addition, I will guide teachers to understand and implement a programme on teaching idioms as imaginative language (Phase Two).

1.11 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.11.1 Case study

The research will be conducted using the case study methodology in both phases. The case study methodology is described in Chapter 4. The relevance of a case study in this research is that it allowed the researcher to strive for a comprehensive understanding of how participants relate to and interact with one another in a classroom and how they make meaning of the teaching and learning of idioms (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). Data was collected through studying relevant documents, individual interviews, focus groups and classroom observations as well as the notes from the researcher's diary.

To conduct an in-depth study of how idioms are taught and learned within a school setting assisted me to design the programme and to observe how learners through its implementation understand and interpret idioms as well as how they retain and use idioms naturally and proficiently in Setswana. Moreover, I observed the different techniques and strategies, as embedded in the programme, which teachers employed while teaching idioms.

1.11.2 Empowerment evaluation methodology

Subsequent to the data collection and analysis, I introduced a programme to empower Setswana Grade 3 teachers to teach idioms as imaginative language, using the evaluation empowerment methodology. This method will be elaborated in Chapter 4.

Fetterman (2002:4) is of the opinion that “[e]mpowerment evaluation is the use of concepts, techniques, and findings to foster improvement and self-determination.” According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 1999:9), Empowerment Evaluation (EE) is “the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics and outcomes of strategies (i.e., programs) to make judgements about the strategy, improve strategy effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future strategy development.” This method will be used by the

researcher when developing a programme to empower Setswana teachers to improve their teaching strategies in Phase Two of the research project.

The research method is explained in detail in Chapter 4. Below follows a summary of how the data will be collected and analysed.

Table 1.1: Summary of data collection and data analysis

Data collection Phase One	Participants	Data analysis
1. Relevant documents	Official documents, readers and learners' portfolios.	Look for approaches, tactics and strategies that inform and guide the teachers on how to teach and use idioms in class. Look how often which strategies and tactics are given as activities in the learners' portfolios. Monitor the frequency of idioms used in the prescribed readers.
2. Individual interviews	Grade 3 teachers from the three schools that will be observed.	Go over observed lessons and point at the instances that lent themselves to idiom use. Make the teachers aware of the frequency and use of idioms in their daily speech in class. Check which strategies, tactics and methods they use in the teaching and learning of Setswana idioms. 16 questions were used in the interview.
3. Focus group interviews	Setswana language teachers in Grade 4, 5, 6 and 7 in the same schools.	Compare the frequency of idioms used in each Setswana class. Find out which strategies, tactics and methods are used in the teaching of Setswana idioms. The same 16 questions were used in the interview.
4. Classroom observation	Three Grade 3 classes in the two schools.	Assess how fast idioms are recognised and used in spoken forms. Find out if the learners know idioms and their importance. Observe the impact and effectiveness of the various approaches, strategies and tactics the teacher uses during Setswana lessons in class.

Data collection Phase Two	Participants	Data analysis
Programme design	Three Setswana teachers in three Grade 3 classes in the two schools	Selected 16 transparent idioms in picture form, flashcards developed for teaching idioms and for classroom activities.
Programme implementation	Three Setswana teachers in three Grade 3 classes in the two schools	Researcher introduced idioms through anecdotes to help understand idioms. Teachers had to select and present own idioms to show understanding. Teachers used prescribed readers to teach learners idioms in the context of the story. The teachers then used Setswana idioms in picture form. Revision questions and activities were presented by the researcher to ascertain understanding of idioms taught.

1.12 ASSUMPTIONS

Cooper (1998) concluded that mastering and interpreting of idioms by children is reflected by the frequency of use of idioms by language teachers in the classroom. Abel (2003) stated that Home Language learners recognise idioms more often than non-mother tongue speakers. Consequently knowledge of idioms and their creative use in Setswana indicates the teacher and learner's proficiency, which helps them to communicate effectively and with confidence. The assumption made in this study is that the teacher uses a certain number of idioms in her or his speech daily in class, especially during reading. On the other hand, learners are expected to have knowledge of idioms that they have learned at home or in the community. These assumptions were directing this research.

1.13 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study was carried out in two schools: one urban and one semi-rural school. The reason for choosing an urban school was that all nine indigenous official languages are taught in urban areas in a province like Gauteng, which offers a good opportunity to find out how Setswana teachers and learners are able to retain and use idioms in a multilingual and a multicultural environment. The semi-rural area, in most cases, has one predominant indigenous language, but it is still surrounded by other indigenous languages that are spoken in that specific province.

1.14 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

The chapter division of this research project is as follows:

Chapter 1

This chapter gives the background to the study and the reasons why the researcher embarked on this study. It also states and discusses the problem statement, research questions, rationale and the purpose and objectives of the study, the theoretical framework and research methodology; crucial concepts are discussed and defined in this chapter and the research design is discussed.

Chapter 2

The literature review attempts to determine what an idiom is and why we should teach idioms as part of imaginative language. Furthermore, the strategies for teaching idioms will be reviewed and the key concepts will be defined.

Chapter 3

In this chapter, the theoretical framework on which the study is based will encompass both constructivism theory and the theoretical framework used by learners to decode idioms. Discussions of different researchers who researched this topic are synthesised to position this study.

Chapter 4

The description of the research approach, methods of data collection and analysis will be explained in this chapter. The aim is to try and produce data that will inform the programme to empower teachers to teach idioms to Grade 3 Setswana learners as part of imaginative language.

Chapter 5

This chapter presents an analysis of data collected in 2013 in order to introduce a programme to empower teachers to teach idioms as part of imaginative language. The findings from this data led to the design of the **Setswana idioms in picture form** programme, which was implemented as Phase Two.

Chapter 6

A detailed explanation of the empowerment programme will be provided as well as how it was implemented. The effect of the programme will also be evaluated.

Chapter 7

An overview, synthesis of findings and recommendations are presented in this chapter and the research questions are answered. Literature control of the theories and literature based on idioms and sociolinguistics and how the theories link to the study are analysed.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Phase One of this study, the purpose was to investigate whether teachers are using Setswana idioms when teaching Setswana as imaginative language in Grade 3. In Phase Two, Setswana idioms were introduced in a pictorial programme in order to empower teachers when teaching idioms. The assumption was that teachers need to be empowered, as the findings from Phase One indicated that they do not teach idioms at all. In this chapter I review literature on the phenomenon of idioms as imaginative language, the teaching of idioms and the reasons why they should be taught. In this chapter, a detailed literature review on all aspects of this phenomenon, such as the types of teaching strategies and approaches that teachers could use in the teaching of idioms, will be expounded as well as problems that could hinder teachers in teaching Setswana idioms.

In order to review the relevant literature, I adopted a threefold analysis comprising of pertinent questions: What are idioms? How are idioms taught and learnt? What are the sociolinguistic impediments to the teaching of idioms? What challenges could teachers experience when teaching Setswana idioms as imaginative language? (See Figure 2.1 below.) In addition I reviewed the literature that assisted me on the content of a programme that could assist teachers to teach idioms; specifically in Setswana to Grade 3 teachers.

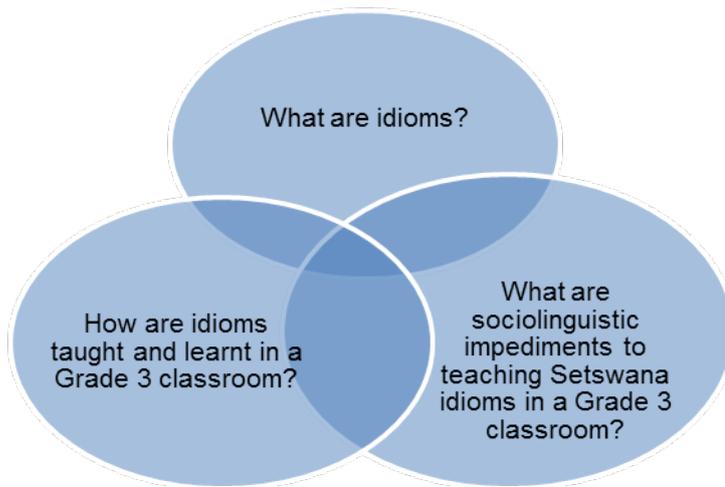


Fig. 2.1: Interrelation of core aspects of teaching idioms

2.2 IDIOMS AND THEIR COMPLEXITY IN LANGUAGE USE

Defining an idiom is rather problematic. The study proceeded from the premise that definitions of an idiom differ from one researcher to another and that the definitions are also influenced by different languages and cultures. Researchers such as Miruka (1994), Moon (1998) and Bauer and Brown (2001) explain that idioms are part of figurative language that includes metaphor, similes and proverbs which are at times difficult to understand because they depend largely on connotation rather than on denotation or literal meaning. To Hockett (1958:172), an idiom entails individual morphemes, which is a broader description than Liu (2003) who states that a morpheme could be a single word with full meaning, or a phrase, or even a sentence. Like Hockett and Liu, Boulton (1980:21), sees an idiom “as less rigid and much harder to learn as it consists of an immense accumulation of verbal habits”. This implies that an idiom can be anything, as mentioned by Liu (ibid.). Cooper (1998:255), on the other hand, explains that idioms are part of a figurative language that includes metaphors, similes and proverbs, which are at times difficult to understand because they do not mean what they literally mean.

Seboni (1980) states that the function of idioms is to instil an appreciation of the beauty of a language. Ntsan’wisi (1965:16) defines an idiom as “a fixed structural form or a fixed phrasal pattern of words which go together.” I concur with Ntsan’wisi

and define an idiom as a fixed phrase. This is evident in Setswana: idioms in Setswana are fixed phrases that start with a prefix (*Go-*, for example:

- *Go tlhoka tsebe* (to be without an ear) > *Ga o reetse* (you do not listen)
- *Go hupa tedu* (to have your beard between your lips) > *Go ngala* (to be peevish or irritated)
- *Go nna teme pedi o se gopane.* (to have two tongues, yet you are not an iguana) > *Go aka* (to be a liar).

Glucksberg (2001) concurs that an idiom is a subset of fixed expressions in a language community. Even Bujo (2001:24) notes that “idioms and proverbs play a decisive role in communicating ethical goods and correct behaviour” in a community. The description that idioms are fixed expressions is also echoed by Abel (2003), who notes that first language speakers encounter idioms more often in their daily communication than second and third language speakers. He defines idioms as “fixed expressions, i.e., as phrases or sentences whose figurative meaning is not clear from the literal meaning” (Abel, 2003:329).

To Hockett (1958) an idiom entails individual morphemes, or a word or a sentence. This is a broad description of an idiom, because a morpheme is the smallest unit of a word with full meaning. Similarly, though expanding on Hockett’s (ibid.) description of an idiom, Swinney and Cutler (1979:523) define an idiom as “a string of two or more words for which meaning is derived from the meanings of the individual words comprising that string.” Like Hockett (ibid.), Swinney and Cutler (1979), Conner (1992:21) sees an idiom “as less rigid and much harder to learn as it consists of an immense accumulation of verbal habits.” These descriptions of idioms show how complex idioms are.

Strässler (1982:133) states that “idioms are lexemes that contain information and they provide a method of handling special situations”. This view is enhanced by Hiecke and Lattley (1983:viii), who see idioms as a “great variety of devices that help lubricate our discourse and bring us closer to the people we are speaking to.” As a home language speaker of Setswana, it is my experience and understanding that the

effective empowerment of teachers teaching idioms in classrooms will assist in sustaining Setswana as a language.

Expounding on this, researchers such as Miruka (1994), Moon (1998) and Cooper (1998) explain that idioms are part of a figurative language that includes metaphors, similes and proverbs, which are at times difficult to understand because they depend largely on connotation rather than on denotation or literal meaning. Applebee and Rush (1992:vi) go to the extent of dividing idioms into the following categories: historical, new idioms, humorous idioms, foreign idioms, slang, proverbs, similes and metaphors. In this study the focus will be on historical idioms as an indigenous aspect of Setswana language.

Liu's writing decades later gives a comprehensive description of what an idiom is. Liu (2008:3) describes idioms as including "fixed phrases, clichés, formulaic speeches, proverbs, slang expressions, and at the extreme, single polysemic words."

Gibbs (1987), cited by Cooper (1998:257), is of the opinion that "the linguistic characteristics of idioms, such as their degree of syntactic flexibility and the closeness between literal and figurative meanings, affect the ease with which they can be acquired." They further give the following three types of characteristics of idioms according to level of difficulty:

- **Frozen idioms:** Idioms that cannot be syntactically transformed into the passive voice and still retain their figurative meaning. For example, Gibbs (1987:571) asserts that the idiom '*John kicked the bucket*' cannot be changed into the passive voice and still retain the figurative meaning of *John died* if rendered in the passive voice. Furthermore he is of the opinion that children and adults "process syntactically frozen idioms faster than they do syntactically flexible expressions." because they are heard more frequently in only one syntactic form rather than in several and are therefore, internalized as a single lexical item.
- **Transparent idioms:** If an idiomatic expression is transparent, there is a clearer and closer relationship between the literal and figurative meanings of

the expression than in the opaque idiom. For example, *Her words were a slap in the face*, the figurative meaning of disappoint or insult is closely related to the literal meaning.

- **Opaque idiom:** The relationship between the literal and figurative meanings is obscure or opaque. For example, *John kept beating around the bush* and the figurative meaning of John kept avoiding something. It is difficult to see a logical connection between the literal interpretation and the figurative meaning.

The above three types of idioms range from transparent idioms, which are easier than opaque and frozen idioms. However, for the purpose of this study, only the transparent idioms were selected, based on the level of the learners in Grade 3.

The relevance of this research is guided by the fact that in order to sustain any language, idioms should be the pillars of every language learning and teaching situation (Ramagoshi, 2010). Hence Seidl's (1991:5) assertion that those idioms are a decisive factor for all learners and adults who want to improve and widen their knowledge and ability to use them in everyday communication. It is the aim of this research to investigate whether teachers are teaching Setswana idioms as imaginative language in Grade 3 classes and then to develop a programme that will assist teachers to teach idioms effectively. Applebee and Rush (1992:v) strengthen my belief that using idioms in one's daily language makes one stand out as a native speaker of the language – everyone will notice the rich, figurative language and a wide variety of vocabulary in one's use of the language. Therefore this study will adopt the definition of an idiom as a "fixed phrase" when analysing the teaching and learning of Setswana idioms in Grade 3.

From the point of view of the abovementioned authors, idioms are not static. However, in the Setswana language, they are static. Setswana idioms start with the prefix 'Go', as in the idiom: '*Go tlhoka tsebe*', literally meaning, '*To be without an ear*'. The actual meaning of this idiom is '*to be naughty or not to obey orders and advice*'; especially of elders. Moreover, in Setswana idioms are not defined but are explained as devices to add spice to a language, as already indicated. Seboni (1980) describes the function of idioms as to instil an appreciation of the beauty of a

language. Therefore, as a working definition, an idiom is defined here as a fixed phrase.

In Phase One I investigated whether teachers understood idioms and whether they were teaching them. The findings from Phase One motivated me to continue to Phase Two, as I learnt from the literature that there could be a number of deterrents to learning idioms.

2.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IDIOMS

Researchers like Arietta (2011:1) have observed that new Hispanic residents As well as citizens born in the United States of America seem interested in maintaining their language heritage, which should include retention of its idiomatic nuances. On the other hand, Cooper (1998:259) in his research report states that “the comparable values for just the use of idioms in English would be 6,860 per week and 356,720 per year. Over a lifetime of 60 years, a person would use about 20 million idioms”. Cooper (ibid.) is of the opinion that “since idioms are frequently used in both spoken and written discourse, they require special attention in language programs and should not be relegated to a position of secondary importance in the curriculum.” Therefore, it is important to teach idioms in Setswana in order to maintain the Setswana language heritage.

Kruger and Nel (2007:136) have noticed that cognitive problems in language learning are noticed in very short written sentences that lack depth and variation. They give very little information and limit the writing practice. The learners also do not understand instructions because of limited vocabulary. In support of teaching imaginative language, Norris et al. (2008:139) state that: “[t]he study of metaphor generates a great deal of terminology, often itself metaphorical.” This supports the assertion that by learning idioms, learners increase their vocabulary as well as proficiency in spoken and written Setswana.

Glucksberg (2001:v) is of the opinion that in psychology and linguistic research, there is a belief that figurative language such as metaphors and idioms involve the same kinds of linguistic pragmatic operations that are used in ordinary, literal

language. On the other hand, Curry (1983:i) in teaching advanced foreign students to increase their vocabulary, used 304 idiomatic expressions based on the parts of the body only, and this method seemed very effective in teaching foreign students idioms in English. Body parts are one of the themes that are often used in teaching first and second language to learners, especially at lower grades, because they are easy to identify. Therefore, teaching idioms as imaginative language is of significance in the improvement of learner language proficiency.

Studies done in most African languages focus more on the learner's acquisition of language, on different methods of teaching and on theory of language than on the practical teaching of idioms as imaginative language (own observation). Seboni (1980) and Ntsan'wisi (1965) looked at idioms as part of linguistics studies, but not on teaching idioms as figurative language. On the other hand, Serudu (1985) and Monyai (2003) researched the importance of proverbs in Sepedi and Setswana and categorized their importance and use in different contexts. Mabule (1992) did research on how to teach Sepedi as a Home Language. She also encountered the problem caused by the negative attitude towards African languages on the part of learners in her study. She remarked that learners were afraid to speak Sepedi for fear of ridicule from their friends. According to Mabule (1992), teachers, even those who are doing primary school diplomas, are not prepared for teaching African languages at primary, but at high school level. That is why the content of their teaching is above the learner's comprehension. Mabule (ibid.) did not focus on the teaching of idioms as imaginative language either.

This study maintains that teachers need to be trained to teach idioms in African languages such as Setswana, since from the literature it is evident that idioms are an integral aspect of language learning and teaching. Hence there is a need to develop a programme to assist teachers to teach Setswana idioms effectively. Without the use of idioms, a language becomes straightforward, uninteresting and devoid of challenges. Idioms help one to be observant of one's surroundings and also to decode the interesting hidden scenarios of the idiom. For example, the idiom *Ba ntshana se inong* literally refers to two people who pick morsels from each other's teeth. It is quite a humorous picture. The idiom refers to two best friends (confidants) who confide top secrets to each other. A child who uses imagination frequently, will

at first perhaps be able to draw a literal picture of the above idiom in his mind. With the help of a parent or teacher, the learner will be given the meaning of the idiom. In future, the child will try to use the idiom in a sentence trying to imitate the parent or teacher. This is different from the following sentence: *Re ditsala tse di bolelelanang diphiri*. This sentence is the normal way of saying you and your friend confide in each other and you trust each other with private and personal secrets.

It is clear that idioms add interest, excitement and a sense of secrecy in the hidden meaning. This view is reinforced by Liu (2008:103), who says: “Sometimes idioms can help speakers convey their messages in a way non-idiom expressions are unable to do.” Therefore it is important to teach idioms; one of the aims of teaching mother-tongue speakers their home language is well couched by Viljoen in the following words:

“The core aim in teaching Home Languages is to develop learner’s language skills which will enable them to communicate as effectively as possible, i.e., that they will be able to listen, read, speak and write on a more academic level. The specific language phenomena to be taught must feature prominently in the action (language situation). Thus the aim with teaching idioms is to refine Home Languages, not to provide initial language tuition” (Viljoen, 1996:5).

Viljoen (1996) supports the idea of language proficiency in learning a home language. In this research, language proficiency is part of learning idioms. Seboni (1980) supports the idea of language proficiency when he states that one of the functions of idioms is an attempt to instil an appreciation of the beauty of a language.

In view of the preceding discussion, the aim of Phase Two in this study was on empowering teachers with teaching skills. This would be done by teaching idioms as part of imaginative language in Grade 3 classes, which informed the design and introduction of a programme for teaching idioms.

2.4 LANGUAGE, IDIOMS, CULTURE AND IDENTITY

The strength of language is based on the fact that there is a strong interrelationship between language and culture. Andah (1995:13) is of the opinion that language is not a genetic trait; just like culture, language is regulated by the standards commonly agreed upon by particular cultural groups. Language employs inherited biological skills aptitudes in children. Furthermore, the researcher contends that language impacts heavily upon the group's perception of the world; as a result, like culture, language is a means of self-identification (Andah, 1995:13). Since language and culture are closely linked, it will be interesting to explore how idioms are related to culture and identity in Setswana.

2.4.1 The nature of idioms and their relation to culture

In the definitions of idioms mentioned earlier (see 2.2) one can observe how the nature of an idiom is linked to the culture embedded in the language. In Setswana language, when one is late, an idiom *O thari*, is used. The word *thari* means placenta; a few minutes after the baby has been delivered, it is followed by the placenta, which is the last thing to come out when giving birth. The father of the baby then slaughters a goat, softens its skin and makes a *thari* called an abba in English. This was culturally expected from all fathers of new-born babies. The goat skin *thari* is used to carry the baby on the back to continue giving it the warmth and security it enjoyed while still in the womb.

There is broad agreement (Goldschmidt, 1976; Hofstede, 1991; Udo, 1992) on the definition of culture as a way of life, a way of thinking and of doing things. Culture is an expression that is learned and embedded in an individual throughout her or his lifetime. It shows itself in the individual's behavioural and thinking patterns that are derived from the community in which she or he lives. Consequently, culture is a collective phenomenon.

Udo (1992:7) is of the opinion that culture has never been static because it is always forced to be dynamic. In that process, in order to survive, it absorbs all kinds of elements from other cultures that influence it. Western culture, which is associated with civilization, is a good example because of the way it has gradually changed the

African's way of thinking and of doing things. For example, within the African culture, looking one's elders or superiors directly in the eyes when having a conversation is regarded as a sign of insubordination or disobedience. A Western person, on the other hand, interprets this behaviour in a negative way - one is seen as lacking in confidence or being a crook. Since the advent of Western civilization, especially after corporal punishment was abolished in schools, African children do look parents in the eyes when speaking to them – and this is seen as being assertive in Western culture. The social system of Africa has undergone dramatic changes, some of which have proven to be good, but detrimental and corrosive in other African people's perception (Malimabe, 1998).

Culture is partly shared with people who live within the social environment, which is where it is learned. It is seen as a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the member of one group or category from another. Aptly put by Seeyle (1994:15), culture is a very broad concept embracing all aspects of human life. Since culture is derived from the social environment in which one grows up, this suggests that culture is not inherited but that it is inherent and can be learned or acquired in society. It is inherent because one is born under prevailing cultural practices. Swanepoel (2009:7) reiterates that “all normal children master the grammatical system of their home language before going to school.” This is reflected in the example of Setswana idiom cited above.

2.4.2 The nature of idioms and their relation to identity

The advantage of teaching idioms is not only that it boosts people's pride and develops language proficiency, but also that it builds people's identity and ensures the survival of Setswana as one of the indigenous languages of South Africa. If that is lacking, how are our children to know who they are and what heritage they bring to South Africa's diversity?

If idioms are not used daily in conversations or when teaching Setswana in class, Setswana will slowly be stripped of its essence, beauty and its rich vocabulary. This may result in loss of identity. Carrim (2000), in her research on self-articulated forms of identity, has observed that people tend to articulate their identities in four different

ways, namely as (a) personality traits, (b) institutional identities, (c) familial and/or social identities and (d) regional identities. Language therefore is a familial/or social identity which is part of a person's makeup – one cannot put it on or take it off like a piece of clothing.

This thought is well supported by Searle (1979:50) when he states: “Speak idiomatically unless there is some special reason not to.” Searle does not just encourage the use of idioms per se, but to use language in a rich way since one has the choice to do so. This suggests the use of idioms, proverbs and other figures of speech to enrich our languages. However, in the case of Setswana even mere idioms are not frequently used in daily conversations because of the negative attitude towards African languages by teachers [see Chapter 1] and learners (Mamphole, 2009; Mabule, 1992; Malimabe, 1990; Mpapi, 2010).

Carpenter et al. (1998) have observed that these identities are articulated when we use language to meet our needs, express our emotions and socialise. Children are born with the ability to understand and decipher the world and to learn the rules of spoken language at home or in the community or environment. Crystal (2000:17) is of the opinion that “the lower the average language population age, the more successful the parents are in getting young people to speak.” Therefore, the idiom programme to be implemented in the Foundation Phase class is to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses in terms of changing the attitudes of learners, so that they begin to use idioms in their everyday communication and writing.

The issue of identity is also observed in urban areas where an African language seems to be regarded as less important in relation to English. Thandeka Mpapi (Mail & Guardian, 2010: 42-43), conducted a study to examine the attitudes of African learners towards African languages. One learner commented that: “If you speak English well, people respect you. But if you speak isiXhosa, it does not matter how well you speak it, no one looks at you differently.” Mpapi further comments that these learners give an impression that African languages are boring and insignificant. This research would like to evaluate the effectiveness of the idiom programme in changing the language efficiency of learners. An earlier evaluation of the level of idiom usage by Grade 3 learners and teachers (2013) indicated that teachers do not

teach idioms because this aspect of language is not addressed in the curriculum. Hence the study is proposing to introduce a programme of teaching and learning Setswana idioms at Grade 3 level.

Aptly put, Higgs (2008:488) believes that only African educators who are critically conscious of the struggle for the establishment of an African identity in educational discourse can demonstrate how African philosophies can be employed as a foundational resource for the socioeducational transformation of African content and also how indigenous philosophies can be politically and economically liberating. It is the researcher's belief that African philosophies are embedded in idioms, proverbs and sayings. Language, like culture, is a means of self-identification.

2.5 METHODS OF LANGUAGE TEACHING AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHING OF IDIOMS

Prawat (1992:345) is of the opinion that teachers are seen as both agents of change and obstacles to change in education because of the outdated forms of instruction that focus more on factual and procedural knowledge than on a deeper level of understanding. In this study, the researcher is interested in finding out how teachers are empowered to creatively improve learner's proficiency through idioms in Grade 3 classes.

A number of debates have been conducted and studies done on language teaching over the years that have yielded a number of agreements and disagreements about which method is suitable for Home Language or Additional Language teaching. The greater range of skills and types of knowledge being taught to learners requires different styles, methods and approaches. In some cases, the curriculum documents do not differentiate between methods of teaching and theories or approaches to teaching. In this study, it will be important to also look at the various methods or approaches to teaching Setswana Grade 3 idioms as part of imaginative language.

Richards and Rogers (2001:19) define an approach as "an asset of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning." An approach defines the nature of the subject matter to be taught. A method is defined as "an overall orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts,

and all of which is based upon the selected approaches. An approach is axiomatic, while a method is procedural.”

Kilfoil and Van der Walt's (1997:3-4) research on teaching language indicated several factors that can have an impact on teaching Setswana idioms. When a child is learning her or his first language, the learning is spontaneous, as the learner is surrounded by family and the community that speak that language every day. Thus learning their first language is easy, as it is part of their identity. The community where the learners find themselves easily influences the learners' use of imaginative language, for example idioms or proverbs. On the other hand, if the learners are exposed to the language in school only, they will depend only on the teacher for practice and corrections. Yet if learners find themselves in a community that speaks their home language, they can easily pick up the idiomatic nuances of that language.

From the preceding discussion, I will give an analysis of teaching strategies that could be adopted in the teaching of Setswana idioms to Grade 3 learners. However, Setswana Grade 3 teachers themselves have to choose suitable idioms for the grade they are teaching and the methods to be used when teaching idioms. Researchers such as Cooper (1998) and Liu (2010) expounded on the aspects to be considered when choosing idioms for a specific level.

Rogoff's (2012:324) research confirms one important method of learning a first language, which is observing and “pitching in”. The important skills that are emphasised are, listening and watching, then pitching in when one has something to say. These skills are relevant to Grade 3 learners because young learners learn by imitation. Rogoff further emphasises that children who are active participants in different activities of their communities learn many more things than those who are not involved at all. This brings us to this research project. Learners who hear idioms being used by parents and other people in their society as well as from the teacher in the classroom will recognise, understand and be able to use idioms efficiently in their daily communication.

2.5.1 Choosing idioms to be taught in Grade 3

No two teachers teach in the same way; each time a number of issues have to be taken into consideration when teaching. For example, the different levels or grades and the suitable content for the level in question; the IQ's of the learners (that is, accommodating fast learners and slow learners) and the positive or negative attitude learners have towards African languages.

Cooper (1998:259) gives the following criteria when choosing idioms to be taught:

- Choose idioms that are frequently encountered in the target language.
- Choose expressions that do not present special problems with vocabulary and grammar. In this case, syntactically frozen idioms are recommended.
- Choose expressions with transparent figurative meanings. For example: to be in deep water.
- If one teaches Additional Language, it will be best to start with expressions that are identical in their Home Language and Additional Language. Then add idioms that are similar in both languages (Cooper, 1998:259).

Liu (2008:107-112) generally supports the idea that idioms that should be included for learning should be based on function, formality, register, connotation, learning objective and language proficiency. Liu (2008) gives the following selection criteria for choosing idioms in order of importance:

- Students' needs: The idioms chosen should be the ones the students need to achieve their goals. Then the idioms should be easy to learn and use successfully in communication. One can even go so far as to ask the students to generate their own list of idioms that they think will be useful.
- Usefulness/frequency: According to Liu (*ibid.*), it may be a waste of time to teach idioms that students may never use. The usefulness of an idiom will be determined by its frequency. To help determine these types of idioms, Liu recommended a list of 302 most frequently used in a Spoken American English corpus of approximately 10 000 idioms.

- Appropriateness: Teachers should not teach idioms that are vulgar or offensive (for example, *kiss my xxxx and piss someone off*) If a teacher decides to teach them, students should be made aware of their offensiveness.
- Easiness to learn: It is important to teach easy and simple idioms first before students learn the difficult and complex ones. This aspect further entails:
- Transparency in meaning and decompositionality: For example, “to bite off more than one can chew” is easier to understand than opaque and non-decomposable idioms.
- Simplicity of vocabulary and syntax: For example, “a piece of cake” is easier to learn than “a needle in a haystack”. “Cake” is a more common and familiar word than “haystack”.
- Similarity to idioms in Home Language: Liu agrees with Cooper (1999) that idioms that are similar in both meaning and in structure in the Home Language are easy for the Additional Language students to learn.
- Learner’s age: The easiness or difficulty of an idiom should be appropriate to the learners’ age. According to Liu (citing Douglas and Peel, 1979)), metaphorical idioms are difficult to learn for children under the age of 6, while proverb-type idioms are even more difficult for 10-11 year-old-children (Liu, 2008:107-112).

2.5.2 Teaching strategies of idioms

Teaching strategies and tactics as used in the classroom are difficult to describe because they are mostly experimental or outlined according to individual teachers’ experiences in their different classes. Therefore general strategies and tactics are used as tips for other language teachers in teaching specific areas such as vocabulary or idioms. The following sections explain some of the strategies found in the teaching of idioms:

2.5.2.1 Using prescribed books to teach idioms

Wolchock (1990:614) describes a method of teaching idioms using a well-known US reader (called “Amelia Bedelia”) to her third grade class. She uses idioms found in the reader and then focuses on teaching a deeper and clearer understanding of these idioms to the learners. She starts by explaining to the learners that sometimes

words do not mean exactly what they say, For example, When Amelia is told to hit the road, she would literally take a stick and hit the road with it. She then takes an idiom found in the story and explains it in an easier manner in relation to the incident in the story. Wolchock (Ibid.) then encourages the learners to think of other expressions they have heard and how Amelia (the character in their reader) could have reacted to them. To reinforce the idioms learned, the learners are encouraged to use them in context and in a sentence.

This was one of the methods used in this study in Phase One. The researcher observed whether the teachers she was observing did use this strategy in teaching idioms. If idioms did not appear in the prescribed reader, she would check if the teacher could, in a creative manner, use any scenario from the reader and give a relevant idiom that reinforced the message in that scenario.

2.5.2.2 Thematic use of idioms

In this strategy, Francis (2004) used the theme of a trip where the character used an airoplane to get to her or his destination. For example, for every aspect of the trip, the person was stuck in traffic while rushing to the airport to board a plane. She or he used an appropriate idiom to suit all the incidents the character encountered on the trip. If this was the state of knowledge of idioms in higher grades, I wondered what it would be like in the Foundation Phase. That is why I wanted to investigate if at Foundation Phase, teachers were able to use idioms thematically.

2.5.2.3 Using idioms that are based on the parts of the body

Curry (1983) states that using parts of the body, for example the “say and touch” teaching strategy in teaching learners how to speak and write, is an area that many prescribed works have been using to teach languages. In some cases even rhymes like *Tlhogo le Magetla* (Head and Shoulders) have been used for years in teaching learners how to speak and identify rhyming in words. In this method, Currry (ibid.) gives the idiom based on a part of the body and then gives a definition of it before using it constructively in a sentence. This is one method that could be used successfully when empowering teachers to teach idioms, because learners will not

easily forget such an idiom – each part of the body can easily serve as a reminder of the idioms they have learned. The aim of this research is to study whether teachers do use parts of the body to teach idioms, because such idioms do exist in Setswana.

2.5.2.4 Using pictures in the teaching of idioms

Applebee and Rush (1992) use pictures as a strategy to teach idioms. This is one strategy that motivated the researcher to embark on this study. The researcher observed when marking the assignments of distance education students on idioms in Afrikaans and English that they used pictures or drawings that depict an action that gives a learner a clue of what idioms are. For example, a picture of a man pulling another one's leg, which equals the idiom: *I am just pulling your leg*; meaning *I was just joking*. I looked for similar pictorial idioms in Setswana and other African languages, and there were none. So, in this study, I intended to find out if there was any Setswana teacher in the Foundation Phase who was using this strategy or method. Using pictures to teach idioms to Grade 3 learners is an important teaching strategy that imparts linguistics skills of reading and interpreting to learners.

2.5.2.5 Using aspects of grammar (e.g. nouns and adjectives) with idioms

Seidl (1988) uses all types of idioms that are most commonly used in every day communication. Their use is practised aided by either a picture as a clue or jumbled relevant idiomatic phrases. The learner or person is instructed to complete a given sentence that needs a grammatical answer like a noun or an adjective. This method of teaching idioms can be effective in class, as learners will also be learning grammar in context at the same time. In Phase One of the study, during classroom observation I observed whether the above strategies were used in class while teaching idioms.

2.5.2.6 Using multiple intelligences in the teaching of idioms

Cooper (1998) indicated that teaching and learning idioms can be organised according to Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences (1993) for diversifying instructions so that all students can be reached and given a chance to succeed. Cooper (ibid.) gives an example of a linguistic aspect of multiple intelligences by

discussing idioms as figurative speech or asking the learners to write down idioms encountered while watching TV shows.

2.5.2.7 Macrostrategies and general approaches to teaching idioms

In this section, Liu (2008:121) gives various macrostrategies and approaches that teachers can implement in the teaching of idioms:

- *Raising student's awareness of/and interest in idioms:* Liu (ibid.) is of the opinion that Additional Language learners should be made aware of frequently used idioms in daily speech. This will make the students more interested in idioms. Liu also encourages incidental learning of idioms. In this research, it has been observed that teachers of Home Language learners rarely use idioms in their speech. According to the researcher, both Home Language and Additional Language learners need to be made aware of frequently used idioms in their different languages.
- *Developing a habit of watching for idioms in daily language:* Liu suggests that learners should be taught that idioms are ever present in language and in reading books. The first training practice is that of getting learners to identify idioms in a selected text that contains idioms. This should be done by the learners as a whole group in class. This ensures that all the learners know what they are looking for. After this group activity, learners can identify idioms individually when reading newspapers, listening to the radio and watching television. The teacher then encourages the learners to write down all the idioms they encounter daily and their meanings in their own notebooks. The teacher then makes a habit of checking who has the largest number of idioms and also check if they understood the idioms and that they wrote down the correct meanings thereof. This can become a competition to see who collected the largest number of idioms in a week, a month or a semester.
- *Using an idiom corner/bulletin/file/notebook:* According to Liu (ibid.), an "idiom corner is a space on a wall of the classroom used to post idioms that students have encountered or that the teacher would like students to learn." Students look for interesting idioms or those that are difficult to understand and are exposed to more interesting idioms. The learner who posted the idioms is

helped and is able to see who knows the meaning or how they will decode it as well as who got the meaning the quickest. Liu (ibid.) (cited by Otier, 1986) suggests that after this exercise, students should build an idiom file that can be accessed by the whole class. The idioms in the file may be arranged according to themes, function, source, origin or structural pattern.

- *Exploring idioms in cartoons, comic strips, TV and other media:* Another strategy to raise the students' awareness of idioms is by reading and discussing idioms they find in cartoons, comic strips and while watching TV. However, according to (Irujo, 1986), this type of activity is more suitable for higher-level learners.
- *Learning to organise idioms in a variety of ways to promote idiom acquisition:* To help learners to increase sensitivity and awareness and interest in idioms, it is important to organise them by themes, origin and parts of speech. This makes it easier for learners to learn and understand idioms and also makes them appreciate and value idioms. They also learn the function and usage patterns of their idioms .

With regard to everyday use of language and idiomatic expressions, Tycho, Rogerson, Gardiner, Madrid, Murray and Martynowski (2004) used different themes pertaining to a student's life in a foreign country. They used relevant idioms for every step he takes, starting from when he arrives in the country, wanders around town, sits in the student lounge, attends a Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) class, eats dinner with a roommate, shops for clothes in a mall, picks up a friend at the airport, tans on the beach, waits for fireworks show, works out at a fitness club, drinks in a neighbourhood bar, catches a movie, drives to a cabin for the weekend, finishes classes, snowboards at a winter resort and returns home. Every theme is in a story form that even has a dialogue, and almost every sentence has an idiom relevant to the situation the student finds himself in. The advantage of this strategy is that all the idioms are used in context. After every unit, there are different activities based on the idioms found in each theme. They range from comprehension tests and story completion to crossword puzzles.

This analysis of the literature on strategies and approaches to the teaching of idioms discussed above leads to the analysis of the literature on the teaching of Setswana idioms prior to 1994 in South Africa. The study of this history will assist in understanding the teaching and learning of Setswana idioms as well as inform the design and development of a programme (Phase Two) to empower teachers.

2.6 A HISTORICAL REVIEW: THE TEACHING OF IDIOMS IN SETSWANA PRIOR TO 1994

The earlier Setswana linguists, such as Malepe (1974), Sekeleko and Lekala (1984) and Snyman et al. (1989), who wrote Setswana grammar textbooks, used one of the “old methods” of teaching idioms, as discussed below.

Idioms in Setswana languages were taught by rote learning a list of idioms and their meanings in a formulaic way. The rote learning method ensured that learners knew a number of idioms without changing or distorting them. Thereafter, the following types of activities would be given to learners:

- a) *Feleletsa maele a a latelang ka mafoko a a nepagetseng.* (Complete the following idioms with the correct words)
Mafoko (Words): temepedi; tsebe
Go tlhoka _____.
Go nna _____ o se gopane.
- b) *Lebaganya pegelo e e latelang le leele le le maleba* (Match the following statements to the correct idiom)
Statement: *Motho yo o buang maaka* (A person who lies)
Idiom: *Go nna teme pedi o se gopane.* (To have two tongues yet you are not an iguana)
- c) *Kwala maele a a dumelanang le ditlhaloso tse di latelang* (Write down the idioms that match the following explanations:
Motho yo o tlhokafetseng (to die) :-----
Motho yo o buang maaka (a liar):-----
- d) *Kwala maele a a nang le maina a a latelang.* (Write down idioms that are based on the following nouns)
Maina (Nouns: *tsebe* (an ear); *kgamelo* (a bucket); *ditedu* (beard)).

From the above examples and my experience of teaching idioms from these textbooks, it is evident that idioms are taught in an uninteresting way, using methods that are not challenging to learners in Setswana classes. This research aims to investigate if there has been any change in the teaching of idioms in the Setswana Grade 3 classes. This research further aims to establish if any of the methods or strategies given above are used in the teaching of Setswana in Grade 3.

Borko and Putnam (1996:690) argue that the teachers' subject matter makes a difference to how they teach, and that novice and experienced teachers alike often lack the rich and flexible understanding of the subject matter they need in order to teach in ways that are responsive to students' thinking and that foster learning with understanding. Focus on a subject matter is important in understanding teaching because, as Shulman (1986) points out, it could influence researchers to focus on how subject matter knowledge is transformed from knowledge of the teacher into knowledge for instruction. But what constitutes knowledge of subject matter? Shulman (1986:9) asserts that content knowledge goes beyond knowledge of facts or concepts of a domain and also includes understanding of the substantive and syntactic structures of subject matter. Shulman (ibid.) says that the substantive structures are the variety of ways in which the basic concepts and principles of the discipline are organised to incorporate its facts.

The syntactic structure of a discipline is the set of ways in which truth or falsehood, validity or invalidity is established. He argues that such understanding could help teachers comprehend why a topic is central to a discipline and influence pedagogical judgments regarding relative curricula emphasis.

This study investigated the idiom teaching strategy of using pictures that depict each idiom, which will be included in the proposed Setswana idiom programme. This, provided me an opportunity to understand how the basic knowledge of idioms affects teaching strategies, especially in Grade 3. The study further looked at the level of idioms used to encourage effortless grasping of the newly taught idioms.

2.7 ASPECTS RELATED TO THE IMPEDIMENTS TO TEACHING SETSWANA IDIOMS EFFECTIVELY

South Africa is a multilingual and multicultural country which currently has 11 official languages: English, Afrikaans, isiZulu, isiXhosa, siSwati, isiNdebele, Sesotho, Setswana, Sepedi, Xitsonga and Tshivenda, besides other foreign languages like such as German, Greek, Chinese, and French. This multilingual context creates a language contact situation in which the various languages influence each other's development (Mutasa, 1999). Furthermore, it brings about a sociolinguistics situation where processes such as code-mixing, code-switching, borrowing and adaptation are inevitable. This sociolinguistic process also affects Setswana.

In all the regions where Setswana is spoken in the Republic of South Africa, all seven dialects of Setswana are in one way or the other influenced by English and Afrikaans (the previous official languages of South Africa). These two languages were forced onto Batswana learners before the new, more inclusive government was introduced in 1994.

Setswana is strongly influenced by neighbouring languages in urbanised areas. In pre-dominantly Setswana areas (North-West) little influence on Setswana is exerted by other languages. The province has other African languages as minority languages, such as: Sepedi, Sesotho, isiZulu, isiXhosa, Xitsonga, which are spoken by relatively small numbers of residents. These smaller groups tend to speak their languages among themselves, while in public they are bound by circumstances to communicate in Setswana, Afrikaans or English (Malimabe, 1990).

A number of earlier sociolinguistic researchers (Mzamane (1962); Madiba (1994); Makena (1985); Bokamba (1988); Ohly (1988); Knappert (1972); Mazrui (1977); Nelde (1990) and Beukes (2004)) hold that factors influencing languages, or reasons for languages to adapt to changing situations, are: multiculturalism, bilingualism, multilingualism, prestige and the need to fill a gap in the vocabulary of a language. This perception is also supported by recent research studies on sociolinguistics such as Beukes (2004); Kerswill (2006); Wardhaugh (2006) and Garret (2010). The above linguistic factors that affect languages or language change are also greatly

influenced by societal changes such as urbanisation, education, religion and modernisation.

People living in urban areas, especially in the townships, come from different walks of life, each speaking a different language and adhering to a different culture. If a neighbour is of a different nationality, more often than not, both parties try to learn to speak each other's language for the purpose of effective communication. As a result of this versatility, most urban residents are bilingual (Ramagoshi, 2010).

However, in most cases children growing up in such an environment may end up speaking a mixture of two languages. In cases where more than two languages exist, the influence can give birth to Koine languages such as Pretoria Sotho, as Schuring (1985) showed in his research on Pretoria Sotho and Malimabe (1990) in her research on the influence of non-standard varieties on standard Setswana of high school learners.

Ansre (1971:151) argues that when a language adapts certain items from another language, it is not just a matter of co-existence of these languages over a long period of time, but it is also a matter of other factors being at play such as technological innovations, interculturalism and rapid urbanisation. Ansre (ibid.) further observes that language influence:

“... is determined by sociocultural factors. Given such co-existence and also a situation in which the culture of the speakers of one language is regarded as socially and technologically dominant, the major flow of linguistic items will be primarily from the direction of the language of the dominant cultural group to that of the dominated speech community.”

One general feature typical of cosmopolitan areas is the fact that multilingualism, multiculturalism and urbanisation encourage adaptation such as borrowing and loaning of words among languages. Wolff (1998:293) and Bamgbose (1998:12) tried to dispel the myth that multilingualism and multiculturalism are impediments to

language teaching and language proficiency in an effort to enhance the status and viability of African languages. Wolff (1998) is of the opinion that:

“If we are to accept multilingualism and multiculturalism as the norm, the role of mother tongues becomes of vital importance because as a rule, they will be part and parcel of the multilingual and multicultural environment for any individual or community. Whenever one speaks of development and democracy, the norm of multilingualism and multiculturalism involving mother tongues needs to be kept in mind.”

Other signs of multilingualism and multiculturalism are code-switching, code-mixing and Pretoria Sotho. These aspects are of importance to this study in view of its focus on the investigation of teaching Setswana idioms as imaginative language and the language proficiency of learners.

2.7.1 Code-switching and code-mixing as a communicative strategy

Another factor that is part of the discourse among researchers is that of using code-switching and code-mixing as a communicative strategy. Code-switching may influence the adaptation process of language. The contributing factors are foreign words, phrases and sentences within the speech of different African languages.

Earlier sociolinguists who researched extensively on code-switching and code-mixing, such as Myers-Scotton (1977) and Poplack (1979), maintain that different types of code-switching are found at almost all levels of societies, that is, the upper class, middle class and lower class. However, code-switching and code-mixing are deterrents to the acquisition of proficiency in Setswana.

Bokamba (1988: 24) defines code-mixing as:

“...the embedding or mixing of various linguistic units, i.e. affixes, words, phrases and clauses from two distinct

grammatical systems or subsystems within the same sentence and the same speech situation.”

Furthermore, Bokamba (ibid.) is of the opinion that code-switching (the switching or alternation of the code) occurs intersententially, i.e. between words and sentences and intrasententially (i.e. within sentences). An example of an intersententially code-switching would be:

- *Ke ile Gauteng maabane. I just wanted a shop where I could buy something beautiful.*

The sentence is supposed to read:

- *Ke ile Gauteng maabane. Ka batla lebenkele le nka rekang sengwe se sentle.*
(I went to Johannesburg yesterday. I just wanted a shop where I could buy something beautiful).

The above example of intersentential code-switching is more typical of the middle-class speakers who regard themselves as “educated”. Code-switching can also occur intrasententially, as in the following example:

- *Tlaya kwano, please, o tle go planta mielies mo tshimong.*

The sentence should read:

- *Tlaya kwano tsweetswee, o tle go jala mmopo mo tshimong.*
(Come here, please, and plant the mealies in the field)

There is an assumption among the researchers that the above intrasentential code-switching is used by people who do not have higher education qualifications. Nontolwane (1992:28) regards this type of code-switching as code-mixing. She defines it as “The use of one or more languages for consistent transfer of linguistic units from one language to the other.” To support this, she cites the following example:

Ngizolethaama-phepha we-agreement uzowasayina-ke.

(I will bring the agreement papers so that you can sign them).

There is no doubt that if the use of code-switching and code-mixing occurs regularly in people's daily conversation, adaptation occurs. People get used to using foreign words without adapting them. Therefore foreign words are perceived to be "normal" in their speech. Myers-Scotton (1988:152), cited by Thipa (1993:167), points out that code-switching is both a tool and an index. For the speaker it is a tool or a means of doing something. For the listener code-switching is an index or a symbol of the speaker's intentions.

Code-switching and code-mixing are contributing factors to adaptation, and judging by the above observation, it is becoming an accepted universal bilingual strategy, which when differentiated and used intersententially (which will be more acceptable in formal gatherings) will help communicating a person's thoughts without hesitation caused by lack of terminology or way of expressing a foreign concept in one's mother tongue. Malimabe (1993:134) states that: "[u]ntil code-switching is accepted as a universal bilingual strategy, it should be discouraged, especially where it interferes with the development of a language."

Setati et.al, (2002) has proved in her research that code-switching and code-mixing are used extensively in the teaching of content subjects such as Mathematics. The researcher does not have a problem with that. English is expected to be a medium of learning and teaching in respect of content subjects, and in her studies on language practices in the classrooms of South African schools, Setati et.al, (2000:243) further observed that both teachers and learners from previously disadvantaged communities do not have the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) as their main language. As a result, this presents primary mathematics teachers with different challenges for communicating mathematics. The language that the teachers use (which is mostly code-mixed sentences) was, according to Setati's research also a non-standard African language. Thus, even if teachers used an African language to explain mathematical concepts in an African language, they were doing the learners an injustice by code-mixing instead of code-switching. In code-switching, a teacher has to be competent in two languages; in this case, they are expected to speak standard Setswana and standard English fluently, which would ensure that learners benefit from more vocabulary and improved proficiency in both languages.

However, in my opinion this strategy, if used in teaching Setswana mother-tongue speakers, could be grossly inappropriate, although in sociolinguistic terms, this opinion will be regarded as a “purists” ideology. This observation still relates to the problem statement of this research, which is to analyse the teaching strategies of Grade 3 Setswana teachers in teaching idioms as imaginative language as well as the learner’s proficiency in using Setswana idioms. Sridhar (1996:59), who favours code-switching and code-mixing, states that “The traditional pedagogical resistance to code-mixing stems from a combination of purist attitudes and the use of a monolingual paradigm of language.” Wessels and Van den Berg (1998:7) also agree with other researchers that “[c]ode-switching is one way of promoting multilingualism. It will also help to promote a shared understanding of a common South African culture.” However, this view will not help in Home Language proficiency, nor will it allow the use of idioms and proverbs, as its focus is more on communication and not on the idiomatic nuances of a language.

Code-switching as a communicative and teaching strategy is still debatable, as the question is teaching a standardised language and proficiency in the mother tongue by introducing the use of idioms in the teacher’s as well as the learner’s daily conversations. Thus, if code-switching is used as a communicative strategy, teachers as well as learners must be competent in both languages used for code-switching. This idea is also supported by Rodseth (2000), who suggests that code-switching and code-mixing be allowed only when learners are discussing among themselves during group work and not in a formal presentation of their findings. As indicated in Setati’s research, this is possible in English, Afrikaans and content subjects like Mathematics and Physics that are taught in English to the non-mother-tongue speakers of English and Afrikaans. The researcher, therefore, is of the opinion that there is no need to switch or mix codes in a Setswana class with Setswana mother-tongue speakers. Bruner (1995:25) states that:

“Language is mastered at first in collaboration with an adult or more competent peer solely with the objective of communicating. Once mastered sufficiently in this way, it can then become internalized and serves under conscious control as a means of carrying out inner speech dialogue.”

Bruner (ibid.) is defending the fact that learners can only be competent in a language if they were taught by or exposed to people who speak that particular language fluently. This thought is supported by Cooper (1998:257), who states that “[t]he mastery of idiom interpretation by children is reflected in an increased use of figurative language by the teachers in the classroom.” This is an important assertion for this study, as the focus is on how well Setswana teachers know their standard language and how they can influence learners’ competence positively in using idioms in class.

Teachers and learners of standard Setswana (see 2.7.4 below) in multilingual areas of South Africa face more challenges of adaptation in teaching language proficiency in their mother tongue than their counterparts in monolingual and bilingual areas. Research has shown that languages that are in contact with other languages have a tendency to influence each other positively or negatively (Rapeane, 1996).

Setswana contact with other language varieties seems to affect the linguistic nature as well as proficiency in the language. Greater diversity may lead to problems relating to tension between standard and vernacular languages (i.e. regional dialects and social dialects which are classified as non-standard languages), which might have educational implications in all cases of high-level public functions such as schools, the economy and politics. Language contact has been researched as a general problem that underlies learners’ competency in their home languages due to interference or influence of other languages (Rapeane, 1996). This language aspect also brought about the development of a colloquial language called Pretoria Sotho, which influences the teaching of Setswana in general and Setswana idioms in particular.

2.7.2 Influence of non-standard languages: Pretoria Sotho and the teaching of idioms

Schuring (1985) states that Pretoria Sotho seems to be a regional non-standard language. It is mostly spoken around Pretoria and its surrounding areas such as Atteridgeville, Soshanguve, Hammanskraal, Mabopane, Mamelodi and Brits (Gauteng Province). Cook (1999), in her study of Street Setswana in Rustenburg,

found that it is gradually gaining momentum in areas such as Rustenburg (North-West) as well. .

The research findings of Malimabe (1990:26-29) on Pretoria Sotho indicated that students whose essays and speech contain a high rate of standardised and non-standardised loan-words are students both of whose parents are not Batswana by birth and who live in cosmopolitan areas. Where one parent or both are Batswana by birth, there are fewer loan-words. Pretoria Sotho is also found in rural areas, as most people from the rural areas around Pretoria work in the vicinity of Pretoria as it is the biggest centre of economy close to the Setswana speaking communities. The BaPedi also flock to Pretoria for the same reasons.

It has further been proved that poor performance in Setswana by high school learners is partly due to influence of Pretoria Sotho, which is a language based on the Sekgatla dialect. Schuring (1985:2) proved that Pretoria Sotho has characteristics of a Koine language. He defines Pretoria Sotho as follows:

“Sotho omgangstaal is dus enige omgangstaal wat nog as Sotho herkenbaar is, ook al vertoon dit `n sterk inslag van ander tale soos Afrikaans, Engels en Zoeloe.”

(Sotho vernacular is therefore any vernacular language that is still recognizable as Sotho, even if it shows a strong Influence of other languages such as Afrikaans, English and Zulu).

Schuring (ibid.) uses the term Sotho for Pretoria Sotho, as it has a bit of all the Sotho languages, that is, Sepedi, Sesotho and Setswana, besides Afrikaans, English and Zulu. For example:

Pretoria Sotho is colloquially referred to as *Sepitoria* by people who are from the rural areas. Most of these people are influenced by *Sepitoria* as it makes them feel they are adapting well to the township or urban life, or feel they are eligible for employment in the area.

Schuring (1985:39– 44) further describes Pretoria Sotho as a Koine language, which, among other things, is an everyday language. The following are characteristics of Koine languages: Contractions; variations; simplifications and informal words. These characteristics are also present in Pretoria Sotho, which make Pretoria Sotho a Koine language. For example, contractions and shortenings occur, for example *ka gore ga* which is shortened to *k` or`a*. More contractions are found in Pretoria Sotho than in the standard Sotho languages, because Pretoria Sotho is spoken at a slightly faster tempo. Furthermore there are many variations in Pretoria Sotho. One aspect of variation is that speakers switch between loan-words from English and Afrikaans: *Man (Afrikaans), Monna (Sotho), Ag, man!* and when impatient, trying to make a point: *Wa bona monna*.

Furthermore, Schuring (1985) asserts that a structural aspect of a Koine language is “the possibility of rating some part of language (e.g., a paradigm, a construction, an utterance, a clause type, a phonological sequence) as in some sense simpler than another comparable part in the same language or another language.” In other words, Pretoria Sotho is in many aspects simpler than the standard Sotho languages with regard to grammar, morphology and phonology.

The passive suffix *-w-* is used: *waitse* instead of *o a itse* (You know)
 goaiwa instead of *go a iwa* (We are going)

Standardisation also falls under simplification (other terms are “levelling” and regularisation). Standardisation is selecting from among a number of equivalent features those features that are more popular both in the urban and rural settings, at the same time suppressing features that sound rustic. Although Pretoria Sotho is a non-standard language, it follows the same process of simplification as a standard language. Among the many variants of Pretoria Sotho, one element can usually be identified where some terms are used more frequently than others, for example *-itse* (Setswana) is used more frequently than *tseba* (Sepedi), elision of the verb “to do” *ira* is used more frequently than *dira* (Schuring, 1985).

One can say that Pretoria Sotho has withstood the test of time. Arguably, Pretoria Sotho has acquired an unwritten acceptance in and around Gauteng in particular

and in South Africa as a whole. Moreover, it is easy to trace the origin of most of the words used in Pretoria Sotho, unlike in the words in Tsotsitaal, another colloquial language spoken in Gauteng Province. The original sound and the morphological structure of the original word are slightly changed.

- a. *Go tekirela* instead of *go itirela* (to do things for yourself)
- b. *Phakisa* instead of *phakiša* (to hurry up)
- c. *Kumotse* instead of *kumotše* (Uprooted)

Sepedi uses the diacritic sign as seen on the aspirated /š/ of *phakiša*. If the diacritic sign is left out on the words like *phakisa* and *kumotse*, the Sepedi speaker takes it for granted that they are speaking Sekgatla, one of the seven dialects of Setswana spoken around Hammanskraal, which is highly influenced by Sepedi. The above-mentioned words do not exist in Setswana. For example, *phakisa* is *itlhaganela* and *kumotse* is *tomotse* (Ramagoshi, 2004).

Ramagoshi (ibid.) is of the opinion that Pretoria Sotho has grown and matured during the past forty years of its research. I will explore how Pretoria Sotho impacts both the teaching and learning of Setswana idioms in Grade 3 classes.

2.7.3 Influence of Setswana dialects and the teaching of idioms

Setswana has seven dialects that can impact on the teaching and learning of Setswana idioms, when teachers or learners use certain words in a particular dialect. The Setswana Language Committee tries to address the consolidation of dialects by standardising words derived from all seven dialects. Many words, for example: *nyena* instead of *lena/lona*, *mmidi* instead of *mmele* and *pedung* instead of *pelong*, which are regarded as a non-standard from some of Setswana dialects, were omitted from standard Setswana during corpus planning by the previous Setswana Language Board. However, they are still used in the spoken form of some of the seven dialects of Setswana. This study will also explore how dialects influence the teaching of idioms in Grade 3 classes.

Fromkin and Rodman (1983:245) describe a dialect as part of the same language which differs in specific areas. In Setswana someone from Hammanskraal (Gauteng Province) will use a different dialect from that of a person coming from Mangaung (Free State), Mmabatho (North-West Province), Botswana and Namibia. Setswana has seven dialects, which can impact on the teaching and learning of Setswana idioms when teachers or learners know certain words in a particular dialect but these are not acceptable in the standard language of Setswana. The standard Setswana tries to address the consolidation of dialects, but it is interesting to explore how idioms taught in Grade 3 classes exhibit this sociolinguistic aspect. The Setswana dialects were last divided by Cole (1955:xvi-xix) into four subgroups, each subgroup consisting of various dialects. The subgroups are:

2.7.3.1 *Central Setswana*

The central division comprises the *Rolong, Hurutshe and Ngwaketse* dialects. The Rolong is divided politically into four sections spoken in the following regions:

Table 2.1: Central Setswana

Dialect	Region
<i>BarolongboorraTshidi</i>	Mafikeng district (North-West province)
BarolongboorraRratlou	Khunwana, Kraaipan and Setlagole (North-West province)
<i>BarolongbooRapulana</i>	Lotlhakane and Polfontein, South East of Mafikeng (North-West province)
<i>BarolongbooSeleka</i>	Thabanchu in the Free State province.

Even though the BarolongbooSeleka dialect is influenced by the neighbouring Sesotho language, it still retains the characteristics of the Central Setswana division.

The other two Central Setswana dialects are indicated in **Table 2.2:**

Dialect	Region
Sehurutshe	Zeerust in the Marico district (North-West province)
Sengwaketse	Kanye in Botswana, North-West province

2.7.3.2 Southern Setswana

The southern Setswana subgroup includes the Tlhaping and Tlhware (Tlharo) dialects (Northern Cape Province).

Table 2.3: Southern Setswana

Dialect	Region
Tlhaping	Taung, Vryburg and Barkly West districts of the the.Western Cape province).
Tlhware	Kuruman district. (Northern Cape).

2.7.3.3 Eastern Setswana

Table 2.4: Eastern Setswana

Dialect	Region
Eastern Kwena	Brits, Swaruggens, Rustenburg in the North-West province).
Sekgatla - divided into the following sub-dialects: - <i>Sekgatla sa ga Kgafela</i> - <i>Sekgatla sa ga Motsha</i> - <i>Sekgatla sa ga Moseitlha</i> - <i>Sekgatla sa ga Mmakau</i> - <i>Sekgatla sa ga Mmanaana.</i>	Mochudi and Moshupa in Botswana.and at Pilansberg and Hammanskraal district. (North West Province)

Sekgatla sa ga Mosetlha and *Mmakau* are the sub-dialects spoken around Pretoria and Hammanskraal, where research was conducted. In these areas these dialects are in constant contact with Sepedi (Cole, 1955). Setswana dialects and the language contact situation where Setswana is spoken, are of significance to this study, since they lead to adaption where Setswana is forced to borrow words from other languages as part of language development.

2.7.4 Standard Setswana and the teaching of idioms

Schuring (1981:1) describes a standard language as a language that is accepted and used as an official language in schools, literature and in government. Okonkwo (1980:180), addressing the origin of literary languages, points out that “[i] was demonstrated beyond doubt, that not only all the great literary languages of Europe had originated as spoken dialects. Their origin and development could only be explained in terms of principles which determine the acquisition and use of the associated spoken language.”

Lyons (1981:12) supports this notion by saying:

“...all the great literary languages of the world are derived, ultimately, from the spoken language of particular communities. Furthermore, it is a matter of historical accident that the usage of one region or of one social class should have served as the basis for the development of a standard literary language in particular communities and that, consequently, the dialects of other regions or of other social classes should now be regarded, as they often are, as inferior or sub-standard, varieties of the language.”

Standard Setswana in the Republic of South Africa is based on the Sehurutshe dialect. Malepe (1966:13) is of the opinion that Sehurutshe is traditionally considered the nucleus or parent-stock from which other Batswana tribes branched.

Although the Serolong dialect has been influenced by Afrikaans, the teachers are well versed in the standard written Setswana. The Setswana Terminology and

Orthography provides the standard vocabulary and its written form. The then Setswana Language Board worked very hard at accommodating all dialects, although not all the vocabulary from all dialects can be accepted as standard as indicated above.

According to Okonkwo (1977), the most important issue with regard to this matter is the fact that dialects are “genetically related.” This will help increase the standard vocabulary of a language when new words are adapted or coined. For example, in Setswana three dialects have been used for the term for traditional meat *tšhotlo*, *kgojwa* and *seswai*. Jason and Tsonope (1991) argue that in Botswana, unlike in the Republic of South Africa, standard Setswana is not based on the pronunciation of any of the major dialects, but it comprises two major dialects – Sekwena and Sengwato. It is quite clear from the above discussions that standard Setswana is significant in the study of teaching and learning Setswana idioms as imaginative language.

2.7.5 Loan-words or borrowed words and the teaching of idioms

Myers-Scotton (1992:33) maintains that borrowing is “the incorporation into one language of material from another language.” However, loan or borrowed words are a deterrent to the acquisition of language proficiency in Setswana. For example, some teachers and parents have a tendency to say a child is: *stoutu* (From Afrikaans stout), meaning naughty instead of using a Setswana idiom that says: *O tlhoka tsebe*.

Borrowing is a process that occurs when there are instances where a new or foreign word is used in a language. Speakers of the borrowing language know the source language too, or at least enough of it to use the relevant words. Myers-Scotton (1992:33) further states that borrowing occurs when speakers of another language adopt and use words from a foreign language. The new speakers of the foreign language may at first use some words from the foreign language only with speakers of the source language, but at some point, come to use the language with those to whom the language was not previously known as well. To the latter speakers the word may sound 'foreign'. At this stage, when most speakers do not know the word,

they conclude it is from another language; the word can then be called a foreign word. However, in time, more speakers become familiar with the foreign word. The community of users can grow to the point where the word is understood and used by even people who know little or nothing of the source language. In this way the new word becomes conventionalised. It is at this point that the process can be called borrowing or adoption.

These words are changed slightly to fit in with the patterns of the target language. Just like Myers-Scotton, Graff (1964:346) maintain that borrowing is “the travelling of words from one language to another, thus increasing or enriching the vocabulary of the borrowing language.” Napoli (1996:168) also defines borrowing as a process of taking words from one language and using them in another. Radford (1996:254) expresses the same view by stating that borrowing occurs when “new words are acquired from one language and used in another language.” From the views expressed by Radford (ibid.) and other linguists, one can take borrowing as transference of lexical items from one source language to another. *Loaning* and *borrowing* are, of course, metaphors, because there is no literal lending process. There is no returning of words back to the source language. They simply come to be and are used by a speech community that speaks a different language from the one they originated in.

Setswana, like English, has gone through many periods in which a large number of words were borrowed from particular languages. These periods coincide with times of contact between Setswana speakers and those speaking other languages; for example Afrikaans, Sepedi, Sesotho and isiZulu. This is also endorsed by Malimabe (1990:9-10), who states that around Pretoria Setswana is mainly influenced by Sepedi and Sesotho and, in some cases, isiZulu and isiNdebele. She points out that some words from Afrikaans and English also find their way into Setswana. All these happen where speakers of different languages are brought together, either by marriage or employment. Malimabe (1990:8) concludes that Black Urban Vernacular (which is a mixture of Sepedi, Sesotho, isiZulu, English and Afrikaans) influences standard Setswana around Pretoria. Setswana spoken in the Ga-Rankuwa area may also be influenced by other languages spoken in that area. Generally in South Africa,

especially in urban areas, borrowing has become extremely fashionable. This flooding of new or foreign words into Setswana adds to the need for this study.

Mathumba (1993:177) classifies borrowing into cultural borrowing and intimate borrowing, the former referring to borrowing of features from a different language and the latter to adoption between languages spoken in the same geographical area. What is important for this research is Mathumba's emphasis on the borrowing that happens between languages spoken in the same area. In the same way, the speakers of Setswana in the Ga-Rankuwa area find themselves exposed to languages such as isiZulu, Afrikaans, Sesotho, Northern Sotho and isiNdebele, which are also spoken in their area. In this way, words from other South African official languages find their way into the everyday speech of the Setswana speakers. The latter end up replacing appropriate Setswana words with the convenient or newly fashionable foreign words from languages spoken in their neighbourhood.

Gumperz (1993:87) regards borrowing as adoption, which is the introduction of single words or frozen phrases from one variant into another. Here again, there is transfer of words from a source language to a borrowing language. These borrowed words are then incorporated into the grammatical system of the borrowing language. Through repeated use, such words end up being part of Setswana as they finally take the Setswana morphological characteristics and also enter into the Setswana syntactic structures.

In his study of loan-words, Madiba (1994:87) explains that all languages at some stage or another have a need for new words, and no language can claim to be completely self-sufficient. The same process is also taking place in the case of Setswana, although it is not necessarily because of the need for new words.

Researchers like Mahlangu (2000) and Ramagoshi and Webb (2007) have also identified problems in the teaching of African languages, among others problems related to the influx of borrowed and adapted words into teaching and speaking African languages. These are the result of social and economic changes. All these researchers, however, agree that borrowed words are necessary to help a language increase its vocabulary as it adapts to changing situations. The problem is that in some cases indigenous words that convey the same meaning are rejected in favour

of loan-words. It has been proven that learners growing up in areas where there is influencing by other languages are inclined to use more borrowed and non-standard words in formal situations that require them to be competent in a standard language (Ball, 2009). In the light of this, it is also assumed that the level of proficiency of learners will lack idiomatic expressions or usage of figures of speech, which make Setswana a rich language. Therefore the study will explore the impact of loan-words/borrowed words in the teaching of Setswana idioms as part of imaginative language in Grade 3 Setswana classes.

2.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the literature reviewed described what an idiom is as well as the importance of teaching and learning idioms as imaginative language. The literature on the impact of language, culture and identity when learning and teaching idioms was also explored. Since this study is on finding out how teachers of Setswana Grade 3 classes teach idioms and how this can inform the design of a programme on idioms, a review of methods and strategies for teaching idioms was provided. Finally, since Setswana is one of the official languages of the multilingual South Africa, sociolinguistic literature on the challenges of multilingualism and its effects on teaching Setswana Home Language, in particular idioms and the historical teaching of idioms in Setswana prior to 1994 were reviewed.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Stoffels (2004:43) defines a theoretical framework as “an explanatory lens to understand and explain” the study. The discussion below outlines the theoretical framework that supports the study of the teaching and learning of idioms as imaginative language to Grade 3 learners. Maxwell (1998) describes a general purpose of a theoretical framework as a structure that helps in aligning research concepts, which help the researcher to decode and analyse the data collected in their studies. The theoretical framework also helps confirm anticipations and beliefs the researcher has about a research topic. On the other hand, Sowden and Keeves (1988) emphasise the fundamental aspects of research; after these have been identified; it has to be determined how they relate to each other in order to answer research questions. They further imply that a relationship between specific aspects of research sometimes comprises sequences that occur over time, or they might form a pattern in the procedures or between the issues that are being studied. The theoretical framework chosen for this study is constructivism and the theory of teaching, learning and the decoding idioms by learners. These two theories influence how teachers teach idioms and how learners learn and understand idioms. The first theory focuses only on how teachers understand and use different strategies in teaching idioms, while the second theory focuses only on how the learners understand the idioms taught by the teachers.

3.2 CONSTRUCTIVISM AND DECODING OF IDIOMS

Hmelo-Silver (2014:1) defines constructivism as follows:

“Constructivism, as perspective in education, is based on experimental learning through real life experience to construct and conditionalize knowledge. It is problem based, adaptive learning, that challenges faulty schema, integrates new

knowledge with existing knowledge, and allows for creation of original work or innovative procedures.”

This definition summarises constructivism as a theory that proves the truth of the old saying that states: “Tell me and I will forget; show me and I may remember but let me do and I will learn.” Constructivism encourages learner-centred education based on the teachers’ and learners’ experiences in life to enable them to solve problems.

D’Angelo (2014:7 and Kolodner (1997) propose five instructional approaches which are integrated with constructivist designs and are receiving significant attention in teaching and learning. They are:

Case-based learning: Case-based learning involves real-life experiences which the students try to solve while at the same time building new knowledge. The teacher facilitates small groups, who come up with specific analysis techniques and work towards solutions of the open-ended problem. According to D’Angelo (2014:7), “students benefit from this type of instruction because they are given an opportunity for decision making as part of their learning process and because they experience and address different viewpoints”. Students get a chance to discuss a case using their knowledge, prior experiences and perspectives to solve the problem. Students will engage in arguments based on the interpretation of the case. This in turn, deepens their understanding of the case they are trying to solve.

Discovery learning: Researchers such as Mayer (2004) and Papert (1980) agree that in discovery learning, the teacher gives students a problem to solve. This learning approach gives learners an opportunity to explore and to formulate solutions to the problem. The role of the teacher is to facilitate and guide students to develop problem-solving skills. D’Angelo (2014:7) believes that discovery learning assumes that students are able to retain knowledge if they discover the knowledge themselves. This also helps to develop the students’ initiative and creativity.

Inquiry-based learning: The important feature of inquiry-based learning is that the students are solely responsible for the content they want to learn, the learning process and the assessment of learning (Edelson et.al, 1999). This method is

popular in scientific studies, but can also be used in language learning. Questions are used to guide students in inquiry-based learning. Instructional design begins with a general theme as a starting point for learning. Through guiding questions by the facilitator, students build knowledge from the answers provided as well as from interactions with other students. Students benefit greatly from this approach because “they develop metacognitive learning skills and research skills upon which they can build towards future educational experiences” (D’Angelo, 2014:7).

Problem-based learning: Problem-based learning, like inquiry-based learning, requires the student to solve a given problem. This links with ‘real life’ experiences. It forces the student to analyse the problem critically and come up with solutions to real-life problems. As a group, students identify the nature of the problem, that is, what could have caused the problem, then together decide on the resources they need to solve the problem (Boud and Feletti, 1997). Wood (1993) favours this approach, as it benefits the students by helping them to integrate analytical skills with content knowledge. Problem-based learning is perceived as a constructivist approach because it has the following five instructional goals as stipulated by Barrows (1985): construct flexible knowledge, develop effective problem-solving skills, develop self-directed learning skills, become effective collaborators and become motivated to learn. Thus project-based learning provides students with opportunities to engage in their own learning as they create meaningful artefacts. Projects may include reports, physical models, computer models, exhibitions, websites and other concrete products that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding. Students have to think of everything (Hmelo-Silver, 2014:21).

The above four approaches are important to the teaching and learning of Setswana Grade 3 idioms because they all align with strategies that will be used in the teaching and learning of idioms as imaginative language. Furthermore, these approaches form the bases of the idiom programme implementation and data analysis in Phase Two of the study. In the next section, I give a historical overview of constructivism and how this influences my use of the theory of constructivism in the teaching of idioms.

3.2.1 Historical background to constructivism

The historical background to constructivism is important because it proves that different theories of analysing teaching and learning have been in use for ages. What is important is for me to understand how these theories align with my study and the context in which the teaching and learning takes place.

Hmelo-Silver (2014:2) traces the historical roots of constructivism to early philosophers such as Socrates, who believed in guiding students to construct their own meaning instead of allowing a teacher for example, to ‘download’ information to them. This is based on the foundation that constructivists “focus on how learners construct their own understanding.” Around (1724-1804) another philosopher, Immanuel Kant, who added to Socrates’s theory, observed that stimuli surrounding the learners in their environment form the basis for their perception and understanding of the world.

The theory was further developed in the 20th century by John Dewey (1859-1952), who advocated the idea that when teaching students, the focus should be on what the students already know or understand and the interests they have in life. This type of teaching promoted the way people learn in a natural way – from the known to the unknown. Vukelich et al. (2000:xi) generally support this idea by stating that the constructivist view of learning maintains that children build knowledge by combining new information with what they already know. Other researchers who continued to build on the theory of constructivism are: Jean Piaget (1896-1980), Bruner (1960) and Levy Vygotsky (1986).

3.2.2 Jean Piaget (1896-1980)

Cognitive constructivism is associated with the work of Piaget. It deals with how the individual learner understands things in terms of developmental stages and learning styles. According to Hmelo-Silver (2014:2), around 1896-1980 Jean Piaget discovered that the way a child learns and thinks changes as they grow. Knowledge, according to Piaget, exists not only in the outside world, or in the adult, but is inherent in the child. Constructivists believe that learning is affected by the context in which an idea is taught as well as by the student’s beliefs and attitudes (Piaget,

1965). Piaget (1954) held the view that children construct knowledge of the world through assimilation and accommodation, but he emphasised biological maturity as a necessary condition. The child extends and increases this inherent knowledge (the knowledge it is born with) through its own experiences. Therefore, according to Piaget, intelligence is a mixture of heredity and experiences derived from the environment. This belief is further subscribed to by Montessori (1870), who also supported the process of learning that stems from the learner's immediate environment. The environment includes surroundings (space, ideas, natural resources, animals, plants, objects, other people and time) as well as circumstances/situations the child finds itself in. The child, according to Piaget, learns through experience. As a result, the educator's task is that of shaping events and placing learners in an interesting and stimulating environment for them to learn of their own accord and to develop the intellect. The development of inborn potential (abilities) is dependent on the child's interaction with its immediate environment.

3.2.3 Jerome Bruner (1960)

Another theorist who built on Piaget's theory of constructivism is Bruner (1960:7). He taught that the idea of structure is very important. Bruner, like Piaget, is of the opinion that we develop our intelligence by trying to make sense of the new ideas that we find in the form of a specific structure. He maintains that when learners are helped in the overall "pattern of structure", they are more likely to comprehend principles that can be applied to a variety of situations, "grasping the structure of a subject and understanding it in a way that permits many other things to be related meaningfully to it. To learn structure, in short, is to learn how things are related." What Bruner means is that learners need to be trained in developing their capacities to the fullest. They need the ability to relate incoming information to previously acquired frames of reference. This formation of structure is as follows:

Phase 1: Assimilation takes place. The individual receives new/incoming information. This information may be difficult or complex because it is strange to the individual, and it raises a lot of questions and makes one unsure as to whether it has been understood. This is so because it does not fit into the existing structure.

Phase 2: Accommodation (of new information). Bruner (1960) is of the opinion that after acquiring new information, it has to be linked to the existing structure by gathering together ideas of the new information and to change the way learners think. Furthermore, processing of the new information can take the form of drawing a picture of an idea of the new information in their minds or finding similarities and differences by comparing newly acquired information with existing knowledge, skills, values and attitudes and rearranging or restructuring. Bruner (ibid.) also contends that in this phase there could be a link between previously acquired information for the learners to find relationships or put together pieces of information to see whether they fit into the existing structure. Learners can make changes as information is manipulated to make new information fit into the existing structure.

Phase 3: Organisation: In the last phase, the learners decide on the new picture developed, i.e. to engage in metacognition. Metacognition is a process of thinking about one's own thinking: thinking about what you know and how you learned it. The learners are able to shape, organise and adapt newly developed ideas/information if it makes sense and represents meaning, i.e. fits into one's structure of knowledge. This can lead to learners' ability to stand back from one's behaviour to observe, monitor, evaluate, correct and control it. It is important for teachers to train children in the use of this skill of reflecting back on one's own way of learning (Bruner: 1960).

3.2.4 Vygotsky (1962)

Social constructivism is associated with the work of Vygotsky (1962), who emphasised that meaning and understanding grow out of social encounters. Lev Vygotsky, a Russian philosopher and education psychologist, agrees with many aspects of Piaget's work but emphasises cultural and social influence on cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1986). Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism emphasises the interaction of children with other people in cognitive development. His theoretical concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978) embodies his belief that cognitive development is directly related to social development. The discrepancy between a child's actual mental age and level they reach in solving problems with assistance indicates the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1986).

In terms of cognitive development, Vygotsky's theory supports that learning precedes development. He believes that developmental processes lag behind the learning processes, pointing out that children, when given assistance, are able to refine their thinking which helps them to internalise what they have learnt. This implies that cognitive development is limited to this certain time span, which he calls the ZPD (zone of proximal development). The ZPD is the difference between an individual's current level of development and his or her potential level of development. Unlike Piaget, Vygotsky believes that cognitive development is a process that can only be achieved through collaboration with others; it is not an individual effort. Full development during the ZPD depends upon full interaction. Most constructivists advocate instructional intervention that will not only match, but also accelerate student's cognitive development. These scholars' perspectives assisted me to design a Setswana idioms in picture form as a form of intervention programme to assist both teachers and learners as Phase Two of the study.

3.3 RECENT STUDIES ON CONSTRUCTIVISM

When one studies theorists who are promoting constructivism today, which is the basis of what is regarded as good teaching and learning (Goodman, 1986), one still finds traces of or a continuation of what was started by theorists such as Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky. Present researchers all agree that the child's experiences at home and school form the basis of her or his learning. The following is a discussion of theorists who followed up the earlier theorists' framework of constructivism and concur with the basic aspects of this theory, which is teaching the learner from the known to the unknown; taking into consideration the cultural context of the learner as well as the age or level of the learner. This determines the content of learning to be able to grasp what they are learning. This framework will be used to analyse the teaching of idioms in Setswana Grade 3 classes and how learners learn idioms as active participants while the teacher acts as a facilitator of the learning process.

3.3.1 Active process of learning

Scholars such as Badders (2007:1), Gravett (2005:19) and Newby et al. (2006:34) are of the opinion that learning in constructivism encourages learners to be taught that learning is an active process of building meaning for oneself. Learners have

already had their own experiences before going to school. They fit the new ideas or information taught at school into their already existing conceptual framework. This interpretation is supported by Scholnick, Kol and Abarbanel (2006:12), who support the idea that constructivism is a theory of learning that encourages learners to learn by actively constructing their own knowledge.

On the other hand, Von Glasersfeld (1995:5) believes that ideas have to be conceived first before they are transferred from teachers to learners, i.e. learning is a process that involves active construction and not merely passive acquisition (Scholnick et.al, 2006:12). The construct is pieced together through an active process of involvement and contact with the environment.

Scholnick et.al, (2006:12) reject the notion that the mind is a container waiting to be filled with knowledge. These researchers replace it with a constructivism notion that the mind is an agent actively seeking to satisfy its curiosity and resolve any issues that need to be solved. Similarly, Sebate (2011:40) is of the opinion that “[i]n a constructivism classroom, the focus tends to shift from the teacher to learner. The classroom is not a place where the teacher becomes an expert and pours information into passive learners who, like empty vessels, are waiting to be filled.” The learners are actively involved in the teaching and learning process. The aim of the researcher was to find out if teachers acted as facilitators and learners as active participants in idiom learning. In this study, facilitation played an important role, as it also affects the strategies used by the teacher to make sure that learners understand idioms.

3.3.2 Sociocultural constructivism

Sociocultural constructivism theories are based on learners’ interactions with their social environment. This helps determine what to teach and how it should be learned. For example, a learner in Africa will not readily grasp teaching about a castle as compared with the traditional *kgotla*. Learners’ background and culture is engrained in their lifestyle and in their home language.

According to Rapport (1997:177), “thinking consists of trafficking in a community’s available symbolic forms – rituals, tools, words, idols, water holes, gestures, markings, images and sounds.” It is these symbolic forms – derived from a cultural tradition, guaranteed by a social status quo – that enable meanings, and no thinking is possible without them: thinking is symbol, use is social action.

Von Glaserfeld (1996:5) goes on to state that the basic arguments of constructivism theory are that the learner uses background knowledge to construct new knowledge. The background knowledge should be meaningful and workable for them to use in a continuous process of construction, assessment and modification. In constructivism, the surrounding culture guides the activities and context in which knowledge is constructed, because knowledge and truth are constructed by people and do not exist outside the human mind (Tam, 2002:3).

Von Glaserfeld 1996, Fosnot 1996, Duffy & Cunningham 1996; Scholnick et al. (2006) and Abidoye (2012:18) describe constructivism as “an approach of teaching and learning based on the premise that learning is the result of *mental construction*.” In other words, learners actively construct or build new ideas or concepts based upon current and past knowledge already acquired. Von Glaserfeld (1995:5) is of the opinion that “[c]oncepts cannot simply be transferred from teachers to students—they have to be conceived.” Learning is a process that involves active construction and not passive acquisition (Duffy and Cunningham, 1996). Furthermore, constructivism sees knowledge not as a commodity to be transferred from expert to learner, but rather as a construct to be pieced together through an active process of involvement and interaction with the environment. This study will explore the aspects of the cultural context of the learners in the learning of Setswana idioms. It is expected that idiom knowledge can be transferred from the parents to the learners in the home context, and from the home to the classroom, where the teachers can tap this knowledge.

3.3.3 Learning through association in group work

Group work is encouraged in constructivist learning, as students learn through collaboration with other students and with the teacher who facilitates most of the

time. Constructivist theories encourage learning through enquiry or exploration rather than by merely giving a correct answer, even if it is purely through guessing.

In this instance, learners collaborate as peers in small as well as large groups, using their experience to solve a problem that has been presented to them by the teacher (who is a facilitator). The facilitator, who guides and encourages learners through the types of questions asked, helps learners to be active participants in the lesson or in problems the groups are trying to solve. Learners may apply the same knowledge or different knowledge to find the solution, and each will contribute her or his personal experience in their attempt to find the solution. Tam (2004:4; Newby et.al, 2006:35) agree that learning is a group or social concept. Good teaching provides the learner with the ability to apply her/his knowledge and to expand that knowledge.

Ogumbamero (2010) still supports Brunner's belief that "when a learner learns new information, they relate it to something they have learned before. This makes their learning easy, because they have a frame of reference - everything depends on what the learner already knows and how they relate the known to the unknown." According to Ogumbamero (2010), Brunner (1960) believes that the best way to learn any subject is through learning and understanding its basic structure. Ogumbamero summarises Brunner's hierarchical structure in the following three modes:

- **First mode:** To give learners generalised basic ideas or principles that will enable the learners to grasp the minimal structure of knowledge that will help them to detect important information to achieve the best understanding of the subject. In Phase Two, the teaching of idioms was introduced through relating anecdotes to both the teachers and the learners, so that both could have a minimal structure of what idioms are and how they are written.
- **Second mode:** To decode concepts to the levels appropriate to learners being taught, i.e. the teacher has to simplify the content of the subject to the level of intelligence of the learners. In this case, since three types of idioms were selected according to the level of difficulty, the teachers were helped by selecting 16 transparent idioms that would be used in the

practice of teaching idioms as well as in the implementation of the *Setswana idioms in pictures* programme (see Chapter 6).

- **Third mode:** Sequencing and relating information in such a way that it will help learners to think for themselves and discover more information pertaining to the subject instead of having the thinking done for them (Ogumbamero, 2010). During the time I taught idioms to the Grade 3 learners using anecdotes, I used everyday incidents such as refusing to get into a stranger's car and the idiom that is related to such an incident in Setswana, i.e., *Go supa letsatsi* (to point at the sun), which implies to refuse to do something you are expected to do.

Ausubel (1968) supports the structured method of subject learning by stating that the teacher's important responsibility is to "select material that is appropriate for the students and present it in a structured manner, that is, in a form of a lesson that progresses from the general idea to specific detail." He calls this *reception learning*. He states that making the structure of knowledge compatible with the cognitive structure of the learner is like presenting the whole information about a subject.

In constructivism, the emphasis is on the learner as an active "meaning maker". The role of the teacher is to enter into a dialogue with the learner who is trying to understand the meaning of the material learned, and to help her/him to refine her/his understanding until it corresponds to that of the teacher (Scholnick et.al, 2006:12). The researcher will be interested in observing how the learners conceptualise idioms and relate them to everyday interpretations of what is happening around them.

3.4 THE TEACHER AS A FACILITATOR

Copley (1992) supports the idea that in constructivism, the teacher should play the role of a facilitator whose main function is to assist students to think by leading them to be active participants in their learning. Previous knowledge is linked to the present problem to be solved. The mind processes what it has stored and uses the information to understand and solve the problem presented to it.

Sebate (2011:40) is of the opinion that “[i]n a constructivism classroom, the focus tends to shift from the teacher to learner. The classroom is not a place where the teacher becomes an expert and pours information into passive learners who, like empty vessels, are waiting to be filled. The learners are actively involved in the teaching and learning process.”

Ogumbamero (2010:12) focuses on the teacher as a facilitator. A learner needs guidance to be able to learn facts that add to the growth of her or his information and content knowledge of any subject she or he is learning. As a facilitator, the teacher should (after assessing the information) make sure that it is suitable for the learner’s needs. Rote learning of information is discouraged; learning through active participation is encouraged. This process will guarantee that learners acquire new knowledge.

According to Abidoeye (2012:23), the teacher works more like a mediator. This thought is further developed by Marlowe and Page (1998), who state that effective constructivist teachers provide opportunities for learners to help themselves become successful orators, storytellers, historians, mathematicians or scientists. In higher education, constructivist teachers are challenged to engage students in problem solving and decision making under ill-structured and complex circumstances, so that they can explore the teaching environment as it is out there in the real situation.

Abidoeye (2012:23-24) is of the opinion that creating learning environments in which students take responsibility for their own learning does not suggest that they have complete freedom of decision making concerning their learning. The teacher’s role is mainly to guide, draw focus, suggest, facilitate and evaluate the process to guarantee that the learning process is heading toward a relevant and academically fruitful conclusion. In the case where learners have to be taught directly, the teacher as a facilitator is the one who makes the decision (Marlowe & Page, 1998). The teacher’s main work is to make sure that the learner accomplishes what she or he is supposed to learn in a specific grade. Thus guiding learners to discover information and learn is the most important task for the teacher. Brooks and Brooks (1999) and Honebein (1996) propose the following principles that help learners to accomplish what they are set out to learn: encourage students’ autonomy and initiative, use

authentic data manipulatively and interactively and use physical resources. Students are also encouraged to use cognitive terminology such as create, predict, analyse in framing tasks. This allows students to set goals, and to choose instructional strategies and content. The teacher, being a facilitator, inquires into students' understanding of concepts before sharing their own understanding and encourages them to have dialogues both with teachers and peers. The teacher also asks students questions that challenge their critical thinking and encourage them to ask questions. The teacher seeks elaboration of students' initial responses and engages students in experiences that might lead to contradictions with their initial hypothesis. Finally, the teacher allows time after a question has been raised, both to establish a relationship and to construct metaphors. For the learners, constructivism is an ongoing process of construction, evaluation and modification of constructs (Von Glaserfeld, 1983). In teaching Setswana idioms the facilitating role of the teacher is important.

3.5 THE THEORY OF DECODING AND LEARNING OF IDIOMS

Piaget is of the opinion that learning is affected by the context in which an idea is taught as well as by the students' beliefs and attitudes (Piaget, 1980). In this study anecdotes were used in the context of the learners' everyday life and experiences, while the idioms in pictures were presented by teachers with questioning skills to see if the learners interpreted the pictorial idiom literally or idiomatically.

In an attempt to investigate how learners decode idioms, Liu (2008) highlights five major theoretical frameworks that have been applied in actualising Home Language idiom comprehension. These theories are (1) literal first, or idiom list sub-theory; (2) simultaneous processing, or lexical representation sub-theory; (3) the figurative first, or direct access sub-theory; (4) the compositional analysis sub-theory and (5) the dual idiom representation model. For the purpose of this study, all five theoretical frameworks will be taken into account in an endeavour to best address the research question. However, it is necessary to outline all five hypotheses, which are of relevance to the current research project.

The first sub-theory is the literal first, or idiom list sub-theory, postulated by Bobrow and Bell (1973) and adapted by Liu (2008). Bobrow and Bell (1973:343) propose that there are distinct idiomatic modes and literal modes of processing sentences. They argue that “inducing a set to perceive idioms can increase the proportion of people seeing the idiomatic meaning of a test sentence first and a set to perceive literal meaning can reduce the proportion compared to a no-set baseline.” The sub-theory implies that learners understand and interpret an idiom literally first before they interpret it as an idiom.

The second sub-theory is the one postulated by Swinney and Cutler (1979) and maintained by Liu (2008) as the simultaneous processing or lexical representation sub-theory. Swinney and Cutler (*ibid.*) argue that idioms present an important challenge to those interested in building a performance model for sentence comprehension. According to their proposition, idioms are used and understood the same way as other ordinary words: idioms are stored in the mind, and at the first encounter; one interprets them both literally and figuratively at the same time. The implication is that if you know an idiom, you understand it.

The third sub-theory, called figurative first or direct access, was first introduced by Gibbs in (1980, 1983). According to Liu (2008:8), this approach is a drastic extension of the lexical representation or simultaneous processing. In this approach, it is believed that indigenous speakers do not even try to understand the literal meaning of an idiom first. They usually recognise an idiom when they see or hear one. Thus they recognise and know the meaning of an idiom from the outset.

The fourth and most recent sub-theory was espoused by Gacciari and Levorato (1989), Gibbs et al. (1989) and Flores d’Arcais (1993). These theorists believe that in the compositional analysis hypotheses, idiom comprehension is done as in normal sentence processing with a practical interpretation. They use two types of idioms in this research, namely semantically decomposable idioms, which are made up of either a verbatim or a metaphorical meaning that contributes independently to the sequence’s overall meaning, and non-decomposable idioms, whose idiomatic meaning cannot be acquired through an analysis of the meanings of the words that constitute it (Liu, 2008:52).

The dual idiom representation model devised by Titone and Connine (1999) and enhanced by Abel (2003) into a model of dual idiom representation (DIR model) is pertinent here. Initially, Titone and Connine (1999) combined both the non-compositional sub-theory (in which idioms are processed in a similar way to long words or multisyllabic words) and the compositional approach (in which the semantic meaning of an idiom is emphasized). In this hybrid model, they believe that “idiomatic meanings are both directly retrieved and literally analysed during comprehension”. Abel (2003) took the study further and came up with a psycholinguistic model, the DIR model, which not only combines the lexical and the conceptual level, but also assimilates the representation of idioms in the Home Language and First and Second Additional Language lexicon. It also takes the frequency of the idioms into consideration.

The relevance of the DIR model to this research project is its integration of both the literal first or idiom list and the simultaneous processing or lexical representation sub-theory. The DIR model encompasses these two basic models largely in that it takes into consideration the following important aspects:

- It deals exclusively with the native mental lexicon and does not try to integrate the First Additional Language lexicon.
- It concentrates either on lexical representations or on conceptual aspects.
- It allows frequency effects to play a role in the representation or processing of idioms.

To summarise: The first sub-theory, the literal first or idiom list, suggests that a person first understands an idiom literally before understanding it idiomatically; the second sub-theory, the simultaneous processing or lexical representation sub-theory, suggests that idioms are interpreted literally and idiomatically at the same time. The third sub-theory, figurative first or direct access, believes that indigenous speakers know and understand an idiom at first sight, while the fourth, the compositional analysis sub-theory, is composed of decomposable idioms (with either a literal or figurative meaning) or non-decomposable idioms (those idioms of which individual components do not contribute to the phrase’s figurative meaning).

The dual idiom representation model (DIR) model, which is a comprehensive model of the five models, also takes the frequency usage of the idiom into consideration. Therefore, in this research, the literal first or idiom list sub-theory will be used to attempt to analyse data that has been collected from the three Grade 3 classes in the areas of research.

To understand teaching strategies employed in the teaching of idioms in Setswana Grade 3, it is important to first know the subject matter that provides the teaching context. Cooper (1998:255) explains the difficulty of idioms based on the fact that idioms are part of a figurative language that includes metaphors, similes and proverbs, which are at times difficult to understand because they do not mean what they literally mean. Cooper (ibid.) further states that because of the high frequency of idioms in daily speech, idioms are an important aspect of vocabulary acquisition. Cooper (1998:259) also proved in his research that idioms present a special problem to both the native speakers as well as to the second language learners. He gives the following principal findings from studies on idiom acquisition as follows:

- Children younger than nine years of age generally choose literal interpretations of idioms. The awareness that idioms must be understood figuratively begins around the age of nine.
- Idioms that are syntactically frozen are easier to learn than those that are syntactically flexible.
- Idioms whose meanings are metaphorically transparent are easier to learn than opaque meanings.
- Idioms are easier to comprehend if they are given contextual support than if they occur in isolation.
- Many idioms can be categorized according to underlying themes.
- Idioms are difficult for second language learners to comprehend and produce.
- Second language learners make use of their native language when conceptualising target language idioms.

This is the reason why Grade 3 Setswana teachers have to know the types of idioms and the level of idioms they have to teach the learners. In this research the following types of idioms taught in Grade 3 will be critically analysed:

- Idioms that are syntactically frozen, which will be easier to learn than those that are syntactically flexible, and
- Idioms whose meanings are metaphorically transparent, which also will be easier to learn than those with opaque meanings (Cooper, 1998:259).

3.6 LINK OF CONSTRUCTIVISM TO EDUCATION MODELS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The following section outlines the different stages in the changes of South African curriculum that had an impact on the teaching of African languages and on Setswana in particular.

3.6.1 Outcomes-Based Education Curriculum 2005

In this section the researcher will describe constructivism as an educational model in relation to the development of teaching models in South Africa, as this also influenced the teaching and learning of Setswana idioms in African languages. In 1953, the then Prime Minister, H.F. Verwoerd, introduced the mother tongue policy according to which all Africans in the Republic of South Africa had to be taught all subjects in their mother tongue in lower primary schools. Although this was in theory partly a good policy, the intentions, however, were not accepted in a positive way. The problem of lack of terminology with regard to content subjects like mathematics, biology, physical science and commercial subjects, coupled with the negative attitude towards African languages by their speakers, turned Africans against the mother tongue policy, and consequently progress in developing African languages became slow. Today English, and Afrikaans to a lesser degree, is still preferred to the vernaculars by black Africans (Marivate, 1992:95).

3.6.2 The emergence of four phases of education in South Africa (1953-2011)

Given the history of education in South Africa (1953-2011), which the researcher calls the ***Four phases of education*** in South Africa, it is important to understand the

background against which African languages, especially Setswana, were taught in order to understand why constructivism is preferred in this research.

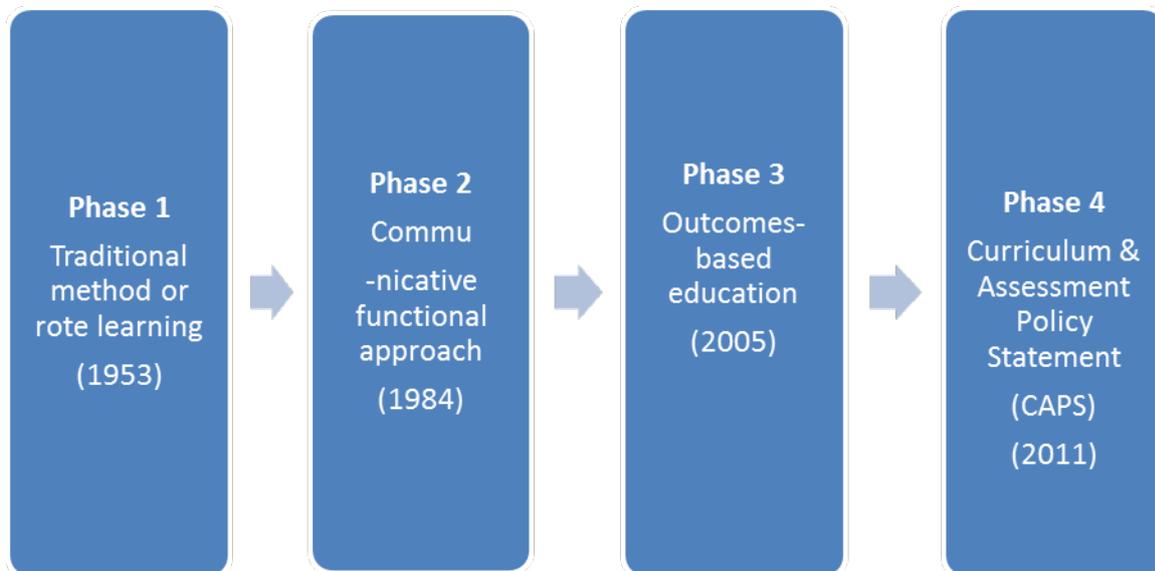


Figure 3.1: Adapted from Ramagoshi in Lexicos (2004:254)

3.6.3 Phase 1: The traditional approach (1953)

Before 1994, the syllabi for African languages were all written or based on the teaching of African languages as a second language instead of using first language approach. This method was based on what is termed the “traditional method”. This method encouraged rote learning because formal definitions were emphasised instead of understanding or learning language in a natural way. A clear distinction needs to be drawn between the tuition of a first language and that of a second language. In second language tuition the main emphasis is on the acquisition of basic fluency for communication purposes. In 1984, the researcher was a lecturer at the College for Continuing Training (In-service Training) in Soshanguve, Pretoria, when the Department of National Education introduced the functional approach to the teaching of African languages at the College. This method met with resistance at first, but it gradually had an impact on the few teachers who attended the week-long training. Unfortunately, many teachers did not attend courses on the functional approach at the College of Continuing Training. Only a few teachers were selected from every province, and they were supposed to give training to their colleagues

when they got back home. (own experience as Setswana lecturer (Ramagoshi, 1988).

3.6.4 Phase 2: The functional approach to Home Language teaching (1984)

Home Language tuition should be aimed at expanding basic knowledge and improving linguistic proficiency. Home Language tuition should give learners a broader, more sophisticated and more profound knowledge of the language. This includes the enrichment of the child's vocabulary, cultural refinement, structural perfection and the development of the child's creative and critical use of the language. Instead of merely focusing on the use of the language in specific circumstances, the language as such is often discussed in Home Language tuition. Children learn their first language through constant exposure to the living language, its structures, meanings, cultural values and traditions, so that they are eventually able to take their rightful place as full members of the community in which their mother tongue is spoken.

In modern approaches to first language tuition, grammar should not be taught in isolation; it should be integrated into practical language usage and composition work. Functional grammar tuition was therefore strongly emphasised. Since grammatical insight is important, learners were expected to apply their knowledge in other areas of language use, for instance in compositions. Grammar was therefore not an end in itself, but means to an end.

With the functional inductive method, learners are exposed to a specific grammatical form in a real life situation. Such a situation is created by means of a passage for reading sentences, pictures or a story in which the relevant linguistic form features prominently. A tape recorder may also be used to good effect. The teacher uses leading questions to prompt learners to identify the linguistic form in context. Then learners are guided to deduce one or more rules applicable to this form. Once the rules have been deduced, they are applied. The functional – inductive method is very popular and is currently advocated all over the world. Then after the new government took over in 1994, Curriculum 2005 was introduced: the Outcomes Based Education (OBE).

3.6.5 Phase 3 of education: Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) (2005)

According to Sebate (2011:1), in an effort to transform educational practices and address social issues, which included equity, access and redress, the South African Government introduced outcomes-based education (OBE) in South Africa in 2005.

OBE is an approach that focuses on what is learned and how it is learned rather than on what is taught. The system is outcomes-based, or results oriented, rather than content driven. While the emphasis is on learning and teaching, it is a system where the facilitator and the learner focus their attention on the following:

- Results (called outcomes) expected at the end of each learning process – which refers to competencies in knowledge, skills, values and attitudes within a particular context.
- Learners should be able to demonstrate what they understand and apply it. Orientations should benefit them when they leave school or have completed training.
- A process that will take learners to the point of learner-centred group work and developing the ability to think.
- Learners are to be trained in active participation methods and in taking responsibility for their own learning.
- Flexible time frames allow learners to work at their own pace. Rigid time frames were done away with.

With the constructivist view of learning as explained above and the implementation of outcomes-based education, teaching practices have changed over the past few years to include and involve the learners more in classroom activities (Fraser, 2006:6; Van der Host and MacDonald, 2003:5; Gravett, 2005:24).

3.6.6 Phase 4: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (2011)

Due to the many problems of misinterpretations of OBE by teachers, the Department of Education revised OBE into National Curriculum Statement. The implementation of the NCS was not as successful as expected and led to another revision by the Minister of Basic Education, which produced the Revised Curriculum Statement

(RNCS). Many teachers interpreted these revisions as totally new curricula (Department of Basic Education, 2011:8). Sebate (2011:30) stated that the many revisions of this curriculum led to the following implementation problems for the teachers:

- High administrative burden,
- inadequate understanding and
- too many curriculum policies and documents for one lesson preparation.

Due to the imbalances in the use and implementation of these curriculum documents, the Minister of Basic Education again came up with a new revised curriculum document known as Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Sebate (2011:30) defines (CAPS) as follows:

“A comprehensive and concise policy document that provides details regarding what teachers need to teach and assess on a grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject basis.”

The aim of CAPS was to equip learners with regard to their intellectual ability, knowledge, skills and values for self-fulfilment and participation in society (Department of Basic Education, 2011:9).

These revisions of policy statements also affect Grade 3 Setswana teachers when interpreting the curriculum for teaching idioms as imaginative language.

3.7 OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION AND CAPS IN RELATION TO CONSTRUCTIVISM

Skosana (2010:35) states that “[t]he South African model of OBE borrowed features and characteristics from the Australian model, when it referred to learners who perform at their own pace.” Both the Australian and the South African models of OBE seemed to have outcomes frameworks that were constructed along constructivist approaches.

Sebate (2011:1) compared constructivism with OBE because OBE is learner-centred. He further stated that “[t]he theory of constructivism is, however, not only restricted to outcomes-based education, but lies at the foundation of all good teaching, learning and assessment practices.” Due to the similarities with the functional inductive approach, OBE and constructivism, this study will be based on the theory of constructivism.

When outcomes-based education was introduced in 2005, researchers as well as teachers criticised and rejected it because of, among others, the amount of work it caused for teachers as well as the difficult vocabulary it used (Jansen, 1998). However, the new curriculum helped change teachers’ mind-set. This system replaced the old South African education system, which focused on memorising lesson content and resulted in a marks statement, with a teaching approach that moves away from the mere gathering of knowledge by focusing on the application of knowledge, skills and values, norms and attitudes. Blignaut (2008:115) states that OBE made the South African teachers aware of the importance of a learner centred approach to teaching and in moving them from a “talk and chalk” approach to one of teaching and learning. Research done by Steyn and Wilkinson (1998:204-205) shows that the underlying philosophy of outcomes-based education is constructivism.

3.7.1 The type of learner expected in constructivism theory

In constructivism, the outcomes or goals in learning are the focus. Since OBE was based on constructivism, one of the major features was on the type of learner that was envisaged in OBE. Thus the type of learner that was expected should be able to broaden and deepen language competencies, including the abstract language skills required for academic learning across the curriculum, and the aesthetic appreciation and enjoyment of texts, so the learner is able to listen, speak, read/view and write/present with confidence. These skills and attitudes form the basis for life-long learning. The learner uses language appropriately in real-life contexts, taking into account audience, purpose and context. She or he expresses and justifies own ideas, views and emotions confidently in order to become an independent and analytical thinker. This type of learner is one who uses language and imagination to

represent and explore human experience. By interacting with a wide range of texts, the learner is able to reflect on her or his own life and experiences and to consider alternative worldviews (Department of Education (2002:11), the National Curriculum Statement, Grades R-12).

The learner use language to access and manage information for learning across the curriculum and in a wide range of other contexts. Information literacy is a vital skill in the “information age” and forms the basis for lifelong learning. Use language as a tool for critical and creative thinking. This objective recognises that knowledge is socially constructed through the interaction between language and thinking (White Paper, March 1995).

Express reasoned opinions on ethical issues and values. In order to develop their own value system, learners engage with texts concerning human rights and responsibilities such as the rights of children, women, the disabled and the aged, and with issues linked to race, culture, ideology, class, belief systems, gender, freedom of expression, censorship and the environment.

According to OBE the learners will: interact critically with a wide range of texts; recognise and be able to challenge the perspectives, values and power relations that are embedded in texts; and recognise the unequal status of different languages and language varieties. OBE also indicates that learners will be able to challenge the domination of any language or language variety and assert their language rights in a multilingual society. The role of the facilitator in teaching and assessing languages should make provision for inclusion of all learners, and strategies should be found to assist all learners to access or produce language texts (Department of Education (2002:11), the National Curriculum Statement, Grades R-12).

3.7.2 The type of teacher expected in constructivism theory

The National Curriculum Statement (Department of Education, 2003:5) regards a teacher as someone who is qualified, competent and dedicated and acts as a mediator of learning, a leader, researcher and community worker. Taole (2012:25) defines a teacher as: “An organizer of knowledge, initiator of activities, guiding and

advising rather than prescribing or drilling a specific aspect of language.” She is also of the opinion that “a teacher needs to have a thorough knowledge of how the home language that you teach works and changes so that you can help learners to develop their communicative competence fully.” This is further supported by Rivers (1981:84):

“Persons who are not native speakers of a language, can easily cause offense and give wrong impressions by mixing elements from several registers in speech and writing.”

The above researchers’ opinions highlight how interferences in teaching and learning a language can impede home language proficiency.

3.8 EMERGING THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: TEACHING AND LEARNING IDIOMS IN SETSWANA

International researchers such as Liu (2008), Bobrow and Bell (19973), Gibbs (1980) and Swinney and Cutler (1979) highlight five sub-theories that show how learners learn and decode idioms: (1) literal first or idiom list, (2) simultaneous processing or lexical representation, (3) the figurative first or direct access, (4) the compositional analysis and (5) the dual idiom representation. The results from this study showed that learners interpret or decode idioms according to the levels aligned to their age groups, for example: frozen idioms, transparent idioms and opaque idioms (see 2.2).

On the other hand, the South African literature on the teaching and learning of idioms when compared with the five sub-theories above lacks data on idiom teaching theories and teaching idioms according to the level of difficulty. There is no method on how to teach idioms in African languages, including Setswana, as in the international context above. The only approaches are those of filling in the missing words or matching the relevant answer to the idioms (see 2.6).

In this study, the researcher analysed the South African curriculum policy statements (OBE, CAPS) to find out how teachers are guided to teach idioms as imaginative language. The results indicated the difference in the teaching and learning of idioms in the international context as discussed above. Moreover, Grade 3 Setswana

teachers were not teaching idioms at all, although these policy statements are consistent in requiring a communicative approach to Home Language teaching. In this approach the teacher is regarded as a facilitator who taps the knowledge of idioms that learners have or bring from home. The teacher teaches learners to think independently, at the same time using group work to tackle a problem together and come with a solution based on cultural context. This is in line with the principles of constructivism.

During my observation of classroom teaching of Setswana idioms I observed that: teachers hardly use idioms in teaching any lessons, including Setswana Home Language. Some of the readers had idioms as titles, but the teachers hardly emphasised the idioms as imaginative language. Another observation is that teachers missed an opportunity to use an idiom where, for example, during reading or communicating with learners, an incident lends itself to the use of an idiom. The absence of concrete examples of teaching Setswana idioms shows differences from the international practice of categorising idioms or using the five sub-theories stated above.

The correlation between the international and South African theory of teaching and learning of idioms is based on constructivism, which helps learners' independent learning and encourages learner-centeredness based on learners' experiences in life while the teacher plays the role of a facilitator.

The diagram below provides a summary of all aspects in the above discussion on the theory of teaching idioms. These emerging idiom teaching sub-theories link with D'Angelo's (2014:7) and Kolodner's (1997) four integrated approaches of constructivism, which are (1) case-based learning, (2) discovery-based learning, (3) inquiry-based learning and (4) problem-based learning (see 3.2).

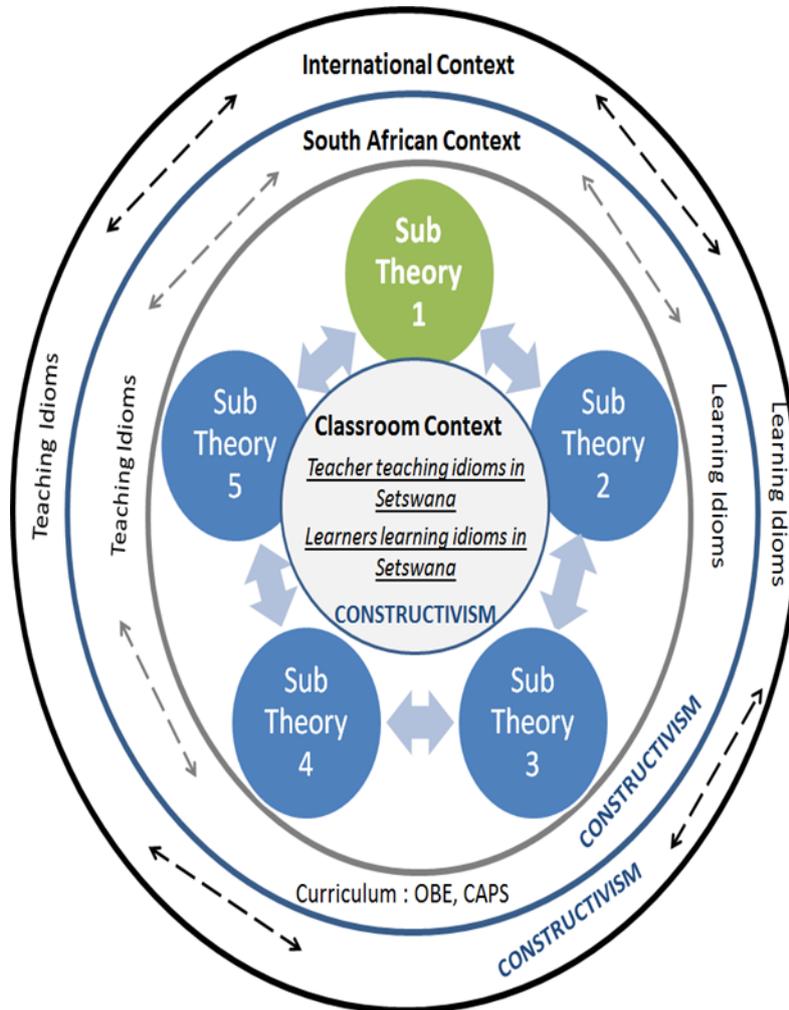


Figure 3.2: Emerging idiom teaching theory

The above figure shows an ideal situation for teaching and learning idioms in the international context in the outer layer. The arrows show that the idioms being taught, the method used and how the learners decode idioms using the five sub-theories, are all integrated in the teaching and learning of idioms. Internationally, studies showed that all the five sub-theories are used based on the level of the idioms taught.

In the South African context, the conceptual framework shows through the arrows that idioms are also taught by teachers to learners using constructivism as a

teaching method. However, when the five sub-theories were tested, the result showed that learners decode idioms at the first level of decoding (the literal first or idiom list), indicated in a green colour. The other four sub-theories were not used in this study.

3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter analysed the two theoretical frameworks to be used in this study of the teaching of Setswana idioms to Grade 3 learners: constructivism and how learners decode idioms. In constructivist theory, a learner should be self-directed and use initiative and creativity to facilitate the learning process. This chapter showed how these two theories indicate an emerging theory for this research project. According to Wertsch (1997), social constructivism not only distinguishes the exceptionality of the learner, but it also encompasses the learner as part of the learning process. The different four phases of Education in South Africa are related to this study because of the changes of terminology usage. From Phase 1 – 3 idioms and proverbs as well as figures of speech were taught. However, with the invent of CAPS (Phase 4) the known terminology was replaced by the term “imaginative language” which is explained in the CAPS glossary (Department of Basic Education, 2011:94) but the teachers cannot decode this concept.

Following this discussion, the research will look at how Grade 3 Setswana learners are taught idioms as imaginative language and whether they decode idioms appropriately.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the design of the research and suitable methods of data collection and analysis of data are described and justified in order to answer the research questions. Details about how, when and where the research was conducted and the different methods that were employed in the research are supplied.

The study was conducted in two phases. In Phase One, the primary data sources consisted of passive participant observation during Setswana classes in three Grade 3 classes, interviews with Grade 3 teachers and focus group interviews with Grades 4, 5, 6 and 7 Setswana teachers in the same schools where the research was conducted (See Appendix C CD1: Interview questions). The aim was to investigate whether these teachers knew what idioms are and which strategies they used when teaching idioms. Furthermore, documents informing teachers about the teaching of idioms as imaginative language as well as the readers for learners and the learners' classwork books were used as data sources. This chapter also provides information on the analyses of the data in Phase One. The outlined methods of data collection and analysis were suitable for this study in order to find out and assess how teachers teach idioms and how learners learn them as part of imaginative language in Grade 3 Setswana classes. In addition, the data collection and analysis of Phase One prompted the design and introduction of a programme on idioms in Setswana. The methodology used to conduct Phase Two of the research was empowerment evaluation. In the next sections each of the aspects of the research design will be dealt with.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Rowley (2002:18) defines a research design as the "logic that links data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the initial questions of a study." The main thrust of the proposed research design is the formulation of research questions

followed by structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews to help discover all the aspects not uncovered during the literature review.

This is a qualitative research design from an interpretive perspective or paradigm (Mouton, 2001). A paradigm is the study of the social world and how people think and embrace the world (Thomas, 2009:7). According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:48) and Creswell (2009:76), a paradigm is a lens which gives insight into an organization's principles by which reality can be interpreted. A research design according to MacMillan and Schumacher (2001) and Sebate (2011) is a broad plan and should consist of the following data collection and analysis processes: how to conduct the research; when and from whom data should be collected, as well as general procedures that will be adopted in conducting the research. Moreover, the research design assists the researcher to make appropriate decisions on the type of method to be used in the study and how to systematically interpret the data collected. Since this study aims to determine how teachers teach idioms and learners learn them as part of imaginative language in Grade 3 classes and to design and implement a programme, the case study research design was selected because it is not possible to collect data in all the schools.

It is important to note that interpretive paradigm is not synonymous with qualitative research, since qualitative research can also be conducted in the functional paradigm (Klein and Myers, 1999). The proposed research method will adhere to the underlying principles of the interpretive paradigm; the applicability of each to the proposed research process is discussed below:

- ***Ideographic methodology:*** When choosing a methodology, most social research is concerned with the nomothetic (i.e. general case) rather than the individual, with the latter studied only to allow for generalisation. Benbasat et al. (1987) suggest the use of ideographic methodology in case studies because it allows for the understanding of a specific phenomenon in its context, the examination of a single situation. In this case a specific case site will be studied with a view to understanding it better and therefore to add to theory-building. The three Grade 3 classes were used in this research. One

class is situated in Makapanstad, a semi-rural area, while the other two classes are situated in Soshanguve Township, an urban area.

- **Anti-positivism:** The positivist believes that experiment, observation and measurement are the core of research. In the proposed research no formal hypothesis testing, measuring of variables or drawing of inferences from a representative sample of a stated population will be done. Therefore, within the assumption of epistemology, the anti-positivism principle is more applicable to the proposed research (Klein and Myers, 1999). In this study the researcher managed to observe teachers and learners in Grade 3 classes in order to be able to understand the context under which the learning and teaching of idioms take place. This helped the researcher to interact with the teachers and learners to have a better understanding of the research context.
- **Voluntarism:** Assumptions about human nature fall on a spectrum where one end of the scale states that people's reactions can be predetermined and the other end of the scale states that one will never know how people will react (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). The proposed research will adopt an intermediate standpoint, but with an inclination towards the school of thought that people's reactions cannot be predetermined. In this study, Phase One of the study was used to verify how teachers teach idioms in Grade 3 and how learners learn Setswana idioms. This process led to the formulation of a programme on the teaching and learning of idioms in Phase Two.
- **Nominalism:** Within the ontological debate, nominalism (as opposed to realism) does not assume that the world is made up of hard, tangible, immutable structures and that the world does not exist independently of the observer (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). This is specifically relevant to this research, since the role of the researcher in the interviews, observations and interpretations is intertwined with the activities themselves. Specifically, the study looked at the following questions:

4.2.1 Primary research question

To what extent can a *Setswana idioms in picture-form* programme empower teachers to teach idioms to Grade 3 Setswana learners as part of imaginative language?

4.2.2 Secondary research questions

- How do Grade 3 teachers use Setswana language daily in the classroom?
- What is the understanding of Grade 3 Setswana teachers as regards idioms as part of Home Language teaching and learning?
- How do teachers make learners master the use of idioms as part of a programme in their language learning within the classroom?
- What are the learner's responses to the teaching of idioms as part of a programme in Setswana Grade 3 classes?
- What will constitute a programme that empowers teachers to teach idioms as imaginative language?

In summary, the interpretive paradigm was chosen because it allows for the development of an understanding that emerges as a specific situation is studied in depth, within its specific context, acknowledging the role of the researcher in the process.

4.3 RESEARCH PROCESS: TWO PHASES

4.3.1 Phase One (2013): Investigating the teaching and learning of idioms in Setswana

Phase One of the study formed the basis for designing and implementing a programme for teaching Setswana idioms. Before a programme could be planned, information about the teaching of idioms by teachers and how learners learn idioms had to be collected and evaluated.

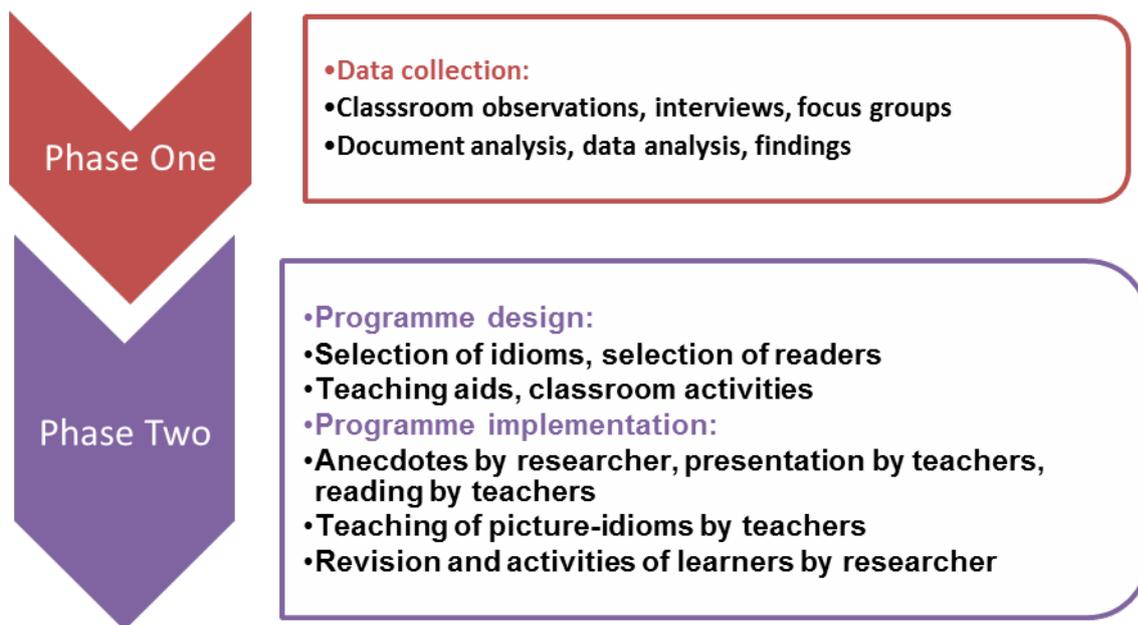


Figure 4.1: Research process: Phase One and Phase Two

This is according to Burrell and Morgan (1979), who are of the opinion that one end of a research study is to avoid assumptions but to find out how people react to specific situations; in this case, it is how teachers teach idioms and how learners learn idioms. The findings of the research answered both ends of *voluntarism* as explained by Burrell and Morgan (1979). Assumptions made in Chapter Two of this study under (2.7) were confirmed.

In Phase One of the study, whether teachers teach idioms in the Grade 3 Setswana classes and which strategies they use in teaching idioms were investigated. How the learners learn idioms was also observed. Furthermore, the CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2011) documents and readers were searched for guidance given to the teachers to teach idioms in the CAPS documents and also to see if any idioms were depicted in the learners' prescribed readers, and if so, how teachers went about teaching them and how the learners learned them.

Phase One of this study was conducted in two Grade 3 classes in Soshanguve, an urban area where the nine official indigenous languages of South Africa speakers (i.e., Setswana, Sepedi, Sesotho, isiZulu, isiNdebele; isiXhosa, isiSwati, Xitsonga and Tshivenda) live in close proximity of each other. One Grade 3 class was situated

in Makapanstad in Hammanskraal, a semi-rural area where the speakers are predominantly Setswana speakers, although there are also other native speakers of other African languages than Setswana.

The research of Phase One was conducted in 2013 in the three Grade 3 classes mentioned above. This gave me ample time to analyse the data collected and evaluate the teaching of idioms in Grade 3 Setswana classes (see the findings in Chapter 5).

4.3.2 Background to the design and implementation of programme

In order to design and implement a programme with Setswana idioms in pictures, the empowerment evaluation process was employed to help answer the research questions (see 7.6) Rule and John (2011:1) state that a case study method can be linked “with other research approaches such as ethnography and evaluation.” For this study, an instrumental case study and evaluative case studies were linked.

To sharpen the focus on the processes that informed the idiom programme, the steps in empowerment evaluation that Fetterman (2001b) termed “[e]stablishing my mission” were followed. These are visits conducted before an intervention programme could be introduced in order to have facts and evidence that idioms as imaginative language were not taught in Grade 3 Setswana classes. According to Tyler (1950:69), as cited by Guba and Lincoln (1982:4), “[t]he process of evaluation is essentially the process of determining to what extent the educational objectives are actually being realized. However, since educational objectives essentially change in human beings, that is, the objectives aimed at are to produce certain desirable changes in the behaviour patterns of the students [*and teachers, in my view*], then evaluation is the process for determining the degree to which these changes in behaviour are actually taking place.”

Fetterman (2002:8) is of the opinion that “[e]mpowerment evaluation is the use of concepts, techniques and findings to foster improvement and self-determination.” According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 1999:9), empowerment evaluation (EE) is “the systematic collection of information about the

activities, characteristics and outcomes of strategies (i.e., programs) to make judgements about the strategy, improve strategy effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future strategy development.” Fetterman (2014:1) gives an expanded definition of Empowerment Evaluation (EE) as “an evaluation approach that aims to increase the likelihood that programs will achieve results by increasing the capacity of program stakeholders to plan, implement, and evaluate their own programs.”

According to Patton (1982:15), “the practice of evaluation involves the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, outcomes of programs, personnel, and products for use by specific people to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness, and make decisions with regard to what those programs, personnel, or products are doing and affecting.”

4.4 THE REASONS FOR INTRODUCING THE PROGRAMME

The introduction of the newly designed programme was prompted by the findings of Phase One. Teachers used prescribed readers of which some had an idiom as title, but that was never emphasised and understood by teachers and perceived as an idiom by the learners. The other reason is that teachers who were interviewed during semi-structured interviews, which were conducted to assess the teaching of idioms, claimed that they never taught idioms because they were not required to do so; they asserted that idioms were not indicated as an aspect to be taught in the curriculum. However, the curriculum explicitly mentions “the imaginative language” as paramount to learning the richness embedded in language (CAPS, 2012:155). This led to my adoption of the empowerment approach and the introduction of a programme that I hoped would assist teachers to teach idioms as imaginative language.

The empowerment practice encourages ownership by placing the approach in the hands of the community and staff members. Tyler, as cited by Guba and Lincoln (1981:4), emphasises that objectives are important in organising a curriculum because they assist the teacher in the selection of “materials, outlining of content, development of instructional procedures, and the preparation of tests and

examinations.” They also serve as the basis for the systematic and intelligent study of educational programmes.

Fetterman (2005:3) states that there are 10 principles that guide EE. These principles help evaluators and community members align decisions with the main purpose or goals associated with capacity building and self-determination

Table 4.1: Empowerment evaluation principles, discussion and implementation

Principles that guide the empowerment evaluation process	Discussions and implementation of the principles
Improvement	<i>Help people improve programme performance:</i> This programme will help the Grade 3 teachers to improve the way they teach idioms in Grade 3 Setswana classes.
Community ownership	<i>Community ownership – value and facilitate community control:</i> A good knowledge of idioms is culturally known to impart values in the community. A learner gets to learn that one does not say to an elderly person <i>O tlhapetswe</i> (you are drunk), but should rather say <i>O ijetse</i> (she or he has eaten). Learners and teachers are part of a community, thus they have a responsibility for building morals and good behaviour in the community. Learners are taught to be good role models.
Inclusion	<i>Invite involvement, participation and diversity:</i> Permission to conduct research at the schools was given by the Department of Education. Later permission to conduct the evaluation research in schools was sought from principals and teachers. All Grade 3 teachers and learners were involved. A request for permission was also sent to parents to inform them of the research and how it would be conducted. One of the parents even phoned the researcher to show her appreciation of the study.
Democratic participation	<i>Democratic participation – open participation and fair decision making:</i> The teacher and the learners were free to participate in the evaluation research, which took two years (2013-2014). They had the right to withdraw from the research if they felt uncomfortable.
Social justice (morals and values)	<i>Social justice – address social inequities in society:</i> The research addressed social inequities because learning idioms will eradicate bias and unfair practices in the community if they practice the moral and value issues embedded in the idioms. For example, <i>Go nkinela matsogo metsing</i> (to soak one’s hand in the water): this idiom means to forgive someone after making a mistake.

Principles that guide the empowerment evaluation process	Discussions and implementation of the principles
Community knowledge	<p><i>Community knowledge – respect and value community knowledge:</i> The evaluation approach lends itself to ask or get information from the parents or elders in the community who are more knowledgeable about idioms. Such an elder can help with the learning of other idioms. However, in this case the Setswana teachers in each school were regarded as part of the community who are assumed to be knowledgeable in idioms.</p>
Evidence-based strategy	<p><i>Evidence-based strategies – respect and use of both community and scholarly knowledge:</i> The teacher represents both the community and scholarly knowledge because she or he is familiar with the content knowledge as well as the methods of language teaching.</p>
Capacity building	<p><i>Capacity building – enhance stakeholder ability to evaluate and improve planning and implementation:</i> After the class observation in 2013, the evaluator was able to sit with the teacher in 2014 to inform her or him of the findings of the class observations and how the planning would take place to help in the planning for implementation of the intervention strategy (idiom programme) – that is, teaching idioms using pictures and other strategies and observing how these strategies impact on the learners when learning idioms in Grade 3 Setswana classes.</p>
Organisational learning	<p><i>Organisational learning – apply data to evaluate and implement practices and informed decision making:</i> The first classroom observation in 2013 provided the data for the researcher to evaluate the teaching of idioms and helped decide how the new programme could be implemented.</p>
Accountability	<p><i>Accountability – emphasise outcomes and accountability:</i> The teachers as well as the researcher were able to compare the outcomes of the new programme based on the learners' positive reaction to the programme – pictures depicting idioms in Setswana and an activity with idioms that had been taught and their meanings in envelopes. The learners were divided into groups of two and were instructed to match the idioms with the correct explanation (Patton, 1997:189).</p>

4.5 PHASE TWO (2014): DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME FOR TEACHING IDIOMS IN SETSWANA

The idiom programme called *Setswana idioms in pictures* is a form of intervention programme to assist Setswana Grade 3 teachers to teach idioms creatively. After my class observations in 2013 (Phase One), I was able to sit with the teachers in 2014 to inform them of the findings of my research during class observations and how the implementation of the intervention strategy (idiom programme) would take place (Phase Two). This programme is about teaching idioms using pictures and other strategies and observing how these strategies impact on the learners when learning idioms in Grade 3 Setswana classes (See Appendix E CD2).

The aim of the programme was to empower teachers. The reason for introducing a programme was that teachers used prescribed readers, some with an idiom as the title, without emphasising an idiom. The other reason was that teachers interviewed during semi-structured interviews, which were conducted to assess the teaching of idioms, claimed that they never taught idioms because they were not required to do so. Furthermore, the teachers asserted that idioms were not indicated as an aspect to be taught in the curriculum.

The empowerment programme was based on the findings of Phase One, and resources were needed to come up with a viable programme. This included knowledge of learning materials that would help the learners learn idioms appropriately and in an interesting manner.

The steps in Figure 4.1 were followed. The knowledge I gained from the literature (see Chapter 2) were also helpful.

The following processes were adopted in the design and implementation of the programme (Phase Two):

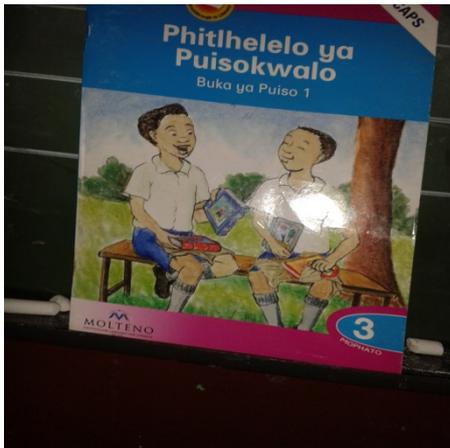
4.5.1 Selection of idioms relevant to Grade 3 level

Transparent idioms: If an idiomatic expression is transparent, there is a clearer and closer relationship between the literal and figurative meanings of the expression than

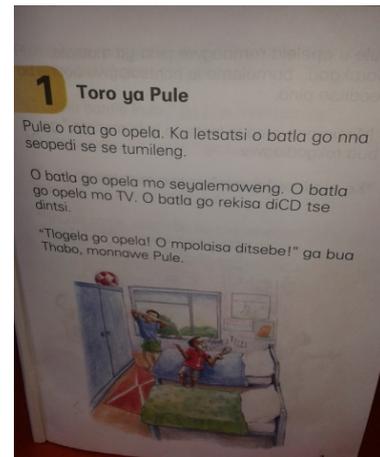
in the opaque idiom or fixed idiom. Sixteen transparent idioms were identified for use in this programme (See Appendix E CD2).

4.5.2 Use of prescribed readers

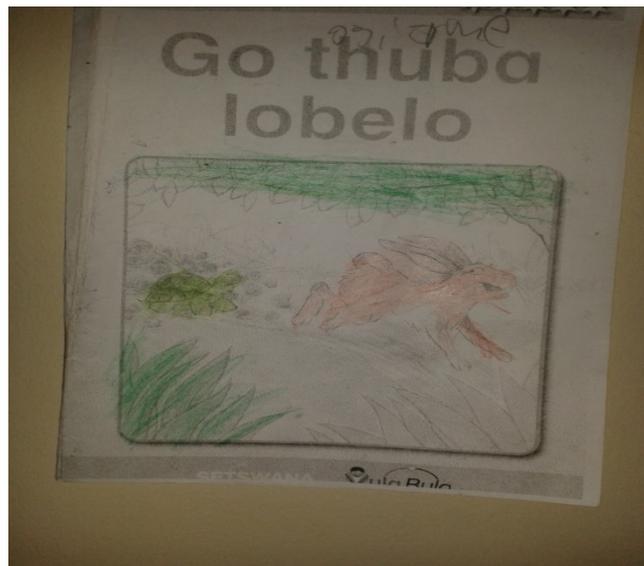
The prescribed readers in both schools were identified as excellent resources for teaching and emphasising the idioms, but they were not being used effectively by the teachers.



Picture 4.1: *Phithhelelo ya Puisokwalo* School (Pooe, 2011)



Picture 4.2: *Toro ya Pule* (Pooe, 2011)



Picture 4.3: *Go thuba lobelo* School 2 (Mekgwe, 2012)-

There was no need to replace the readers; they could be used in the intervention. The researcher was able to select idioms in the readers that are transparent.

4.5.3 Use of learning and teaching support material (LTSM)

Sixteen transparent idioms were developed into pictures, accompanied by written flash cards and separate flash cards with the relevant answers for each idiom.



Picture 4.4: *Go rwala diatla mo Tlhogong* > to despair



Picture 4.5: *Go kgotlha semane* > to make someone angry

Go rwala diatla mo tlhogong

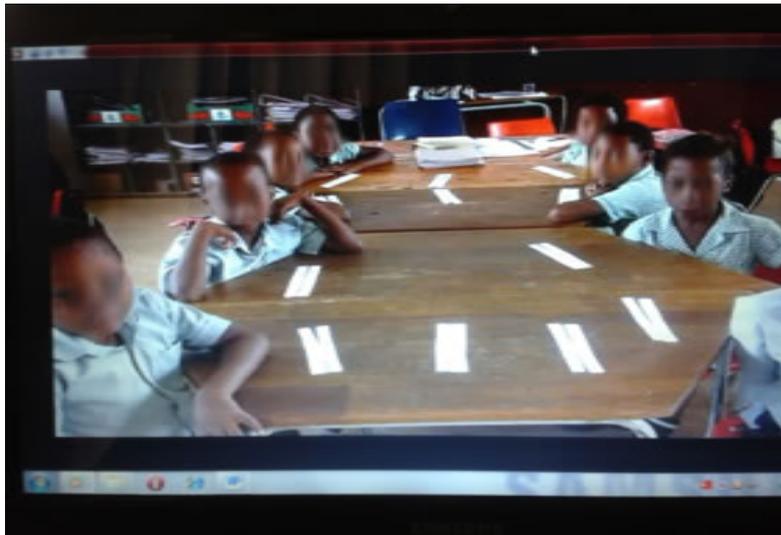
Figure 4.2: Idiom flashcard

Ke fa motho a le mo tlalelong

Figure 4.3: Idiom meaning flashcard

4.5.4 Use of classroom activities

Sets of idioms that had been taught were typed and cut in strips of paper like flashcards with their relevant meanings. They were then put into separate envelopes according to the number of groups in each class. Then learners were divided into groups of two each for a follow-up- activity.



Picture 4.6: idiom flashcard classroom activity

4.6 THE GOALS, TARGET POPULATION AND DESIRED OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME

4.6.1 Goals

The goals were to empower Grade 3 teachers to teaching the idioms depicted in pictures. Furthermore, the teachers are made aware of how to emphasise idioms used in the prescribed readers, or how to use an incident in the reader that lends itself to the use of idioms that are at the level of Grade 3 learners.

4.6.2 Target population

A case study of three Grade 3 classes in a township school and one class in a semi-rural school including three teachers was conducted. The same teachers used in collecting data in 2013 were used again in the implementation of the programme, although the group of Grade 3 learners in 2014 was different from the group used in the data collection in 2013. It was important to use the same teachers because they

were familiar with the topic of the research. I had to apply to the Department of Education again for permission to conduct the intervention at Soshanguve and to the District Office for the Makapanstad school.

4.6.3 Desired Outcomes

The desired outcomes will be the empowerment of Grade 3 teachers who will be able to use different teaching strategies in the teaching of idioms. Learners' language proficiency in Setswana will be improved. Cultural values will be embedded in the teaching of idioms if well emphasised.

4.7 EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME: SETSWANA IDIOMS IN PICTURES PROGRAMME

4.7.1 Collaboration

A relationship will be built with the University of Pretoria and the researcher to enable the researcher to do post-doctoral research at the same schools so as to enable sustainability by producing more idioms in picture form and put into practice other strategies in the teaching of idioms, for example games, puzzles, the seven intelligences and creative writing in Setswana.

4.7.2 Cultural competence

The teachers will be able to teach the learners to use idioms in a competent and knowledgeable way with peers and hopefully with elders (starting with the teachers), which means using idioms that should be used when addressing elders and idioms that are suitable for use among peers. During the implementation of the program, one learner, a girl, used an idiom incorrectly. She wanted to show off that she had understood the idiom and said: "Morutabana, ke kopa "Go ya go fatlha magotlo". (*to blind the mice*) . The idiom is relevant when used by boys because they urinate while standing and pitching for the mice holes, while girls squat or sit on a toilet seat when urinating. These idioms were taught by teachers who are mother-tongue speakers or non-mother-tongue speakers who are qualified to teach Setswana in schools.



Picture 4.7: *Go fatlha magotlo* > To urinate

4.8 CASE STUDY

In both phases the researcher employed a case study. Rule and John (2011:3) state that a case study is “a systematic and in-depth investigation of a particular instance in its context in order to generate knowledge”. On the other hand, a case study method is, according to Bromley (1990:302), “a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomena of interest.” In defining what the case study method entails, Benbasat et al. (1987:370) summarise the viewpoints of various authors as follows: “A case study examines a phenomenon in its natural setting, employing multiple methods of data collection to gather information.” Yin (1994) suggests that a case study research is especially appropriate to a practical situation of a current phenomenon and its real-life; dynamic context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clear-cut and various sources of data are used.

A good reason for choosing the case study method is that it enables the answering of the `why and how` questions of teaching in different environments and in different classrooms. According to Benbasat et al. (1987), the case study method lends itself well to understanding how contexts are created for frequent use of idioms, in this instance Setswana idioms, in learning and teaching situations in their natural setting.

In a case study, research is directed at understanding the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of a particular case in all its complexity. The objective of this research being to investigate the teaching of idioms in Grade 3 and the impact a programme for teaching idioms can have on the participants or an institution (Welman and Kruger, 1999:21), this study aims to provide an in-depth description of factors that determine and influence the learning and teaching of idioms in Grade 3 Setswana classes and to find out how those influences impact on the language proficiency of the spoken and written Setswana of the teachers and the learners. Therefore, a case study is well suited to the capturing of knowledge to enable the researcher to better understand the context of the study.

4.8.1 Types of case study research: the instrumental case study

The type of case study undertaken is the instrumental case study, “which examines the case to explore a broader issue” (Rule and John, 2011:8). In this research, the instrumental case study is suitable because Phase One of the study helped to explore the issue of introducing the teaching of idioms in Grade 3 on the basis of the findings of the data collected in Phase One in 2013. Phase One helped to put the study in context. Furthermore, the data collected in 2013 helped in evaluating the state of teaching idioms in Grade 3 and how learners learn them, which was essential for designing a programme for teaching Setswana idioms in Grade 3.

The 2013 findings revealed that the three Grade 3 teachers in both schools as well as the other teachers in the focus group, i.e. Grade 4, 5, 6 and 7 of both schools were not familiar with the teaching of “imaginative language”, which is clearly defined in the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:94) as involving the teaching of figures of speech, idioms and proverbs, because all these aspects develop language proficiency. The teachers did not know how to distinguish idioms from proverbs and figures of speech, although all three are regarded as idiomatic language. In this study the focus will be on the teaching of idioms as part of imaginative language. For this study instrumental and evaluative case studies were linked, because the evaluative case study helped me decide on the type of intervention programme to be designed.

4.8.2 Instrumental case study: Multiple cases

This instrumental case study adopts a multiple cases design, as it “allows for comparison across cases and can accommodate methodological replication, i.e. use of same methods, techniques and instruments of data collection and analysis” (Rule and John, 2011:21). Three teachers of Grade 3 classes were used in the evaluation of how teachers teach Setswana idioms. The multiple cases have embedded units of analysis involving teachers and learners in two different schools in two different areas (see diagram below).

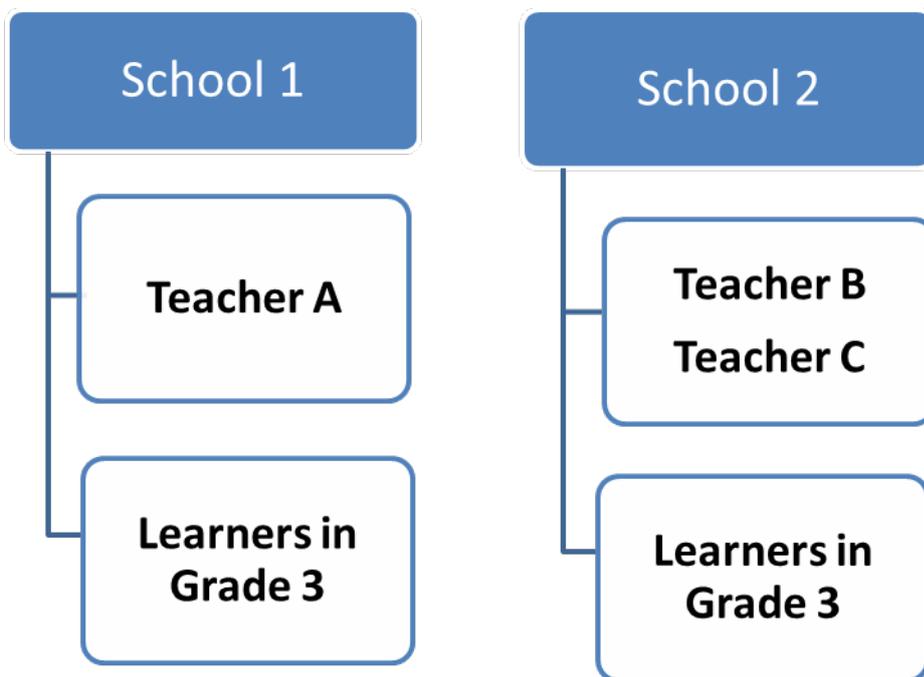


Figure 4.4: Multiple cases with embedded units of analysis

The phenomenon of this study is explanatory. According to Yin (2003), cited by Rule and John (2011:8), an explanatory phenomenon in a case study is a study that “examines a phenomenon that has not been investigated before and lays the basis for further studies.” My studies on the empowerment of Setswana teachers in Grade 3 classes, is a basis for further studies in the teaching of idioms. This study lays a foundation for introducing a further study in the higher grades, as the idioms studied in Grade 3 are easier than those taught in the higher grades (see 2.5.1). This study allows the introduction of more idioms in picture form, and readers and activity books can be written using the idioms introduced in this study. This will help to re-emphasise the idioms taught.

4.9 SAMPLING

Purposive sampling according to Creswell (2010) is a method in which participants are selected because of some defining characteristics that make them owners of information that is needed for the study. In line with instrumental and multiple case study design, purposive sampling was used to select Grade 3 learners who are taking Setswana as a First Language (Maree, 2010). Maree (ibid.) posits that purposive sampling is used in special situations where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind, the specific purpose of this research being to find out how idioms are taught and learned so as to enable teachers to teach imaginative language (idioms) as a way of improving language proficiency in Setswana.

The population for both of the phases of this study is the Grade 3 learners in the two schools where the research was conducted. The criteria for choosing the two schools were that one is an urban school and one a semi-rural school that teaches Setswana at Grade 3 level. The reason for choosing a township school was that all nine indigenous official languages are found there, and I was curious to find out how Setswana teachers and learners are able to conserve and use idioms in an environment that is both multilingual and multicultural. The semi-rural area, in most cases, has one predominant indigenous language (in this case it is Setswana), but it is surrounded by other indigenous languages that might have an influence on its teaching and use. This gave me a better understanding of the need to emphasise the correct teaching, understanding and decoding in the everyday language of the classroom.

Three teachers who offer Setswana as a Home Language in the selected classes were interviewed. These teachers have Setswana as a Home Language at tertiary level and approximately five years' or more experience of teaching Setswana Home Language to Grade 3 learners. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001), in a case study design one investigates small, distinct groups in depth. Profiling three teachers as a distinct group in the sample is premised on the assumption that as Setswana Home Language teachers they are the custodians of Setswana as an indigenous language. These samples were handpicked, as Cohen, Manion and

Morrison (2002) assert they should be, in accordance with their judgement to build up a sample that is satisfactory to pursue the research question.

As indicated above, the population of the study consisted of one urban school in a township and one in a semi-rural school. Context is a determinant of meaning in a case study. According to Rule and John (2011:39), a case study “cannot be understood without reference to the wider context. By wider context is meant the larger field of relevant factors, relationships, and structures in which the case is located.” The larger field of relevant factors in this context is the sociolinguistic aspect discussed in Chapter 2 (see 2.7), which influences the appropriate ways of teaching and learning Setswana idioms in Grade 3 in an urban and a semi-rural area. This sociolinguistic situation in which the schools are embedded impacts on the learning as well as the teaching of Setswana idioms. For example, anyone using code-switching and code-mixing has no chance of using a Setswana idiom correctly in an intelligible sentence.

4.9.1 Abilities that were needed to implement the programme

Teachers who were qualified to teach Grade 3 were used to introduce the programme. A researcher like myself, who is experienced in the teaching of African languages and of Setswana learners, is expected to carry out the implementation process. The programme consists of idioms in picture form, which seeks to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in Setswana. It gives teachers a clear and practical image of what these changes might mean in the classroom and in their development as teachers.

Table 4.2: Teachers who implemented the programme

School	Number	Qualifications	Years teaching Grade 3
School 1	Teacher A	Primary Teachers' Certificate and Senior Certificate	35 years
School 2	Teacher B	Advanced Certificate in Education; Diploma in Education; Bachelor of Technology and Further Diploma in Education (Education Management)	32 years
School 2	Teacher C	Primary Teachers' Diploma, Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education	28 years

4.10 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection is a process of gathering information using instruments such as questionnaires, interviews and observations (Rule and John, 2011:63). In this study the following methods were used to collect data in both phases: document analysis including curriculum, work done by learners, classroom observation and semi-structured interviews with individual Grade 3 teachers as well as focus groups consisting of Grade 4, 5, 6 and 7 Setswana teachers in the same schools where the research was conducted. The Grade 4, 5, 6 and 7 Setswana teachers were interviewed in Phase One of the study as one of the instruments of data collection, which assisted in providing an in-depth insight into how teachers interpret and understand idioms. Moreover, these teachers' responses shed light on the research question: how Setswana teachers understand and teach idioms as imaginative language. It was through this discussion with the focus group teachers that adequate information was collected to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomena of the study (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:41).

4.10.1 Documents

Researchers such as Rule and John (2011:67) maintain that “[d]ocument analysis is a useful place to start data collection in a case study, particularly if the research design includes other methods such as interviews and/or observation.” When

collecting relevant data for this study, the following documents were provided by each school:

Table 4 3: Documents used for data collection

Documents	Department of Basic Education	Used by Schools
Policy documents (CAPS)	DBE	
Prescribed readers	DBE	School 1 & 2
Maths Grade3 supplementary documents	DBE “coaches”	School 1 & 2
Prescribed Life Skills textbooks	DBE	School 1 & 2
Learners’ class work books		School 1 & 2
Ready-made lessons	DBE	School 1 & 2

The Department of Basic Education’s (DBE) documents were used as part of the collection of data on types of guidance provided to teachers teaching Setswana. The readers were examined to find out if they contained Setswana idioms. The teachers’ work schedules and lesson plans were collected because I wanted to verify if the teachers did teach idioms as part of imaginative language in Grade 3. The learners’ portfolios with evidence of activities in idioms were also collected in order to corroborate the evidence from the observations and interviews in Phase One.

4.10.2 Classroom observations

During Phase One I also observed the teachers’ daily use of idioms when teaching and communicating in class. Cohen et al. (2002:305) state that observing lessons in a classroom setting gives the researcher “the opportunity to gather live data from live situations.” In order to answer the research question, Setswana idiom lessons in Grade 3 classes were observed. During Phase One in the reading of Setswana Home Language I assumed that there might be idioms in the selected textbooks or readers that learners read. In the selected stories in the readers, most of the folktales in Setswana end with a moral lesson that incorporates an idiom and/or a proverb. Monyai (2003:4) highlights the point that the concluding part of the folktale is the most important part of the study, because it is the foundation of most idioms

and proverbs. Nieuwenhuis (2010) also argues that as a qualitative data gathering technique, observation is used to obtain a deeper insight into and understanding of the phenomenon being observed.

The purpose of observing classroom teaching was to look for the following:

- How the teacher announced the lesson during the teaching of Setswana and if idioms were used accidentally or on purpose
- How the teacher explained the idioms (if there was a need to use any) during the Setswana lessons
- What media she used to teach idioms
- What the reactions of the learners were to the use of idioms

In Phase One three Grade 3 teachers in two schools were observed over a period of six months, depending on the availability of the teacher. I observed each teacher during all lessons for the day, since all the subjects are taught through the medium of Setswana.

4.10.3 Interviews

According to Kvale (1996) and Cohen et al. (2002), interviews are “an interchange of views between two or more people,” while Rule and John (2011:64) maintain that it can also be “one on one discussions between the researcher and research participants, a sort of guided conversation.” In this study, two types of interviews were used to collect data, namely individual interviews and focus group interviews.

- **Individual interviews**

The researcher conducted three face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the teachers in whose classes the teaching of Setswana idioms as imaginative language was observed. The interviews were conducted in the interviewees’ respective classrooms to ensure that any documentation that might be required by the interviewees during the interview was on hand. Semi-structured interviews, according to Nieuwenhuis (2010:5), “require the participants to answer a set of predetermined questions and it does allow for the probing and clarification of

answers.” This implies that interviewees are not restricted in their responses to questions. Moreover, the researcher is afforded the opportunity of asking follow-up questions as well as of paraphrasing the interviewees’ responses.

Through semi-structured interviews, the researcher was able to solicit rich in-depth information through a variety of questioning techniques. The interview sessions with the three teachers took 20-45 minutes each. After permission to conduct research had been granted by DBE, the interviews were recorded on tape and on video. Audio recording allows for data to be captured in an interview without the delay of writing, even though notes were still taken to allow for contingency questions. In addition, recording data allows participants access to listen to their responses and to reflect on and perhaps even to substantiate their responses.

- **Focus groups interviews**

Berg (2001:111) regards a focus group interview as “guided or unguided discussions addressing a particular topic of interest or relevance to the group and the researcher.” In the focus group, the participants interact with one another rather than with the researcher. In this manner, data will emanate (Cohen et al. 2000:288). Although open-ended guiding questions are used, the interview will be directed to areas of interest that come up during the interview. This method assisted the researcher greatly in exploring the research topic, where fully structured interviews schedule might have had drawbacks (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Moreover, it might be difficult to analyse some of the interview data, especially when synthesising across interviewees. However, as Cohen et al. (ibid.) suggest, “chairs the meeting so that a balance is struck between being too directive and veering off the point, i.e. keeping the meeting open-ended but to the point” is the way to go.

In Phase One focus group interviews were conducted with Setswana Grade 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 teachers in each area of the research schools. This helped to determine the teachers’ perception and knowledge of the importance of teaching idioms as imaginative language in Setswana classes. The focus group discussion helped to determine whether the teachers of Setswana had different strategies, tactics and approaches that they used in the teaching and learning of idioms in their respective classes.

4.10.4 Researcher's diary – field notes

During the research I also relied on my research diary as an instrument of data collection. I recorded field notes of classroom observations, interviews and lessons by teachers both in Phase One and Phase Two. I also used codes as easy reminders of themes and categories as well as other relevant information.

4.11 DATA ANALYSIS

Sebate (2011:113) is of the opinion that “data analysis is the process of making sense out of data, which involves interpreting, consolidating and reducing what people have said and what I had seen.” Rule and John (2011:75) point out that:

“Data analysis and interpretation constitutes a critical stage in the research process which allows you to construct thick descriptions, to identify theme, to generate explanations of thought and action evident in the case, and to theorize the case.”

From the outset of the research, during Phase One, the data collected was analysed immediately. In a case study method (as in any other qualitative study), data collection and analysis occur concurrently (Maree et al., 2010; Cohen et.al, 2002; Baxter and Jack, 2008). Audio recorded data was listened to more than twice and transcribed without compromising the language and body inflections to facilitate data analysis. Recurring patterns were noted and arranged into themes. These ensured credibility and validity of the study and its findings. Moreover, transcripts were given to participants to scrutinise for trustworthiness and credibility. Where discrepancies were noted, the participants listened to recorded responses and were able to reflect on their responses and perhaps even clarify further what they wanted to convey or to edit their responses.

I then scrutinised the prescribed textbooks and readers used for teaching Setswana idioms to find out how idioms were explained or emphasised during lesson presentations. If none were used, then I went back to the tape recordings of the teachers' oral and reading lessons and saw whether the teacher was able to pick up

an incident from the reader that presented an opportunity to use any of the imaginative language devices, specifically idioms.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006:79), thematic analyses can be defined as “a method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data.” Furthermore, Rule and John (2011:123) state that a “thematic structure entails identifying the main themes or issues within a case and using them to organise and present the case.” The data collected was sorted into themes and thereafter categorised by means of a coding system. The findings of the analyses were integrated and interpreted to produce a report of the first phase of the research report. Creswell (1998), Miles and Huberman (2002) and Stark and Torrance (2005) also maintain that in a case study data is subjected to various analytical steps, such as:

- Organisation of the facts into logical order, such as chronologically adding notes where appropriate
- Classification or clustering of the facts into categories directly related to various approaches and types of strategies and techniques used in the teaching and learning of idioms
- Identification of patterns or themes that emerge from the data during ordering and or categorisation
- Content analysis (related to the above points) to distinguish among data elements that relate to the various aspects of the theoretical model, for example in this study how teachers teach idioms and how the learners decode the idioms.

A “chain of evidence” (Rowley, 2002:23) was maintained during data analysis to ensure that the appropriate sections of the case study database are referenced when referring to specific interviews or documents during the various analyses. Miles and Huberman (2002) view data reduction as an important component of data analysis. Therefore, although data analysis initially took all collected data into account, part of the analysis phase was to extract, simplify and condense relevant parts of the data.

4.12 CHALLENGES AND SHORTCOMINGS OF THE RESEARCH

A number of challenges were encountered that at times made the collection of data difficult. The distance from Pretoria to Makapanstad was too far for one to travel daily to the schools; I had to stay at a guest house in 2013 during Phase One, and in Phase Two, in 2014, for myself and the cameraman who recorded the implementation of the idiom programme. The expenses for accommodation at the guesthouse were paid from funds provided by the European Union (EU). The other school was about 45 minutes' drive from where I stay. I had to wake up early in order to make it on time for the first class. One day we arrived at the school only to be turned back because the teachers were busy with preparations for Mandela Day Celebrations. Another incident occurred during the focus group interviews, where one Grade 6 teacher became suspicious of my questions because she could not come up with an appropriate answer. She decided to withdraw from the interviews.

4.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A case study approach to research necessitates interaction with participants at a personal level. In fact, the researcher became the main role player in the research. This necessitated maintaining the necessary ethical standards due to this relationship's potential to infringe human rights. In this study confidentiality of participants was ensured at all times. Participants were from the outset, informed of both the purpose of the study and what their roles were going to be. This was done to ensure that when they consented to participate in the study, they understood what they were binding themselves to (See Appendix A CD1).

Regarding the learners, permission was requested from parents and they were assured of the learners' safety at all times during the research process. Parents were reassured that no harm would befall the learners as a result of negligence during the course of their involvement in the study. Participants were also informed that participating in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any point of the research process without fear of prejudice. Written permission was obtained from the interviewees, who were informed about the research topic, and they were assured that confidentiality would be maintained and pseudonyms would be used. Recordings were made of the interviews and notes taken during the interviews. In

cases where interviewees were uncomfortable with being video'd, only notes were taken (See Appendix A CD1).

A relation of trust was established with all the participants, who were allowed to review and confirm or alter the research data and findings to avoid bias. The privacy of the participants was also maintained by not sharing what was discussed except in the fulfilment of the research project. Therefore, aggregate data was not shared until all participants were informed about how the information is going to be used.

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Department at the University of Pretoria before the different Departments of Basic Education (North West and Gauteng), where schools are situated, were asked for permission. The circuit managers as well as principals of the schools concerned were approached only after their respective circuit offices had received approval letters from the Department of Education (See Appendix B CD1).

Rigid, standardised instruments for data collection were not used *per se*, since data collection occurred through semi-structured interviews, document analyses and observations with scheduled interviews as well as field notes from the diary. This method was deemed suitable to collect data for this study. The active role of the researcher in qualitative research can therefore not be ignored, since my ability to interpret the collected data was critical to understanding this research. Rowley (2002) argues that successful execution of the research depends critically upon the competence of the researcher, while Benbasat, Goldstein and Mead (1987) state that research results depend heavily on the integrative powers of the researcher. The potential subjectivity was mitigated by not leading the interviewees, regularly confirming with the interviewees what was meant by specific statements and through various techniques to ensure validity and reliability, discussed below.

4.14 ENSURING TRUSTWORTHINESS OF RESEARCH

Rowley (2002) argues that one of the great strengths of case studies (when compared with other research methods) is that it allows for evidence to be collected from multiple sources. The need to ensure trustworthiness is met by using several

strategies such as triangulation, confirming validity and reliability of the research process (Stake, 2005). It allows for the use of data from multiple sources, each of which may possess different types of errors or weaknesses, to ensure that a more objective understanding of the data can be obtained across the different sources and can therefore assist with data convergence (Yin, 1994). Although there are many forms of triangulation, in the present study data source triangulation was used – a technique suggested by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) where data that conflicts across the various data sources will need to be examined further before becoming part of the data analysis phase. Therefore, the interview process was followed by a process where additional information was gathered from additional relevant official documents and learners' portfolios in Phase One of the research.

4.15 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

As regards the researcher, “It is important to be constantly aware of how you are positioned in relation to the study context and participants, and how such positioning may influence the study and its overall quality” (Rule and John, 2011:113). On the other hand, Creswell (2009:177) recommends that the researcher should disclose her/his status and experiences to the readers. This is helpful because I was not independent of the research project and context. He further states that the knowledge will help in the validity and reliability of the research. Ponterotto (2005) contends that the researcher should be conscious of the values she brings to the study.

My values and knowledge of Setswana and being a former high school teacher, a lecturer at the In-Service Training Centre and now a lecturer in Setswana and method of teaching African languages may have influenced the way I phrased research questions and reflected on the whole research process. However, this possible bias does not negate the wealth of information gathered from the respondents. None of the Grade 3 Setswana teachers in the two schools were known to me, nor did I have any relationship with them that might have influenced the quality of the study.

From the findings of the data analysed from Phase One, I was able to develop an idiom programme as a form of intervention for Grade 3 Setswana teachers and learners (Phase Two). This programme was expected to enhance the teachers' teaching skills and strategies, which in turn would help the learners to improve their language proficiency in Setswana as well as enhance their indigenous knowledge base.

4.16 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to record and document the teaching strategies used by Setswana Grade 3 teachers to teach idioms as imaginative language and to find out how learners decode idioms. This chapter describes how the research process was designed and discusses procedures for data collection and data analysis. In Chapter 5 the findings of the data collected in Phase One are presented. The findings formed the basis of an intervention programme Setswana idioms in picture form, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6 of this study.

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF PHASE ONE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter data collected in Phase One of this study is analysed and in Chapter 6 the implementation of the programme in Phase Two is described and analysed. In Chapter 4 the research design, sampling techniques, instruments for data collection and data collection processes relevant to Phase One were described. This chapter deals with the findings of Phase One only which led to the introduction of the *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme designed for Phase Two of the research study. My main instruments of data collection were classroom observations, interviews with Grade 3 Setswana teachers and focus groups interviews as well as analysis of relevant documents and field notes made in my diary. In Phase One the focus was to observe how Grade 3 Setswana teachers teach idioms and how learners decode idioms during learning.

The data from Phase One answers the first secondary question of the research study: *What is the understanding of Grade 3 Setswana teachers of idioms as part of Home Language teaching and learning?*

I used both content and thematic analysis in Phase One. Content analysis, according to Abidogun (2013:103), is “a research technique that can be used to understand text and the content of their use.” The content analysis process was based on documents, written material, interview transcripts and classroom observation I observed lessons conducted in Setswana without any interference. Audio recordings of the lessons were done, which were later transcribed into 87 pages. This enabled me to assess how well the CAPS (DBE, 2011) requirements were adhered to in respect of the teaching of imaginative language as indicated on page 55 of the curriculum document (CAPS). I was able to do audio recording of lessons based on listening, speaking, viewing, reading and writing. Since the aim of this phase was to investigate how teachers teach Grade 3 Setswana idioms and how learners decode idioms, the following section explains the thematic analysis of the data of Phase

One. Themes and categories were identified when analysing data collected through classroom observations, interviews and document analysis.

I studied the typed transcripts of 87 pages from my data sources in order to find a recurring pattern that informed the analysis. I then looked for recurring responses based on my interview questions as well as the written words that are related to sociolinguistics aspects of the study. Thereafter I then marked the recurring patterns to identify themes with abbreviations, for example SAsp for the sociolinguistic aspect that is an impediment to the teaching of Setswana idiom and language proficiency. The categories falling under this theme were abbreviated as follows throughout the transcript: PtaS for Pretoria Sotho, Non-stdD for non-standard dialects etc. This to me formed “patterns of meaning and issues of potential interest,” as put by Braun and Clarke (2006:86) to enable me to identify emerging themes in Phase One.

5.2 FINDINGS FROM THE INDIVIDUAL GROUPS AND FOCUS GROUPS

In these sections, the data analysis and finding from the individual interviews with participating teachers of the focus group of Grade 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 Setswana teachers is summarised. The answers of both groups were similar and the summary is based on the 87 pages transcribed from audio recordings of the 16 interview questions. The summary confirms the themes and categories given above. (A selection of the transcripts is presented in Appendix D CD1).

A summary of the evidence confirms that idioms are not taught in Grade 3 Setswana classes. Furthermore, the data from Phase One confirms the assumptions that there are impediments to Setswana language proficiency, especially in the teaching of idioms, which could explain why the teachers do not use idioms in their daily language when teaching and addressing learners in the classroom. Moreover, during interviews with the teachers of Grades 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 respectively, I discovered that the teachers maintain that they do not teach idioms because this is not explicitly required in the CAPS document.

In this study, the way Grade 3 Setswana teachers teach Grade 3 idioms creatively and how learners decode idioms were explored. As a method of collecting data,

semi-structured interviews were conducted first with the Grade 3 Setswana teachers and with Grade 4, 5, 6 and 7 teachers who teach Setswana in the selected schools with the following purpose:

To elicit the teachers' understanding of imaginative language and what they perceive it to be and how they teach imaginative language to Grades 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 Setswana learners. Also to find out what are the policies, curriculum provisions and requirements for the teaching of African languages in Grade 3.

All the interviewees in the focus group as well as individual teachers were asked the same 16 questions as listed below. Excerpts from my diary are captured as remarks below each group's response to each of the questions in order to indicate the saturation of the data as well as the triangulation to ensure trustworthiness (see 4.14). This is how the groups responded to each of the 16 questions:

1. What is meant by imaginative language?

School 1: The individual teachers and the focus group teachers did not understand what imaginative language is. One of the teachers wanted to know if imaginative language was in or part of Setswana, while another one wanted to know if it was part of the 11 official languages. The Grade 3 teacher said it was any language the learner used, but she could not distinguish any language from imaginative language. School 2 as well as the Grade 3 teachers did not know the answer at all and they asked for examples; the example they could think of was a proverb and not an idiom. The remarks are from my research diary made in 2013.

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: The teachers in both schools did not understand what imaginative language is. I encouraged the teachers to answer in Setswana, but they still could not come up with the appropriate answers.

(Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)

2. Which examples of imaginative language in Setswana do you know?

School 1 teachers all agreed that it must be language usage - one could notice that they were guessing. Then one teacher said it was part of relating a story. None of the three teachers could give a relevant example. The Grade 3 teacher said it is *go itlhamela kgang* (to create one's own story) - about giving the learners a topic and a picture that they can use to create a story. In School 2, the three teachers agreed on a proverb as an example: *Ngwana yo o sa leleng o swela tharing*. (A child who does not cry dies in her abba). The Grade 3 teacher in this school said she did not have any idea about this.

Do you think it is important to teach Grade 3 learners imaginative language?

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: Teachers from both schools gave examples of proverbs instead of idioms or figures of speech. They even gave language usage as well as narrative as an answer. (Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)

The teachers in School 1 still wanted to know if language use is imaginative language – they then asked if it is *manatetshapuo* (aspects that makes the language interesting) which includes idioms, proverbs and figures of speech. One said it was a language of literature, while the other said it was grammar. However, the teachers still could not come up with an appropriate answer. The Grade 3 teacher said, “Yes, because the aim is to prepare them for Higher Grades and to enable them to read.” In School 2, the group said it was important because it helps the learners to play with language. The Grade 3 teacher agreed that it was important.

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: Teachers speculated because they did not understand what imaginative language is. However, some of them guessed that it has to do with aspects that make language interesting. (Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March)

3. Which material or prescribed books do you use to teach imaginative language?

School 1 teachers referred to novels, short stories and grammar books. One teacher said he used *Setswana sa Borre* (a very old grammar book, which is no longer produced or prescribed). The interviewer had to use a number of guiding questions to get the group to realise that imaginative language has to do with idioms, proverbs and figures of speech; and that this research focus is on idioms. After I thought they understood what idioms are, she asked if they had specific books they could use to teach idioms. One said *Masilo le Masilonyana*, which is a folk-tale and not based on idioms. Another mentioned *Noga Lentswe*, another folk-tale. She continued to give an incoherent summary of it. At the end of the summary I asked her if she could link an incident or two from the folktale with an idiom or a proverb. She answered in the negative, and what she could understand was only to ask simple comprehension questions. The Grade 3 teacher said she did not have books for teaching imaginative language. When I asked her about the readers, she said the readers did not have good Setswana words. This was surprising, because there were readers with a number of idioms. When I asked her what constituted good Setswana words, she gave examples like *ba sa re yo ba re o* (they do not say this one – more dialectal, not easy to translate); *o a dula* instead of *o a nna* (she or he sits, and not stay), which are more Sesotho-like.

Both schools and the Grade 3 teachers agreed that they did not have any prescribed books to guide them in the teaching of idioms, since they were merely supplied with ready-made lesson plans by a coach who comes from the Department of Education. I asked if they meant that they did not teach idioms because, according to them, they (idioms) were not stated in the ready-made lesson plans. They all agreed, because according to them they were not supposed to teach anything besides what was prepared for them by the coach.

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: Teachers are not aware that idioms are supposed to be used in an everyday language that is used spontaneously even if they do not appear in the curriculum. (Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March)

4. Do you get any guidance from your Setswana subject advisor about the teaching of Setswana idioms?

Both School 1 and 2 focus groups plus the three Grade 3 teachers said they did have someone to guide them in respect of parts of the curriculum they did not understand, but nothing about the teaching of idioms. They had to faithfully follow the ready-made plans supplied by the coaches.

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: Teachers follow the prescribed plans of the coaches and do not engage their own initiative or creativity.

(Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March)

5. Are you aware that in CAPS you are supposed to teach imaginative language?

Both Schools 1 and 2 teachers did not seem to have any original CAPS documents prescribed by the Department of Basic Education. They spoke only about the ready-made lessons. They were also unaware that the content of the English and Setswana CAPS document are the same. The Grade 3 teachers said they were not aware that they had to teach idioms or imaginative language.

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: Teachers did not seem to know the content of CAPS document nor how to interpret it.

(Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)

6. If yes, on which page of the CAPS document do you get this information?

Both the School 1 and 2 the Grade 3 teachers did not know because they were not in possession of the CAPS documents.

**Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: The teachers did not know on which page of the CAPS document because they did not have any CAPS document in all the five Grades.
(Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)**

7. Will you select the types of imaginative language that you will teach to Grade 3 learners? (if you are a Grade 3 teacher).

The Grade 3 teacher in School 1 said she might know how to select if the idioms appeared in the policy document. I asked what she would do if they did not appear in the policy document. She said she might teach them in passing. The Grade 3 teachers in School 2 said they would teach what the coach told them to teach.

**Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: Teachers seemed to be channelled by what the coach from the Department of Education and Training instruct them to teach. This kills the teacher's initiative and creativity.
(Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)**

8. If not, which grade do you teach and how do you go about selecting the types of imaginative language you teach in your grade?

School 1 teachers gave the traditional methods of teaching, for example: a) *Neela diane tsa mafoko a a latelang* (give idioms using the following words); b) *Feleletsa diane tse di latelang mme fa o feditse o di tlhalose* (complete the following proverbs, then give their explanation). When I repeated the question because the answer was irrelevant, one teacher said 'from easy to difficult'. The group could still not come up with a relevant answer. The Grade 6 teacher said the learners should have learnt the idioms from Grade 4. The question is, how sure is the Grade 6 teacher that the Grade 4 teacher taught the learners idioms? This confirms the rationale I gave in Chapter 1. The Grade 3 teacher said she would take the learners' age into consideration and teach them simple idioms to complex ones. When I asked how she differentiated these two types, she said simple idioms are short and complex

ones are long. The examples sound more like proverbs. Idioms are generally short. The School 2 teachers said they would teach idioms based on animals that they know. It seems the teachers were confusing idioms with proverbs, because most proverbs use animals. The Grade 3 teachers in this group said they did not teach idioms because they were afraid to deviate from the ready-made lessons.

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: The teachers confused the selecting of the idioms that are at the level of their Grades with the traditional method of teaching idioms mentioned in Chapter 2. (Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)

9. Which specific imaginative language do you teach in the grade you teach?

All the teachers in School 1 said they did not teach idioms at all. The Grade 3 teacher also stated that she did not teach idioms. In School 2 one of the teachers said that she taught figures of speech incidentally and gave '*Go tlhoa tsebe*' (to listen attentively) as an example. The example is an idiom, but the teacher referred to the example as a figure of speech. The Grade 3 teachers in this group said they did not know.

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: Some of the teachers could not distinguish between idioms and figures of speech. One teacher also mentioned that they were difficult and were only taught at high school level while another teacher said they only explained them in passing (accidental learning). Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)

10. Do you think that idioms form part of imaginative language?

The School 1 teachers asked what idioms are – after the 10th question. This was a little discouraging at that stage; evidently they still did not understand what idioms are. The Grade 3 teacher answered in the affirmative, because learners should know Setswana (but she said nothing about language proficiency), which they learn at home. The teacher gave examples like the use of sounds that are not acceptable (dialectal), for example: ‘kh’ and ‘kg’ as in the words *khumo*, *khibidu* and *kgomo*. There is a tendency to use ‘*khomo*’ instead of ‘*kgomo*,’ which is a typical Sekgatla dialect. The teachers in School 2 all agreed that teaching idioms is part of preserving Setswana as an indigenous language – as part of imaginative language. The Grade 3 teachers also answered in the affirmative.

Remarks from the researcher’s diary after interviews: The teachers still guessed the answers. However, they all agreed that learners should know Setswana from home.

(Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)

If your answer is yes, give reasons for your answer.

School 1 teachers only gave examples of idioms instead of the relevant answers, for example: *O ragile lepai* (He kicked the blanket > to die); *Go tsena ka lenga la seloko* (he has disappeared) and *O iketse badimong* (he has gone to the ancestors – he is dead). The Grade 3 teacher felt she had answered this question in question 11. The School 2 teachers said they did not teach idioms – this is also another irrelevant answer.

Remarks from the researcher’s diary after interviews: The teachers seemed to have misinterpreted the question. However, the examples given by teachers in School 1 seemed to indicated that they had some idea of what idioms are.

(Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)

11. Which strategies and tactics do you use in the teaching of idioms?

One of the teachers in School 1 was of the opinion that the only way to teach idioms, especially proverbs like '*Khumo le lehuma di lala mmogo*' (riches and poverty sleep together) is by rote learning. Another teacher said the teacher must add proverbs in her or his speech when speaking. When I asked her if that was what she did, she said "incidentally". In the long run, after asking leading questions, the teachers blamed learners for speaking as they like in the street and at home. Then the teachers continued to give examples of proverbs and not of idioms. The examples of proverbs given were: 1) *Ka tlhagolela leokana, la re le gola, la ntlhaba*. 2) *Lemphorwana la bojalwa* (incomplete) 3) *Fa a sa utlwa wa manong* (incomplete). The Grade 3 teacher in School 1 had forgotten what idioms are and I had to give her an example, '*Go tlhoka tsebe*' (to be without an ear). Then the teacher used the example I gave her in a scenario of a problematic boy in class and then said, we shall say '*O tlhoka tsebe*' (he is naughty). School 2 teachers said they would use group work and ask learners to give their own idioms (what if they did not know any?). The Grade 3 teacher said they would instruct each learner to bring a proverb from home. The parents would help them and they would present the proverbs in groups. The other Grade 3 teacher did not have any strategies.

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: The question was not answered, since no teaching strategies were mentioned except the use of group work. They gave examples of how to teach proverbs rather than idioms, which are more difficult for the Grade 3 level. So they say they will ask learners to ask the parent to teach them proverbs and discuss them in class.

(Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)

12. Which methods do you use in the teaching of idioms?

School 1 focus group said they did not know, while one of the Grade 3 teachers said when she came across an idiom during a reading lesson, she explained it. School 2 teachers said they would use the question and answer method. She would ask one learner to give them a proverb about *ngwana* (child). She would then explain to learners what proverbs were and what their importance was. Another teacher said

she would start by letting them read words using cards. After that she would give them proverbs on *ngwana* and *nonyane*. They would write them on the board and she would subsequently ask them to underline the specific words. The Grade 3 teachers said they did not know because of the ready-made plans.

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: The teachers' responses to methods of teaching were that they used a question and answer method, flashcards and writing on the board with the learners identifying the correct answer.

(Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)

13. Do you regard the teaching of imaginative language as part of sustaining Setswana as an indigenous language? Give your reasons.

None of the teachers of School 1 knew what to say; instead they seemed to be repeating what I had said. I had to clarify the question. One of the teachers said it was one of the languages they spoke as they grew up and became aware of things. One teacher was not sure, but eventually agreed that they preserved the language. And the Grade 3 teachers said it was important for the learners to know about language proficiency. The teacher gave examples of language proficiency, for example, '*Phokojwe go tshela yo o dithetsenyana*' (The jackal that survives is an intelligent one). The teacher then said she would emphasise the language usage. She feels learners would remember the rich language she taught them. The School 2 teachers and the Grade 3 teachers answered positively. They believe idioms are important and they would be retained in the minds of the learners, who would teach others in turn.

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: Some of the teachers agreed that idioms are important to preserve the language and improve language proficiency. Others indicated that idioms are used so that learners can remember the rich language they spoke as they grow up.

(Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)

14. Do you use and explain idioms frequently in your everyday speech in Setswana? Explain.

School 1 teachers were honest, stating that they did not use idioms properly; and because they did not appear clearly in the curriculum and no one did any follow-up to insist that they used them, they did not teach them. The Grade 3 teacher was also honest, saying that she did not teach them because there was nothing that said they had to teach imaginative language, but she thought it was something very useful, like teaching grammar or reading. I wanted to know why the teacher did not use idioms, as they are part of everyday speaking. The teacher felt that even if they were not prescribed, she had to teach one or two.

In School 2, the teachers did not understand the question well, but one teacher said they did not. Another one wanted to know if idioms appeared on the timetable. The teacher blamed the learners and said that only the grandmas spoke idiomatic language. We ended up focussing on words like *Ba ile mmerekong*; *Ba a kolomaka* instead of *Ba ile tirong* (They have gone to work); and *Ba a phepafatsa* (They are cleaning). The researcher advised them to correct learners' language if they made dialectal mistakes, because that was how idioms could be taught too. Then one teacher said they did. Both Grade 3 teachers gave me the correct answers only when I elaborated on the questions.

Remarks from the researcher's diary after interviews: Most of the teachers seem to be intimidated by the coach from the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the ready-made lessons that they give to them. As a result, if idioms do not appear in black and white in the ready-made lessons, then they do not teach them. The fact remains that idioms should be the everyday language of the teacher in class.

(Interviews: School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013)

5.3 THEMES AND DISCUSSION OF THEMES FROM PHASE ONE

The themes and categories in Phase One are given in the following table.

Table 5.1: Summary of themes and categories: Phase One

Themes	Categories
Theme 1: Lack of understanding of policy and imaginative language	1.1 Inability to decode CAPS 1.2 Use of coaches affects teachers' creativity and interpretation of CAPS 1.3 Teachers' lack of knowledge of imaginative language
Theme 2: Idiom teaching strategies	2.1 Teachers' lack of knowledge of idioms 2.2 Teachers' lack of strategies to teach idioms in Setswana 2.3 Teachers' lack of use of idioms in everyday language
Theme 3: Sociolinguistic aspects	3.1 Use of Setswana non-standard dialect words 3.2 Use of non-standard loan-words: from English, Sesotho and Sepedi 3.3 Influence of Koine languages: Pretoria Sotho

The evidence of these themes and categories comes from the different data sources used in Phase One which have been incorporated into this analysis as well as presented in this format.

5.3.1 Theme 1: Lack of understanding of policy and imaginative language

Category 1.1: *Inability to decode CAPS*

School 1 had CAPS documents, unlike the two teachers in school 2, who did not possess any policy documents written in Setswana or English. The two teachers in School 2 had the Department of Basic Education Workbooks with ready-made lesson plans and with daily activities, which are in line with CAPS documents. For example:

On page 189 of Setswana *Puo Ya Gae: Pegelo ya Pholisi ya Bosetšhaba ya Kharikhulamo le Tlhatlhubo Mephato R-3 (CAPS)* -of 24 February 2011, the learner is expected to:

“Dirisa puo ka boikakanyetso: a dira metlae le go tlhaba dithamalakwane a dirisa modumo le segalo se se maleba.”

The English version, which is on page 155 of the English Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS, DBE, 2011) Foundation Phase Home Language Grades R-3, states that the learner: “Uses language imaginatively: tells jokes and riddles using appropriate volume and intonation.”

When I asked the Grade 3 teachers in School 1 and 2 about the above instructions in the CAPS documents, I found that teachers were not even aware that they exist. This is an indication that teachers do not know what is in their CAPS document, and it is also a confirmation that they do not know how to decode the curriculum. Another observation (School 1: 26 February 2013 and School 2: 19 March 2013) I made about the CAPS document is the fact that nothing is said about teaching idioms, proverbs, figures of speech, nor is it even suggested that idioms should be explained if the teacher comes across them during reading lessons. There are vague statements like:

“Fa go tlhagelela mafoko a mašwa kgotsa a a marara mo setlhangweng, morutabana o itsise barutwana go buisa setlhangwa ka bo bona.” English translation: If new or difficult words appear in a text, the teacher informs learners to read the text on their own. (Term 2 Lesson Plan Grade 3 Home Language: Setswana (Molteno - Gauteng Department of Education, 2013:70).

This kind of statement does not help teachers to specifically understand that they should teach imaginative language or idioms. It is not surprising that teachers even ignore idioms that are obvious in the reader.

Further evidence of teachers' misinterpretation of what imaginative language is, is clearly seen in the following statement:

“Laela barutwana go tswala matlho mme ba gopole gore ba dirile eng fa ba ne ba etetse mongwe. Ba bope setshwantsho mo menaganong ya bona ka tse ba di dirileng” English translation: Instruct the learners to close their eyes and think back

about what they did when visiting someone. They must build a picture in their minds about what they have done. This is from Term 2 Lesson Plan Grade 3 Home Language: Setswana (Molteno - Gauteng Department of Education, 2013:70).

The instruction has to do with imagination, yet not a single teacher remembered this instruction when they taught the learners using the lesson plans for the teaching of Setswana Home Language provided by the Department of Basic Education.

Category 1.2: Use of *coaches* affects teachers' creativity and interpretation of CAPS

Documents given to teachers with ready-made lessons by coaches, such as Mathematics or Life Skills, affect the teachers initiative and creativity because they are instructed by coaches to follow the ready-made lessons as they are without deviating from them.

Ready-made lessons: In School 1 teachers were provided with ready-made lesson plans for Life Skills, Mathematics and Setswana. The advantages of ready-made lessons are as follows:

- The teacher saves time because she or he does not have to prepare the lessons. The questions and answers for each lesson are already prepared for the teacher.
- The teacher is focussed on what she or he must teach every day and will not miss any topic selected by the education department to be taught in a specific grade. They will not teach what they like and ignore what they do not like or understand.

However, this type of guidance had the following disadvantages:

- The teacher does not do any thinking – her/his initiative and creativity skills are restricted. There is a tendency to follow everything to the letter without questioning. Teaching is very regimented and formulaic.

- No additions or subtractions are done. Teacher B explained that they had been assigned a coach from the Department of Education to guide them in teaching CAPS using the ready-made lessons. The coach wants everything followed as it is. The researcher noticed a number of mistakes on p 10 of the document in Setswana that neither the teacher nor the coach picked up. It also seemed as if the coach is not a Setswana mother-tongue speaker. Everything is done in a very bureaucratic way.

Mathematics documents: In School 1, the Mathematics documents are in Setswana while in School 2 the Mathematics documents are in the form of ready-made lessons in English instead of Setswana. The teacher was expected to translate the mathematical concepts as she proceeded. There was no other book or notes in Setswana. When I enquired about the accuracy of the terms, teacher B and C informed me that the coach had given them a list of terms. However, teacher B and C complained that sometimes the examiner who set the question papers at the district level used different terms than those provided in the list provided by the Department of Basic Education. This led to confusion, code-switching or code-mixing, which affects Setswana language proficiency.

The coach comes every month to check if they are doing the exact content, questions and answers activities worked out for a specific day of each month. They are not allowed to deviate from the content, specific activities nor from the questions and answers even if the answers are incorrect. CAPS seems to be encouraging rote learning on both the teacher and the learner's side. This affected the research, because teachers did not know what idioms are nor even identify them in the readers that had idioms.

I also observed that during the teaching of Setswana Grade 3 as imaginative language, teachers and learners used loan-words, code-mixing, code-switching, Pretoria Sotho and dialectal words which are not used in standard Setswana. The examples given in Theme 3 below from the general use of Setswana were observed during reading, speaking and semi-structured interviews. They were collected from the learners, individual teachers of the classes that were observed and also through observation during interviews with the focus groups.

Category 1.3: Teachers lack of knowledge of imaginative language

During reading I observed that the stories used in all classes had a number of idioms and incidents that lent themselves to the use of idioms, but teachers did not recognise the idioms or explain them to learners. It is also interesting to observe that the ready-made lessons on reading are not based on the prescribed readers in both School 1 and School 2. Perhaps if that had been the case, the idioms appearing in the prescribed readers would have been addressed.

During the teaching of listening, reading and writing skills, I was informed by Teachers A, B and C that they allocated time to the teaching of listening, reading and writing skills as follows as per the CAPS document:

- Listening: 10 minutes
- Reading: 15 minutes
- Writing: 15 minutes

Teacher A in School 1 followed the allocated times to the letter, even if learners did not fully understand what was taught. The teacher did not have an opportunity to do: i) reinforcement of the lesson; ii) revision and iii) oral questioning to ascertain if the learners understood everything that had been taught. The learners learn like parrots, without using their thinking skills, which destroys their initiative and creativity. However, pg. 23 of the ready-made lesson provided by the coach and used by teachers B and C states that:

“Fa o na le barutwana ba ba neng ba sa fetsa, ba letle ba fetse pele ba dira tiro e nngwe” DBE (DBE Doc. 2012:6). English translation: If you have learners who did not finish, allow them to finish first before they do the DBE work.

This is in contrast with teacher A, who does not have ready-made lessons and for whom a coach interprets CAPS allocation of time in teaching the different language skills. She dutifully stopped the lessons after 15 minutes and started with a new aspect even if the learners had not finished.

5.3.2 Theme 2: Idiom teaching strategies

Category 2.1: Teachers lack of knowledge of idioms

School 1 and School 2 in total had 28 stories in Setswana. Some of the stories had idioms as titles, others had either idioms used in them or depicted incidents that lent themselves to the use of idioms. However, no teacher in the selected schools explained them. Only 10 examples of incidents in the book that gave room for constructing idioms were given, together with the explanations of idioms that appeared in the reader but were not explained by the teacher.

Incidents that lent themselves to the use of idioms from the reader: The teacher could easily construct an idiom from an incident in a story that is linked to a specific idiom. However, teachers did not do that. See the examples in Table 1 below:

Table 5.2: Idioms from the Readers

Incident from the Reader	Possible idiom to be used
Title: Reader <i>Toro ya Pule</i> (Pule's dream)	<i>Go ijesa ditoro</i> (to dream impossible dreams)
Pg 2 <i>Botlhe ba reeditse pina</i> (They are all listening to the song)	<i>Go tlhwaya tsebe</i> (to listen attentively)
Pg 3 <i>Nnyaa! Mme, batho batla mo tshega</i> (No! Mother, people will laugh at him)	<i>Go ja mongwe ditshego</i> (to laugh at someone)
Title: <i>Dikgakgamatso tsa Tebogo</i> (Tebogo's wonders) Pg 7 <i>Naledi o dula mo diropeng tsa mmagwe</i> (Naledi sits in her mother's lap)	<i>Go fara ngwana</i> (to put a child in your lap)
Title: <i>Mpolelele ka gaTeropo</i> (Tell me about town) Pg 16 <i>O etetse ntsalaagwe</i> (She/he is visiting her/his cousin)	<i>O jetse ntsalaagwe nala</i> (She/he is visiting her/his cousin) <i>Go ja nala</i> (to visit)
Pg 16 <i>Modise o dula mo teropong</i> (Modise stays in town)	<i>Go dula ka ditsebe</i> (not to listen or hear)
Pg 20 <i>O na le phaposi ya gagwe ya go robala</i> (He has his own bedroom)	<i>Go isa marapo go beng</i> (taking the bones to the owners/ meaning to sleep)
Pg 13 <i>A mo apeela dijo tse di monate</i> (to cook her/ him tasty food)	<i>A mo apeela dijo tse di rokotsang mathe.</i> <i>Go rokotsa mathe</i> (to have your mouth filled with saliva)
Pg 2 <i>E e lelang saerine</i> (one ringing a siren)	<i>Go lelela teng</i> (to cry inside/not showing your feelings when your hurt)
Pg 7 <i>Peba e ne e nametse (pagame) tau</i> (The mouse had ridden the lion)	<i>Go pagama naka tsa kukama</i> (to be in big trouble)

Idioms that appeared in the Readers but were not explained as idioms: There were a number of idioms appearing in the readers that were not explained by the teachers. In some cases, the idioms are the titles of the stories that were read in Grade 3 Setswana classes. (See Table 3 below).

Table 5.3: Idioms from the reader that were not explained

Idioms from the Reader that were not explained	Idiom and the meaning of the idiom
Title: Reader <i>Go thuba lebelo</i> (to run a race)	<i>Go thuba lebelo > Fa mongwe a taboga mo dikgaisanong tsa lobelo</i> (to take part in race)
Pg 2 <i>Mmutla o o mabela</i> (The proud hare)	<i>Go nna mabela > Fa mongwe a ikgogomosa</i> (to be proud)
Pg 4 <i>Mmutla o ne o repile</i> (The hare was relaxing)	<i>Go repa > Ke fa mongwe a iketlile</i> (when someone is relaxing)
Title: <i>Toropo ya rona</i> (Our Town) Pg 1 <i>Mapodisi a a re babalela</i> (These police protect us)	<i>Go babalela > Fa o sireletsa</i> (to protect)
Pg 3 <i>Batimamolelo ba nonofile</i> (The fire-fighters are fit)	<i>Go nonofa > Fa mongwe a le thata</i> (to be fit)
Pg 4 <i>Ba namola batho mo dikagong tse di tukang.</i> (They rescue people from burning buildings)	<i>Go namola > Fa mongwe a falotsa batho</i> (to rescue)
Title: Bookelo (Hospital) Pg 2 <i>Balwetse ba a bobola</i> (The patients are sick)	<i>Go bobola > Fa mongwe a lwala</i> (to be sick)
Title: <i>Tau le peba</i> (The lion and the mouse) Pg 3 <i>O na le leano</i> (He has a plan)	<i>Go nna le leano > Ke fa motho a na le tsela e nngwe ya go rarabolola bothata.</i> (to have a plan)
Pg 4 <i>Ke a go golola</i> (I am releasing you)	<i>Go golola > Ke fa mongwe a tlogela sengwe se se neng se tshwerwe gore se tsamaye.</i> (to release)
Pg 8 <i>O mpolaisa ditsebe</i> (You are hurting my ears)	<i>Go bolaisa ditsebe > Ke fa mongwe a tlhodia thata mme a dira modumo</i> (to make the ears sore from too much noise)
Pg 6 <i>Mmaagwe a tsholola dikeledi</i> (His mother shed tears)	<i>Go tsholola dikeledi > Ke fa mongwe a lela thata</i> (to shed tears)
Pg 7 <i>Gompieno o tsaya leeto ka setimela</i> (Today she/he undertakes a journey by train)	<i>Go tsaya leeto > Ke fa mongwe a ya go eta mme a tsamaya ka setimela</i> (to undertake a journey by train).

Category 2.2: Teachers' lack of strategies to teach idioms in Setswana

Teachers did not have any strategies for teaching idioms. The 16 questions put to teachers in School 1 and School 2 during the interviews as well as to the Grade 4, 5, 6 and 7 Setswana teachers used in the focus group confirmed that they did not know what idioms are. Due to this lack of knowledge of idioms, I could not identify any strategies used by the teachers in the teaching of idioms; they did not recognise them even if the title of the reader was an idiom.

Life Skills textbooks (*Buka ya Bokgoni jwa Botshelo*): The Life Skills textbook in School 1 is written in good Setswana. The language is simple and straightforward. Where Setswana terminology lacks, the English terms are adapted to suit the orthography of Setswana. The words therefore pass as standardised loan-words. However, there was a lesson on birthdays with the birthday wheel and the birthday months written in English instead of Setswana. In most African cultures, a baby is not allowed to be taken out of the house until after a certain period. Here the idiom *Go ntshetsa ngwana kwa ntle* (to take the child out) is appropriate. The teachers in both schools did not use idioms when teaching Life Skills, yet Life Skills teaching goes hand in hand with specific values in life, as indicated above.

Learners' class-work books: The sample of learners' class-work books in Schools 1 and 2 had no language errors. I observed that the learners' workbook in Life Skills, of 20 Tlhakole 2013 (20 February 2013) had activities on different facial expressions and the following words appeared: *Tlhontse* (sad) and *Motlotlo* (proud of). These words were part of idioms, which the teacher did not explain. For example:

- *Go tlhonya* > *Ke fa motho a sa itumela* (to be sad)
- *Go nna motlotlo* > *Ke fa mongwe a itumeletse go atlega mo go sengwe* (to be proud of oneself).

The class work activity of 15 Motsheganong 2013 (15 April 2013) had to do with drawing an ant and labelling its parts. There was a head (*tlhogo*) and a leg (*lonao*) of

an ant which had to be labelled. One of the techniques for teaching idioms creatively is by using body parts. For example:

- *Go nna mmalonao > Ke motho yo o ratang go tsamaya thata* (someone who gallivants a lot).
- *Go imelwa ke tlhogo > Ke fa mongwe a tlhabiwa ke ditlhong fa a se na go dira selo se se maswe* (to be embarrassed).

Category 2.3: Teachers' failure to use idioms in everyday language

During Teacher B's reading lesson, the teacher sort of explained one idiom accidentally. She was teaching the sound *tsw-* in the word *botswa*. She explained that *Go nna botswa* means to be lazy. To her, this idiom was an everyday term, but she did not recognize it as an idiom. This was the only example that the researcher could identify in School 1 and School 2.

5.3.3 Theme 3: Sociolinguistics aspects

Category 3.1: Use of Setswana non-standard dialect words

Setswana has seven dialects. Standard Setswana has been formed out of the seven dialects, but not all the words from the seven dialects have been standardised. The following examples were used mostly by the teachers and learners during lesson observation and even during interviews:

- *Ge koko a ...> **Fa** nkoko/mmemogolo a...* (When grandmother ...)
- *O a ka ..> **Yo o** ka..* (One who can..)
- *Motho o mongwe > Motho **yo** mongwe.*
- *Tla re bueng > **Tlayang** re bueng.* (Come let us talk)
- *Ke palelwa ke go bala la bona? > Ke palelwa ke go **buisa** lo a bona?* (I am unable to read, can you see/notice that?)
- *Le le tlhogonno > Lo **losego** / Lo **letlhogonolo***
- *Ira ka bonako instead of **Dira** ka bonako..*
- *Bana ba le o mongwe ke ge a ntse a re > Bana ba le **yo** mongwe ke **fa ba** ntse ba re*

- *O nang le botho o tlo* > **Yo o nang le botho o tlike** go (The one with humanity will)
- *Le ha bua* > **Le fa a bua**

Category 3.2: Use of non-standard loan-words from English, Sesotho and Sepedi

Borrowed words/loan-words: Kruger (1965:6) is of the opinion that loan-words are words which are not indigenous to a specific language, but which are used by the speakers of that language in such a way that speakers are no longer aware of the fact that these words are foreign; they have become part and parcel of that language. The research findings of Malimabe (1990:26-29) indicated that students whose essays and speech contain a high rate of standardised and non-standardised loan-words are students whose parents are both not Batswana by birth and who live in the cosmopolitan areas. Where one parent or both are Batswana by birth, there is less use of loan-words. Here are some of the examples from the classroom observations:

Standardised borrowed words

- *Borotho or senkgwe* (bread)
- *Sekolo* (school)
- *Lebenkele/mabenkele* (winkel/winkels –Afrikaans)
- *Dikomiki* (koppies – Afrikaans/cups-English)
- *Dibuka* (books)
- *Sepetlele/bookelo* (Hospital)

Borrowed words which are not standardised

- *Klase* > *Phaposiborutelo* (classroom)
- *Lebolomo* > *Sethunya* (flower)
- *Seneifi* > *Motsoko* (snuff)
- *Freitaga* > *Labotlhano* (Friday)
- *Lesibitshe* > *monamone* (sweet)

Nontololwane (1992:28) defines code-mixing as “the use of one or more languages (multilingual) for consistent transfer of linguistic units from one language to the other.” Code-mixing occurs when a person uses words or sentences from more than one language, dialect or language register during conversation, whereas code-switching occurs “when a bilingual speaker switches between two languages in conversational interaction” (Romaine, 1989:110). In this case, the speaker moves with much ease from one language to the other to express or communicate. To Kieswetter (1995:22), such alternation from one language to the other is characterised by “the use of words which have not been phonologically and morphologically integrated.” This means that such words will still retain their original phonological and morphological patterns. In other words, even though used in conjunction with words from another language, such words do not adopt the phonological and morphological patterns of the language of the speaker.

Table 5.4: Examples of code-mixing

Code-mixing	Standard Setswana	English translation
Ee, ke big book , se ke sa reading , ba re se dirise big book because ke a thing e re e sharang .	<i>Ee, ke Buka e Kgolo; e e leng ya go buisa; re laetswe go dirisa Buka e Kgolo gonne e le selo se se tlhakanelwang)</i>	Yes, it is the Big Book, which is for reading; we were advised to use the Big Book because it is for sharing.
<i>Tse dinnyane ke tse re di dirisang</i> for digroups .	<i>Tse dinnye ke tse re di dirisang mo ditlhopheng.</i>	The small ones are used for groups.
Thirteen , ke twelve e ne e le Mother’s Day	<i>Lesometharo, ke somepedi e ne e le Letsasti la Bomme.</i>	Thirteen, it is twelve and it was Mother’s Day.
<i>Ka mogare go na le dimonamone</i> le ice cream le bag .	<i>Ka fa teng go na le dimonamone le bebetsididi le kgetsana.</i>	Inside there are sweets and ice cream and bags.
<i>Ene ba counta</i> gape forward and backward , ee.	<i>Gape ba balela kwa pele le kwa morago, ee.</i>	Yes they counted forward and backward.
<i>Ba ka be ba e fa</i> thirty minutes at least - nyana.	<i>Ba ka bo ba e neela /abela metsotswana e e masometharo fela.</i>	They should at least give it thirty minutes.
<i>Eyang ko toilet</i> ka pele.	<i>Eyang kwa ntlwaneng ka bonako.</i>	Go to the toilet quickly.
<i>Ke segaabo; ke</i> culture ya gaabo.	<i>Ke segaabo; ke setso sa gaabo.</i>	It is his culture, it is his culture.
Ee, dankie!	<i>Ee, ke a leboga.</i>	Yes, thank you.
<i>Kefilwe, tsaya</i> blackboard ego.	<i>Kefilwe, tsaya letlapakwalelo /patintšhoko eo.</i>	<i>Kefilwe</i> , take that blackboard.

Category 3.3: Influence of Koine languages: Pretoria Sotho

The following are the findings of the influence of Pretoria Sotho on standard Setswana during individual and focus groups interviews.

Table 5.5: Influence of Pretoria Sotho on standard Setswana

Pretoria Sotho	Standard Setswana	English translation
O ja phensele wa itse mara .	O ja phensele fela o a itse?	You eat a pencil, you know that?
Hei ke sono fela ke founela boausi.	<i>Heela! Go tlhomola pelo, ke ya go leletsa bomogolole mogala.</i>	Hey! It is a sad situation; I am going to phone my sisters.
Mama Onicca re bone moshimane a tswa ka mo ntlung.	Mme Onicca re bone mosimane a tswa mo ntlong.	Mother Onicca, we saw a boy coming out of the house.
Meme wa me ke Mama Onicca.	<i>Morutabana wa me ke Morutabana Onicca.</i>	My teacher is teacher Onicca.
O'ske wa buela kaspeeti thata.	<i>O se ke wa buela ka bonako thata.</i>	Do not speak too fast.
E bile ne a sa mphale mara bona kajeno ke moporesitente.	<i>Le fa a ne a sa nkgaise fela bona gompieno ke moporesidente.</i>	Even though she/he was not better than me, today she/he is a president.
Wa nkgobatsa.	<i>O nkutlwiswa botlhoko.</i>	You are hurting me.
Ya papa.	<i>A re utlwe mosimane?</i>	Yes, my boy?
Ke go etsa eng mara wena o worse.	<i>Fela wena ke go dira eng? O feteletse.</i>	But what am I doing to you? You are worse.
Kana re kreya mamepe ko kae?	<i>Kana re bona mamepe kwa kae?</i>	By the way, where do we find honey?

Influence of Sesotho and Sepedi on standard Setswana: Since the research took place around multilingual townships around Gauteng province and North-West province, most speakers of Setswana around these areas are influenced by Sepedi or Sesotho words (Malimabe, 1990). Batswana adapted fast to Western civilisation as compared to the Bapedi. Setswana, Sepedi and Sesotho are sister languages; and where they are all spoken in a specific area it would be difficult for a non-native speaker of any of them to know from which specific language a particular word originates.

Sesotho and Setswana

- *E ka ba* > *E ka bo* (it should be)
- *Le na* > *Le* (this one)
- *Lebese* > *Mašwi* (milk)
- *O nka* > *O tsaya* (she/he takes)
- *Ke fa go etsagala eng?* > *Ke fa go diragala eng?* (It is when what is happening?)

Sepedi and Setswana

- *O nyaka* > *O batla* (you want)
- *Aowa!* > *Nnyaa!* (No!)
- *Motho yo o tswafang* > *Motho yo o botswa* (a lazy person)
- *Mme ke motswadi* > *Mme ke motsadi* (Mother is a parent)

5.4 CONCLUSION OF PHASE ONE

The findings of the data collected from the classroom observations, semi-structured interviews and document analysis and evaluated during Phase One of the research in 2013 are summarised as follows:

- Teachers were not aware that imaginative language includes idioms in the CAPS documents.
- Some readers even had idioms as titles, but the teacher never emphasised any of these idioms during the reading period, let alone several idioms that occurred in the readers.
- There were no strategies or methods of teaching for making learners aware of idioms in their daily speech or the teacher's daily language in class.
- The CAPS ready-made Workbooks did touch on language proficiency and indicated how it could be used by teachers. However, the teachers seemed to be unaware of anything concerning the teaching of imaginative language in Setswana as a Home Language.

In view of the above findings, it was deemed fit to formulate an idiom intervention programme to assist Setswana teachers to teach idioms creatively, and it would be called *Setswana idioms in picture-form*. I successively implemented the programme as Phase Two of the study and collected data for further analysis. The detailed idiom programme, data collection and analysis of Phase Two (2014) is discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF PHASE TWO

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the data analysis of the implementation of the programme titled *Setswana idioms in picture form* and the effect of this intervention in teaching idioms as imaginative language to Grade 3 Setswana learners. The analysis of the implementation of the programme, which took place in 2014, formed Phase Two of this study.

Firstly I sat with each Grade 3 teacher and went over the transcripts of the data collected in 2013 during Phase One. I made the teachers aware of the findings, which were the following:

- Teachers were not aware that imaginative language included idioms in the CAPS (DBE, 2011) documents.
- Some readers even had idioms as titles but the teacher never emphasised any of these idioms during the reading period, let alone several idioms that occurred in the readers.
- There were no strategies or teaching methods for making learners aware of idioms in their daily speech or the teacher's daily language in class.
- The CAPS (DBE, 2011) ready-made workbooks did touch on language proficiency (usage of idioms in daily communication) and indicated how it could be used by teachers. However, the teachers seemed to be unaware of anything concerning the teaching of imaginative language in Setswana as a Home Language.

As a result of these findings in Phase One, I informed the teachers of the need to design and implement an idiom-picture programme. The aim of the idiom programme was to build on the theory of teaching and learning, at the same time empowering teachers with the knowledge of idioms and the different strategies they could use when teaching idioms to stimulate their initiative and creativity in teaching idioms

(see Figure 3.2). None of the three teachers knew that idioms are part of imaginative language. Secondly I explained the programme implementation process. I made the teachers aware that anecdotes would be used as part of practising and understanding what idioms are. I then demonstrated this teaching strategy to each teacher with my own selected idioms in their classes. Thereafter the teachers were expected to present their own anecdotes or other strategies to introduce Setswana idioms as part of imaginative language. Anecdotes are true life stories that are used to demonstrate a specific message. These were used to give the teachers a clear understanding of what idioms are and at the same time empower them with one of the strategies they could use to teach idioms. This was followed by reading from prescribed readers by the teachers. Then a set of 16 idioms in pictures and in colour I had developed was given to each teacher to use in their preparation to implement the programme. I did not provide the teachers with any strategy for using the programme; the aim was to see if the teachers could come up with their own strategies.

I collected data through video recording of myself as presenter and of each teacher presenting the idioms for practice. I also used this data collection method during reading before they taught the Setswana idioms using the programme. The presentations by the teachers were observed and the teaching strategies and the way the learners decoded the idiom pictures were analysed. In this chapter, when analysing my observations, I give excerpts of dialogues that came from lesson presentations of the anecdotes I taught and those of the teachers to give an idea of the strategies used by the teachers to teach idioms as well as the language used by both teachers and learners. The excerpts also showed how the learners struggled to conceptualise idioms from anecdotes, readers and from the idioms in picture form.

The anecdotes by myself and the teachers as well as the reading lessons were used as a form of practice for the teachers and the learners to get a good idea of what idioms are, how to teach idioms and how the learners understand the teaching of idioms.

6.2 DEMONSTRATION OF TEACHING SETSWANA IDIOMS USING ANECDOTES

In all the three Grade 3 classes, I taught a minimum of five idioms. I started by asking learners if they had observed how the language used by their elders differs from theirs. I then asked them if they knew who the people they regarded as their elders are. The reason I chose to use anecdotes was to introduce a strategy to teach idioms and to ensure active involvement of the learners in the lesson. The teachers assumed the role of silent participants while also learning what idioms are through the anecdote strategy that I was using. The teachers and learners as collaborators were empowered through learning and understanding what idioms are. I was acting as a facilitator to encourage the learners to think beyond the imaginative descriptions of the anecdotes in order to see how they link the anecdotes to the idioms. The anecdotes I used in the lessons were at the level of Grade 3 learners, and they could identify with them. This teaching strategy was empowering the learners to solve problems and learn from the known to the unknown, at the same time building theory for learning idioms.

When introducing the first idiom (*Go nesa pula*) during this lesson, I started by greeting the learners and also introducing myself as Mme Ramagoshi to make the learners feel at ease with me. The interaction between me and the learners took place through facilitation by probing the understanding and decoding of Setswana idioms by learners. The length of facilitation for each idiom took me longer than I had anticipated since it was the first time the learners were exposed to idioms as imaginative language (see Appendix D CD1) for the length of the introduction of only one idiom). During my facilitation process when introducing the idiom: *Go nesa pula* (to make rain fall), the learners could not imagine a grandfather making rain fall. I continued probing the learners for the correct answer and guided them towards an idiom by asking the learners: *A rremogolo tota tota a ka nesa pula?* (Can grandfather really make rain fall?). The learners' response was that this was impossible. I confirmed the answer as true because only God can make rain fall. At this stage I started leading the learners from the abstract aspects of the idiom to the concrete, situating the idiom in its context, so that it can make sense to the learners. The following is an example of how I directed the the learners from the abstract to the

concrete aspects of the idiom, of grandfather making rain fall to an understanding of how an idiom is derived from the grandfather use of this idiom:

I said: *Ke Modimo. Jaanong rremogolo ena a re o ne a itumetse fa a utlwa dikgang tse. Go raya gore o utlwile dikgang tse di ntseng jang?*

(Researcher: It is God. Now grandfather says he was happy when he heard this news. What kind of news did he hear?). And the learners response was: *Tse di monate*. (Good news). I further said: *Tse di monate. Ka jalo ga a re “Ka nesa pula” O raya fa go diragala eng?* (Good news. Therefore, when he says “I made the rain to fall” What is happening?). The learners responded by positively saying: *O ne a itumetse*. (He was happy).

From the above introduction of the first idiom to the learners, I observed that from the learners’ responses, it is evident that they struggled with the idea of a grandfather making the rain to fall since this is a natural phenomenon only made possible by God. Learners had to move from the concrete to the abstract aspects of what an idiom is through my guidance to see an idiom in the statement of the grandfather saying *Ka nesa pula* (I made rain fall). This cognitive process needed the teacher’s guidance through questions to lead learners through processes of understanding the concept idioms (Researcher’s Diary: School 1: 24 February and School 2: 17 March 2014).

The second idiom that I introduced was *Go supa letsatsi* (To point at the sun – meaning: to refuse to do something that someone asks one to do). I asked the learners: What will they think of the grandmother when they just hear her saying “*Ka le supa le le fa letsatsi*” (I pointed at the sun while it is here – meaning: I refused point blank)? I commented to the learners that if they paid attention to the language the elders use, they must have heard one of their elders making this statement. I said this to make learners aware that idioms are not taught only in the classroom, that they are there in everyday language spoken in the community if they listen to what they say and how they say it. I continued to guide the learners again through questioning and asked them where the sun was. They all responded that it is in the sky. I probed further, trying to lead them by asking them whether they ever pointed at

the sun, and why they would do that (see Appendix D CD1 for the different answers that the learners gave and how long the learners took when guessing why the grandmother was pointing at the sun). Below follows an example of how I eventually introduced the idiom to the learners (from the abstract to the concrete) in this manner:

I said: *Go siame! Bautswabana. Ka gongwe a ka go raya a re: "Mosetsanyana tlaya ke go fe dimonamone. Tlaya o pagame mo sejanageng ke go ise gae. Fa o fitlha kwa gae, o bolelela mme wa gago le nkoko wa gago se se diragetseng. O re go ne go na le motho yo o neng a re o palame sejanaga sa gagwe a re o tla go fa dimonamone. O bo o re: Ka bo ke le supa le le fa" Go raya eng?*

English translation: (Good answer! Child kidnappers. Maybe he can say to you: Little girl, come so that I can give you sweets. Come and get into the car so that I can take you home. When you get home you tell your mother and grandmother what happened. You say there was someone who wanted you to get into his car and he offered you sweets. Then you tell them that you said: I then pointed at it while it (sun) is here. What does it mean?). The learners responded by saying: *O ganne* (You refused).

I noticed that the learners were still struggling with the concept of an idiom by imagining a person just standing and pointing at the sun for no apparent reason. They started guessing the answer by giving the opposite of the answer to the first idiom. (Researcher's Diary: School 1: 24 February and School 2:17 March 2014.)

The third idiom aroused interest and as I described the scenario related to the idiom by saying: *Ke mang yo o ka reng o ne a utlwa batsadi kgotsa bagolo mo motseng ba bua ba re "Ke fitlhetse Mosidi le Pule ba ja Mmapule direthe. Direthe di fa kae? Ke mang yo o ka ntshupetsang gore di fa kae. Direthe di fa kae? Ee!.(baitluti ba supa direthe tsa bona) Go ja direthe! Akanya batho ba le babedi ba kopane ba gaketse ba ja direthe tsa ga Mmapule. A go a kgonagala?*

English translation: Who can say they have heard parents or elder people in the village speak and say "We found Mosidi, Pule and friends and Mmapule eating

Mapitso's heels" Where are the heels? Who can show me where they are. Yes! (The learners pointed at their heels). To eat heels. Can you imagine two people busy eating Mmapule's heels? Is it possible?). The response from the learners was: *Nnyaa!* (No!). I probed further and said: *Goreng go sa kgonege?* (Why is it not possible?) The learners' response was: *Ka gone ke motho* (because it is a human being).

I confirmed the learners' observation that a human being cannot eat another human (except in cannibalism). I then continued to explain while integrating through questioning skills what is happening if we say *Go ja motho direthe* (to gossip about someone). One learner explained the idiom as meaning to whisper in someone's ear. I then demonstrated through roleplay that whispering in someone's ear does not necessarily mean I am gossiping about someone. I can do so if I do not want other people to hear what I am saying about the person. However, if I am gossiping about someone, I am talking bad about the person, which is not good behaviour or manners. I then explained to make the idiom clearer that *Go ja motho direthe* means speaking bad about someone.

During the presentation of this idiom, I could notice that the learners were able to answer teasing questions correctly even though they could not imagine another human being eating another one's heels. After demonstrating the difference between whisper and gossip, the learners were able to grasp the meaning of the idiom. This idiom was understood much more quickly than the first two.

(Researcher's Diary: School 1: 24 February and School 2:17 March 2014).

Since I planned to introduce five idioms, I continued to introduce and teach the other two idioms using the same strategies outlined above. The anecdotes helped the teachers and the learners to have a better idea and understanding of Setswana idioms. The other two idioms that were used as anecdotes are the following:

- *Go nna mmalonawana/rralonawana > Ke motho yo o tsamayang thata.* (A mother/father of a foot – meaning someone who walks a lot). Someone who goes from one place to another - who is everywhere. It means a person who gallivants.

- *Go rothisa mmutla madi > Ke go ntsha sephiri se o neng o sa tshwanela go se bua.* (To let blood drop from the hare). It means telling someone a secret that was not supposed to be told. An equivalent in English is “Letting the cat out of the bag”.

The learners were able to give appropriate responses only when guided by me. (Researcher’s Diary: School 1: 24 February and School 2:17 March 2014).

6.3 INTRODUCTION OF IDIOMS BY THE GRADE 3 TEACHERS

After my demonstration of how to teach idioms using anecdotes, I requested the teachers to teach at least five idioms of their own choice using their own methods. The aim was to observe if the teachers understood my demonstration of teaching idioms as imaginative language. The following is a description of what transpired during these lessons:

Teacher A started by role-playing the first idiom she was introducing to the learners. She then went to one learner and whispered in her ear and continued to more than three learners whispering in their ears. They all giggled every time she whispered into their ears. The learners responded by saying: *O tsamaya a seba* (She goes about gossiping). The teacher said: *Ke boleletse Titi gore a se ke a bolelela ope sepe fa ke sena go mo sebela sengwe, fela o ne a tsamaya a bolelela batho botlhe* (I told *Titi* not to tell anyone about what I whispered to her, but she went on and told everyone what I told her). The teacher then introduced an idiom that is relevant to the role-playing. She said: *Go akga loleme* (to throw your tongue around). The teacher explained this idiom as: *Fa motho a tsamaya a tlatsatsa maaka ka batho ba bangwe* (It is when someone goes around spreading lies about other people). Thus such a person could also be referred to as *Mmamaaka* (Mother of lies). The teacher continued with the same role-play, but used it as an anecdote. She said: *Fa ke sena go bolelela Titi sengwe, ke ne ka mmolelela gore a se ke a bolelela ope. Fela ena o ne a bolelela Riri le ba bangwe. Ke ne ka mmolelela gore a se ke a bolelela ope. Ke sephiri sa me le ena. Go raya gore “A se ke a rothisa mmutla madi”.* (After I told *Titi* something, I told her not to tell anyone. But she told Riri and the others. I told her not to tell anyone. It was our secret. It means she must not “let a drop of blood fall from

the hare/rabbit”). *Go rothisa mmutla madi* is an idiom where you let someone swear that they will not tell anyone the secret you have told them.

The teacher introduced another another idiom by saying: *Kiri o tshotse namune. E ka mo kgetsaneng ya gagwe. Fa a re o a e ntsha o fitlhela e se teng. E kae? Namune e nyeletse. Namune ga e teng e nyeletse. Fa a sa e fitlhele mongwe a e utswitse, ra re Namune e medile maoto. Go mela maoto ke fa sengwe se nyeletse.* (Kiri has an orange. It is inside her schoolbag. When she tried to take it out, she found that it has disappeared. If she does not find it and someone stole it, we say “The orange grew feet” - meaning it has disappeared).

The teacher ended up by explaining the last idiom which she asked the learners by saying: *Fa motho a re o ntse ka ditsebe, a mme go a kgonagala? Se se raya gore ga a reetse.* (If someone says you are staying with your ears, is it possible? This means that you do not listen). The teacher then explained that *Go nna ka ditsebe* (to stay with your ears) means you do not listen or you are not attentive. The teacher then did revision by asking questions about the idioms she had introduced to the learners.

From my observation, Teacher A understood what idioms are. She managed to use role-play and different anecdotes to make the learners to understand the idioms very well. She emphasised the idioms by asking questions based on the idioms she has taught, but using other forms of explanation. One could see that the learners understood what the teacher was teaching them. The teacher and the learners understood what idioms are (Researcher’s Diary: School 1: 25 February 2014).

Teacher B

The teacher started the lesson by repeating the same idiom I used previously in the anecdote which is: *Go supa letsatsi* meaning to refuse. The learners could remember my anecdotes and the correct interpretation of the idiom. This was a good introduction because she linked it to previous knowledge. The teacher then proceeded with her own idiom asking the learners what *Go fitlha thari* means. She continued to say *Go fitlha thari mo sekolong e le kgale re tsene.* By adding – *mo sekolong go le kgale re tsene* (at the school long after we have arrived), the teacher

gave a cue to the learners. This helped them to immediately understand the idiom to mean being late at school. The teacher then repeatedly asked, if I say *O tlile thari mo sekolong* what it means. One learner answered and said: *Go tla llata*. The teacher immediately corrected the learner that we do not say *llata* in Setswana but we say *O tlile morago ga nako*. She pasted the flashcard with the idiom and the answer and emphasised the idiom taught.

My observation from this presentation of an idiom was that *Go fitlha thari* is the idiom and the answer she gave was *Go fitlha morago ga nako*. It was explained in (2.2) that Setswana idioms are formulaic and start with the prefix *Go-*. By giving an answer starting with the same prefix, she did not assist the learners to understand idioms and their meaning in written form. The teacher did this with all the idioms she taught. This is incorrect, because it negates the formulaic nature of Setswana idioms. It will also confuse the learners, because I emphasised the fact that all Setswana idioms start with the prefix *Go-*. Furthermore, on the flashcards I provided the teachers with the meanings of the idioms did not start with the prefix *Go-*. I would have written *Ke fa motho/mongwe a fitlhile morago ga nako* (It is when someone arrived after time/When someone is late). One will also see that later during the programme activity, I emphasised to the learners to remember that the idioms start with *Go-* and they must remember what the answers to each idiom are. This made it easy for the learners to do this activity. (Researcher's Diary: School 2: 18 March 2014).

The teacher introduced the second idiom *Go tsamaya ka iketlo* (to walk slowly) by demonstrating how to walk slowly and contrasted it by walking fast. She then pasted another flash card on the board with this idiom and its correct meaning on one flashcard. She then said that: *Go tsamaya ka iketlo go raya Go tsamaya o iketlile* (to walk slowly means to have walked slowly). The teacher gave two explanations which were in fact synonymous. She continued to say: *Go tsamaya ka iketlo*, and immediately rushed to give an answer that is *Go tsamaya o iketlile*.

The conclusion I made was that the teacher presented the first sentence as an idiom, but neither the first nor the second is an idiom, just the same explanations put differently. The first sentence is in the present form and the second one in the

infinitive. The idiom should have been *Go tsamaya ka bonya*, meaning to walk slowly. (Researcher's Diary: School 2: 18 March 2014).

The teacher continued with the following: *Mmaago o nthe ketse diaparo tsa kerese mose tse dintle tse di mebalabala*. She presented the idiom *Go nna mebala* (wearing clothes of different colours) as an idiom that means *Go ikgantsha* (to be proud). She continued that if you are wearing clothes of different colours like **colour blocking** then you are proud. She then repeated that *Go nna mebala go raya gore Ke go ikgantsha*. (to have colours means to be proud). Perhaps the teacher confused this idiom with *Go nna mabela* (to be proud), but it has nothing to do with colours.

In my experience as a Setswana lecturer, there is no idiom in Setswana that has to do with colour blocking. The teacher used code-mixing, which is not acceptable in the teaching of the home language (Researcher's Diary: School 2: 18 March 2014).

The teacher then gave another idiom: *Go le baleba* (to open your eyes when waking up). Then she gave the meaning of the idiom as *Go leba kwa le kwa* (to look here and there).

I observed that the teacher gave an incorrect interpretation of the idiom *Go le baleba*. She should have given the answer as: *Go bula matlho* (To open one's eyes). She used the idiom out of context (see the summary of the story in 5 to understand this word in its context). Although the teacher misinterpreted the idiom, the biggest problem lies with the reader *Go thuba lebelo*, which is an inadequate translation from English into Setswana. I mentioned earlier that such translations are one of the factors that disempower teachers from teaching Setswana idioms (see 1.2.2). (Researcher's Diary: School 2: 18 March 2014).

She introduced the last idiom by asking the learner: *Ga ke sa itumela ke editse eng?* (If I am not happy, what have I done?). A learner answered by saying *O tenegile* (*You are fed up*). She then put the flash card with the idiom and answered as follows: *Go tenega > Go se itumele*. She proceeded to ask *Ke eng se se ka go dirang gore o boife* (What is it that can make you afraid?) The learners gave answers

such as: *sepoko* (ghost); *noga* (snake); *kwena* (crocodile).and *ntšwa* (dog). They did not give the correct Setswana word for crocodile, but proceeded to the word “dog”. She then explained that *Go boifa* (to fear) is *Go tshaba* (to be afraid).

My observation of the presentation of idioms by Teacher B was fact that she did well in using a number of demonstrations to help the learners understand what an idiom entails. However, the negative side of her teaching was that she gave two phrases which she described as Setswana idioms while they are not. This is an indication that the teacher did not fully understand what idioms are before she started teaching. (Researcher’s Diary: School 2: 18 March 2014).

Teacher C introduced the lesson by explaining what idioms are. She wrote down the topic *Maele* (Idioms) and emphasised that they were going to look at my previous lesson to see if they had listened attentively. She asked the learners to start giving the idioms that they had learnt from me the day before. She continued to explain what an idiom is giving the following definition of an idiom: *Puo e e sa buiweng ka metlha* (language that is not spoken every day); *Puo e e natefisang Setswana* (a language that makes Setswana fascinating) and *Puo e e fitlhagetseng* (it is a hidden language).

She then asked the learners which idiom they had learnt in the previous lesson from the researcher. The learners were able to provide idioms such as: *Go supa letsatsi* (to point at the sun). They could remember the idiom, but they were struggling with its meaning. Through guided questioning, the teacher assisted them to come up with a correct answer. She even gave a synonym of this idiom, which is *Go gana nnang ya banyana* (to refuse like a little girl). She then emphasised the meaning of the idiom *Go supa letsatsi* as *Fa motho a gana se go tweng a se dire* (when someone refuses to do what she/he is told to do). The other idioms that the learners could remember from the anecdotes were:

- *Go nna rralonawana/mmalonawana* (to be mother of the feet/father of the feet), meaning one is gallivanting.

- *Go rothisa mmutla madi* (to let blood drop from the hare/rabbit), meaning to let the cat out of the bag.
- *Go loma tsebe* (to bite the ear), meaning to whisper in one's ear.
- *Go ja motho direthe* (to eat someone's heels), meaning to gossip.

I observed that teacher C seemed confused by the instruction I gave her to introduce her own new idioms. Even though she repeated the same idioms used in the anecdotes by the researcher, she explained them very well through questioning. The teacher and the learners had a clear understanding of what the idioms taught meant. (Researcher's Diary: School 2: 18 March 2014).

6.4 TEACHING OF IDIOMS BY THE GRADE 3 TEACHERS DURING READING

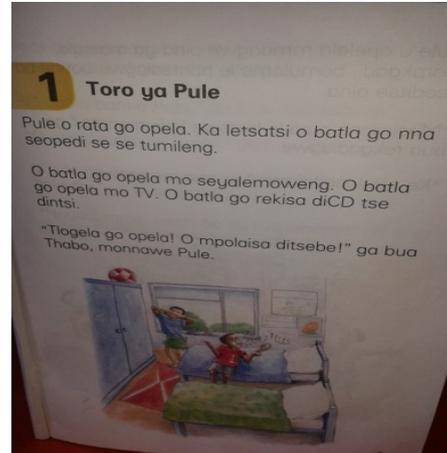
As part of my strategy to implement the Setswana idioms in picture form programme in Phase Two, I used both anecdotes and reading lessons by the teachers prior to the implementation of the programme. The aim of this section was to find out how teachers explain idioms that are embedded in the stories and how learners comprehend the idioms within the context of the story. During reading lessons in 2013 (Phase One), in all the three classes, one of the readers had an idiom as a title while the second reader's title lent itself to a possible idiom. However, the teachers never explained the titles as idioms during reading (see 5.2 and 5.3). After the findings in 2013, I sat with each teacher and explained to them what idioms are and pointed out idioms found in each reader. I expected the teachers to show more creativity, initiative and different strategies to teach the idioms in these readers since they were the same ones used in 2013 in Phase One. The following is an analysis of how each teacher taught Setswana idioms during reading lessons and the learner's responses.

Summary of *Toro ya Pule* (Pule's dream): Pule is a young man who loves singing. His sister is irritated by his singing and she says he is hurting her ears. His dream is to win a singing competition and he is encouraged by the mother. But his sister believes that his singing is so bad that his idea of winning the singing competition is just a dream. In the end, his dreams come true because he wins the singing competition and receives several prizes. Thus his dreams come true.

Teacher A did her reading lesson out of the reader titled: *Phitlhelelo ya Puisokwalo*, in which the story of Pule is told.



Picture 6.1: *Phitlhelelo ya Puisokwalo* reader story



Picture 6.2: *Toro ya Pule* (Pooe, 2011)

The title of the story that was read is: *Toro ya Pule* (Pule's dream). The teacher just read the title without explaining it. She then started reading line by line with the learners reading the same sentences after her. She did not stop to explain some of the idioms that were highlighted to her by the researcher in Phase One reading lessons. After reading the whole story and emphasising its content, the teacher went back to explain the idioms. She started by asking a question based on the title by asking the learners *Fa lo akanya toro ke eng?* (What do you think, what is a dream?) One of the learners answered and said *Motho yo o lorang*. (a person who dreams). Then she asked about what Pule's sister in the story said: "*Nnyaa mme, batho ba tla mo tshoga*" is. (No! mam, people will laugh at him). The teacher then introduced an idiom related to dreaming by asking what *Go ijesa ditoro* is? (What is to eat dreams? – literal). This refers more to daydreaming. One learner answered: *Go ijesa ditoro*. She literally associated the idiom with a wild fruit called *toro* (prickly pear) in Setswana and the eating thereof.

The teacher then explained what the idiom *Go ijesa ditoro* means. Since Pule's sister did not believe that he could win the singing contest, she said he would never win; he is just dreaming. The learners seemed to understand what the idiom means

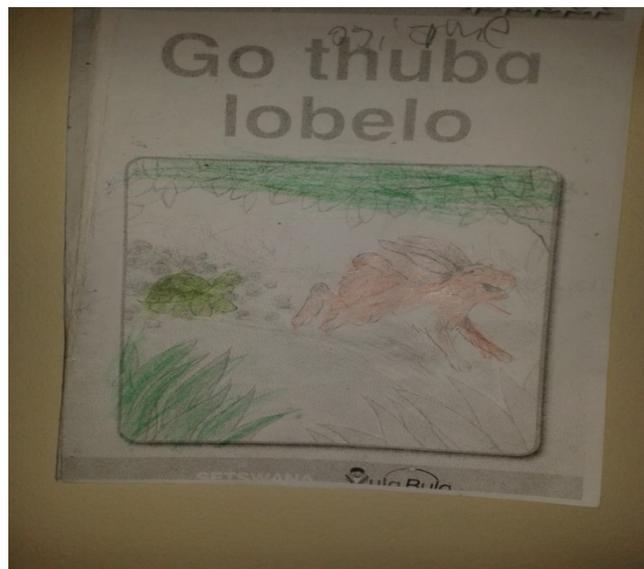
within the context of the story that Pule would never win the singing contest because he was just daydreaming.

The teacher then proceeded to the next idiom and combined comprehension of the story with the introduction of the idiom. Although the sentence does not have an idiom per se, the teacher proceeded and asked the learners: “*Kana Ausi wa Pule o rileng fa a mo tlhodia ka go opela?*” (By the way, what did Pule’s sister say to him when he was singing at home?) The teacher then read the sentence that said: *Tlogela go opela, o tla mpolaisa ditsebe* (Stop singing you will make my ears hurt). The teacher then asked the learners if it was possible for someone to make your ears hurt. She immediately sketched a picture of someone blowing a vuvuzela in their ears. A *vuvuzela* is a plastic trumpet that was used during 2010 world cup football matches. The South Africans cheered their players with it during the matches. It is very loud and it could be irritating to some people.

The learners immediately identified with the picture because a *vuvuzela* is a popular and familiar instrument to them. The learners got the message clearly that *Go bolaisa ditsebe* (to make ears hurt) is an idiom that one uses to complain about too much noise. The teacher also added another idiom: *Fa mongwe a go leletsa vuvuzela mo tsebing o be o re O nthiba ditsebe*. (When someone blows the vuvuzela in your ears and you react by saying. “You are closing my ears,” meaning deafening my ears. The teacher explained that it is not possible that the vuvuzela can close the ears literally. This is an idiom meaning that the noise was too much for the ears. The teacher continued with the rest of the idioms in a similar manner. When the learners used non-standard words like: *Ga re nyake* (We don’t want to - Pretoria Sotho) instead of *Ga re batle*; *O phasitse* (he had passed – Pretoria Sotho) instead of *O falotse*. *O jelase* (he is jealous, a non-standard loan-word from English) instead of *O lefufa*. The teacher then gave an appropriate Setswana explanation of these non-standard words or phrases.

I observed that Teacher A, as a strategy or an afterthought, went and read the story, then extracted idioms and explained them to the learners. The learners showed enthusiasm and understanding of the idioms (Researcher’s Diary: School 1: 26 February 2014).

Summary of *Go thuba lebelo* (to run a race): The hare, undermining the tortoise that he cannot outrun him, dared the tortoise to a race because he believed the tortoise was too slow to outrun him. The race began and along the way, when the hare noticed that he was far ahead of the tortoise, he took shelter from the rain and fell asleep. He opened his eyes (*a lebaleba*), then looked here and there (*a leba kwa le kwa*) to see if the tortoise was still behind him or ahead of him. To his disappointment and embarrassment (not *go boifa*) the tortoise was already at the finishing line and declared the winner.



Picture 6.3: *Go thuba lebelo* (Mekgwe, 2012)

Teacher B started her reading lesson by asking: *Ke mang yo o ka re bolelelang gore buka ya rona e kwetsweng fa?* (Who can tell us what is written here on our book?). One of the learners answered: *Go thuba lebelo* (To run a race). She then asked: *Go thuba lebelo ke eng?* (What does it mean to run a race?) The learners said: *Ke go siana* (it is to run) and another learner said *Ke go taboga* (to run). She explained to the learners that she was going to read alone while they followed in the readers by pointing with their fingers. She started reading on her own, without giving the learners a chance to read. She included the learners in the reading only when she wanted them to repeat an explanation after her. The teacher read a sentence from the reader, and when she read the first sentence from the reader, which reads: *Go ne go na le mmutla o o mabela* (There was a proud hare). She asked the learners

what the meaning of *mabela* was but they could not give the correct answer. They said *Go taboga* (to run). She then gave the answer *Go ikgantsha* (to be proud).

The next sentence read: *O ne o nna o kokoroga o rumola diphologolo* (hare always walked proudly starting a fight with other animals). She again immediately explained that: *Ke go ikgantsha. O apere diaparo tse dipila. Ka sejwalejwale ba re ke go swenka.* (It is to be proud. When wearing beautiful clothes. To take proud strides). The next sentence read: *Go ne ga diragala gore Khudu e tenege* (it happened that the tortoise got angry) The teacher then asked: *Khudu o ne a dirile eng? A tenegile! Go tenega ke fa o dirile eng?* (What did the tortoise do? He was fed up! When you are fed up is when you have done what?). The teacher continued to say *Ke fa o galefile o kwatile.* (It is when you are raging mad – *kwatile* is *Pretoria Sotho* derived from Afrikaans word *kwaad*). The teacher explained that *Go tenega* means *Go ngala*. *Go ngala* is an idiom that means you were so angry that you do not speak to anyone or you leave the company you are with. This is not the case in the story being read. The tortoise continued to challenge the hare to a race, claiming that he can beat the hare. Thus the idiom used to explain *go tenega* is not appropriate in this context. The teacher could have said it means *fa motho a befetswe* (To be angry), because the hare was always boastful that none of the animals could outrun him. The teacher read: *Mmutla wa ragoga go raya Go reisisa* (The hare shot out-literal). The teacher explained the action when the gun goes off as the race begins, using a non-standard loan-word derived from the Afrikaans word “**Om te reis**”. She also said: *Ke fa le eme mo laeneng e be ba re: On your mark, get set ready, go!* (It is when you are standing in a line and someone says: On your marks, get set, ready, go!). The teacher used code-switching to try and make clearer the statement on page 4, which is: *Nngwe, pedi, tharo....SIANANG!* Because the English instruction is not translatable. This clearly shows that the teacher is at this stage still not sure of what she is teaching and she is not fluent in spoken Setswana. She could have explained that: *Ke fa motho a tlolela kwa pele go simolola go taboga* (it is when someone jumps forward when he starts running).

The teacher stopped the reading on page 5 and explained that they would continue with the reading the following day. She then started with the revision of the specific phrases she regarded as idioms from her anecdotes. But they were all from the

reader and not from her. The comprehension of the story was not complete at this stage because she had stopped reading. She asked, for example: *Fa o tenegile ke fa o ntse jang?* She also asked what *Go boifa* (to be afraid) meant and instructed the learners to look at the flashcards she used when she was introducing her own idioms after the researcher's anecdotes. The teacher then realised that she had not finished reading the whole story, because the sentence: *Mmutla wa taboga ka lebelo le legolo, mme o ne o le thari* was on page 7 and *Mmutla wa boifa khudu* (the hare was afraid to look at the tortoise) was on page 8, at the conclusion of the story, yet she was already revising that part of the story. The learners learnt these idioms in isolation and not in the context of the story during the teacher's anecdotes. The teacher then continued with the story from page 6, following the same approach until the end of the story.

At the end of the story on page 8, after the hare is beaten by the tortoise, the tortoise says to him: *O bonako go feta nna, mmutla, fela o se ka wa belafala ka gone.* (You are faster than me hare, but do not be proud of it.) The verb *belafala* is derived from the noun *mabela*, which means *Go nna mabela*, which is an idiom meaning to be proud, but the teacher never explained the idiom again to emphasise the lesson, "Pride comes before a fall," which in Setswana would be *Go wa ka mpa ya sebetse* (to fall with stomach of a liver (literal meaning), or to fall very hard physically). In Setswana it is closer to being bankrupt and embarrassed.

In the Setswana context of the story, *go boifa* means to be afraid or scared of the tortoise. This is a mistranslation of the story from English to Setswana. The context should have been that of the hare being embarrassed instead of being afraid of the tortoise. The same applies to the word *lebaleba* (to flicker your eyes), which has been adapted as "to look here and there". When the teacher read about *lebaleba* on page 6, she still misinterpreted it as when she was teaching her anecdotes. The mistranslations in the story made the teacher misinterpret the content of the story. Perhaps that is the reason why she could not give correct explanations of some idioms. The observation I made is that the teaching strategy used by the teacher confused the learners. The learners were not given an opportunity to discover new knowledge based on their own initiative and creativity, as the teacher rushed to explain what the idiom meant. The teacher was still not certain of how idioms should

be taught. The mistranslations in the story (which was translated from English into Setswana) made the teacher's lesson even more incoherent. The adapted version of the story failed the teacher because there are some words that can be used in a certain context in Setswana which will be different in English (see 1.2.2) (Researcher's Diary: School 2: 19 March 2014).

For the reading lesson, Teacher C also used the book *Go thuba lebelo* (see picture 3). The teacher started by pointing at the cover of the book and asked the learners what was written on the cover. One learner answered: *Go šiana* (To run in Pretoria Sotho). The other one said: *Go kitima* (To run in Sepedi). The teacher corrected the learners immediately that we do not say *Go šiana* nor *Go kitima* but we say *Re a taboga* in Setswana. The learners then read *Go thuba lebelo* (To run a race). The teacher then emphasised that if you do not want to say *Go siana* you can say *Go taboga*. She continued to say *Se se raya gore fa go na le setlhogo Go thuba lebelo fa, go tla nna le dikgaisano* (This means that if the title is "To run a race", it will involve a competition). This explanation and emphasis of the topic prepared the learners for the content and comprehension of the story. The teacher was always on the alert, consistently correcting the learners if they used an inappropriate word instead of an appropriate Setswana word. The teacher read the first sentence, which read: *Go ne go le mmutla o o mabela* (There was once a proud hare). The teacher explained in detail that *Go nna mabela* is an idiom that means: *O a ikgantsha* (He is proud); *o a nyenyefatsa* (he belittles); *O a ipona* (he is proud). The next sentence read: *O ne o nna o kokoroga* (The hare always walks proudly). The teacher practically demonstrated how a proud person walks and gave several explanations that made the idiom clearer to the learners. The learners imitated the teacher in return. The teacher continued to read *Mme wena Khudu, wai! Ga o na lebelo, ka ntlo ya gago mo godimo ga gago!* (You Tortoise, (wai!) you do not have speed with that house - shell of yours on top of you!). The teacher explained the idiophone *wai!* This exclamation is a confirmation of how the hare undermines the other animals. The teacher went on to explain what the athletics phrase *on your marks, get set, ready* means in Setswana, without using English.

The teacher went on to ask what the following sentence means: *Mmutla o ne o repile fela* (The hare was just relaxing). She also asked: *Fa re re motho o repile o ntse*

jang? (When we say someone is relaxing, how do they look?). The learners tried to answer the question, but failed. She explained that in Setswana when we say something in an unusual way, we call that an idiom. Therefore *Go repa* means to *Go iketla* (To relax). When one learner answered that to relax is *Go nwa cooldrink o ntse mo sofeng* (having a soft drink while sitting on the sofa). The teacher immediately gave the correct word for soft drink as *senotsididi*. However, *sofeng* (derived from the English noun *sofa*) remained because it is a standard loan-word that is acceptable in Setswana because sofas are new concepts in Setswana. When the teacher got to the end of page 4 of the story, where the race between the hare and the tortoise was about to start, the teacher stopped the reading. She then revised the content of the story from the title of the book to remind them that the content of the story is about a race between the hare and the tortoise and asked them who they thought was going to win. The learners were excited and tried to predict who was going to be the winner. The teacher then asked them if they had ever been involved in an athletics race at school. This question made the learners recall their previous experiences of athletics and align it with the new knowledge. This helped the learners to have a deeper understanding of the story and the idioms used in the story.

The teacher read very well and made the learners read after her. They read fluently and efficiently without hesitating. The teacher continued to explain every word or phrase that was related to an idiom. She emphasised comprehension of the story, concept formation and spelling of the words and the idioms because she consistently wrote the words and the idioms that needed explanation on the board. The teacher concluded the lesson by doing revision of the idioms and content of the story, asking questions to the learners to check comprehension. For example: *Ke bomang ba ba neng ba gaisana mo lobelong le?* (Who were competing in this race/competition?). She then concluded the lesson by giving the learners class work as follows:

Kwala metlhala e mene ka kgang e, Go thuba lebelo.

(Write four sentences to explain the story *To run a race*).

Before the learners could write the classwork, she asked the learners if they had any questions to ask if they did not understand part of the story or the classwork. The

learners seemed to have understood the lesson because not a single learner asked any questions.

The observation I made was that the teacher had a clear command of Setswana. She explained all the idioms appearing in the story up to where she had stopped and asked guiding questions that helped the learners understand the idioms. She also used more than one example to explain an idiom to make sure that the learners understood the idiom in context. Comprehension of the story was emphasised and helped in the understanding of the idioms. Both the teacher and the learners understood what idioms are (Researcher's Diary: School 2: 19 March 2014).

6.5 INTRODUCTION OF THE SETSWANA IDIOMS IN PICTURE FORM PROGRAMME

The earlier discussions on how anecdotes were used to introduce Setswana idioms to Grade 3 learners; the introduction of idioms by teachers and teaching of idioms from prescribed readers by teachers, set the stage for the teachers and the learners to be introduced to the *Setswana idioms in picture form programme*. The aim of this programme is to empower Grade 3 Setswana teachers to teach idioms creatively and test the learners' understanding of idioms. This forms Phase Two of the research study. The following is an analysis of how the three teachers in both schools taught Setswana idioms in picture form to Grade 3 learners.

Each teacher had to select five idiom pictures from the sixteen pictures to teach the programme (see Appendix E CD1).

6.5.1 Teacher A's lesson presentation of Setswana idiom programme

The teacher introduced the lesson by linking it with the anecdotes and reading lessons on Setswana idioms. Every time the teacher put a picture on the board, she would ask the learners what they saw on the picture. Once satisfied with the answer, she would put the written idiom on the flashcard next to the picture, then (after emphasising the answer) she put the correct written answer on a flashcard next to the idiom.

- **A picture of a boy urinating**

At first, the learners giggled when they saw picture. The picture aroused interest and each learner was trying to interpret the picture the way it made sense to them. The learners interpreted the picture literally that they see a picture of a boy urinating.



Picture 6.4: A boy urinating

Mosimane o a rota (The boy is urinating). One learner said *O ntsha metsi* (He is taking out water), which is a good answer that showed that there are more polite ways of saying a boy is urinating to show respect. The teacher then explained that in Setswana culture, one does not say *Mosimane o a rota*, but *Mosimane o fatlha magotlo/dipeba* (The boy is blinding the mice). One is expected to express it as a euphemism. Thus a synonym of this idiom is *Go ntsha metsi* (to take out the water). The teacher then demonstrated how boys stand when urinating. But to show another way of respect, one can say *Malome o ile go fatlha magotlo*. The teacher then explained that the idiom applies more to boys than to girls because boys urinate while standing instead of squatting, like girls.

- **A picture of someone eating another's heel**

The teacher then put the picture of a woman literally eating the other one's heels. The learners started laughing at the action on the picture and passing remarks on it. They confirmed that they saw a person eating the other one's foot. There was disbelief among some of the learners, because they could not imagine someone literally doing that.



Picture 6.5: Eating another's heel

The teacher then explained that *Go ja direthe go raya Go seba ka motho yo mongwe* (To eat another person's heels means to gossip about that person). The teacher then added another idiom that has the word *direthe* (heels): *Go tlhanola direthe go raya Go tshaba o taboga thata* (to turn out the heels). This means to run away very fast. The teacher tested the learner's knowledge and understanding of idioms through leading questions. The learners at first believed that the teacher literally meant that another human being is allowed or is able to eat someone's heels. The teacher facilitated very well, guiding the learners to look deeper into the picture than to just interpret it literally. The next picture was:

A picture of a man with two stomachs

The teacher asked: *Goreng mala a le makima?* (Why is the stomach so big?)

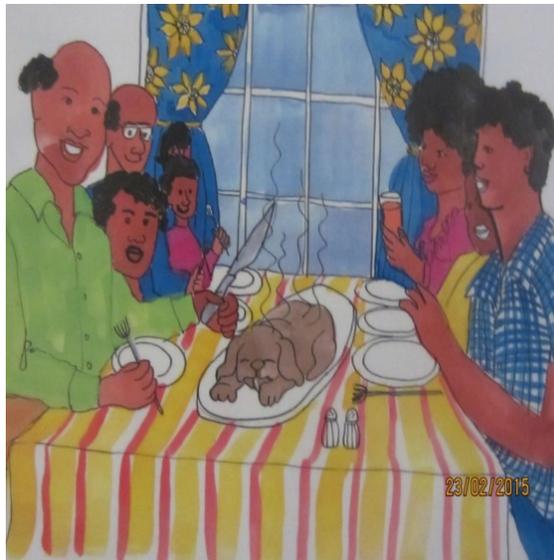


Picture 6.6: A man with two stomachs

The learners answered correctly and said *O ja thata* (He eats too much). She continued to say: *Ka Setswana ra re: Go ja ka mpa tsoopedi* (In Setswana, to eat with two stomachs). It means he eats too much. All the learners laughed when the next picture was put on the board.

- **A picture of a family eating a dog**

The picture showed a family eating a dog. The learners laughed in amazement that people can eat a dog. The teacher then asked them why they thought the family was eating a dog. The learners could not come up with a good reason why.



(Picture 6.7: A family eating a dog)

The teacher then explained to them that when you say: *Kwa gaabo Pule ba ja ntšwa* (At Pule's house they eat a dog). This means that the family is very poor. However, it is impolite to say that about a family. It is polite to say: *Kwa gaabo Pule ba a tlhoka* (Pule's family do not have). It is also impolite to say: *Kwa gaabo Pule ke badidi* (Pule's family is poor).

- A picture of two ladies taking leftover meat out of each other's teeth

The teacher asked the learners what they see.



Picture 6.8: Two ladies taking leftover meat out of each other's teeth

The learners tried to explain what they saw, but could not understand why people can do that to each other. One learner said: *Ba ntshana leleme* (They are pulling each other's tongues). The other one said: *Ba tlabana maleme* (They are sticking each other's tongue). The teacher then asked: *Fa le bona, batho ba e ka nna eng?* (If you look carefully, what can these people be?). One learner correctly said: *Ditsala* (Friends). The teacher then explained what relationships are. What friends are about and how important friends are. She then explained the idiom: *Go ntshana se inong* (Taking out things from each other's teeth). This means to be best friends who tell each other deep secrets.

- **Picture of a lady with long nails**

The teacher put a picture of a beautiful lady on the board and asked the learners what they saw. One learner said: *Manala a makima* (Big nails) instead of saying long nails. The teacher then corrected the learner by explaining that we do not say big nails but long nails *Manala a maleele*.



Picture 6.9: A lady with long nails

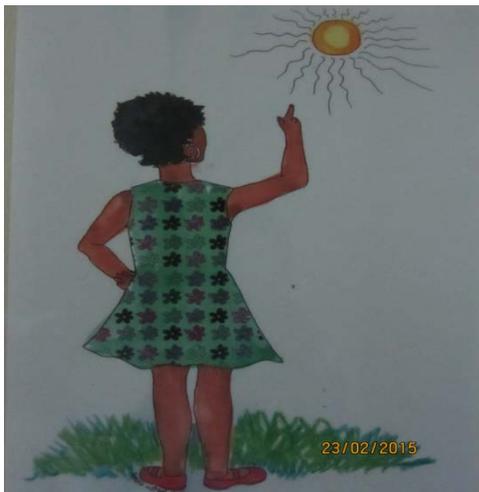
The teacher then demonstrated with her hands what the lady's nails look like. She emphasised how long her nails were, and the learners laughed at her demonstration. One of the learners said: *Go godisa manala* (To grow nails). One could see that the learners literally see a picture of a beautiful lady with manicured nails. The teacher then explained that in Setswana when someone has stealing tendencies, we use the idiom *Go nna dinala ditelele* (having long nails). *Ke legodu* (He is a thief).

I observed that the learners interpreted most of the idiom pictures literally. However, the teacher used different explanations for each picture very well, so that the learners could understand what idioms are. The incidents that the teacher used related to the learners' everyday life. (Researcher's Diary: School 1: 27 February 2014).

6.5.2 Teacher B's lesson presentation of Setswana idiom programme

Here the method of presentation was more “tell and repeat”; this is where the teacher says an idiom and the learners repeat after her. The teacher taught in a hurried manner. She would put the picture on the board, ask a question based on the picture and immediately answer her own question without giving the learners a fair chance to think about the picture at all. The following is an example of how she went about teaching:

The teacher started the lesson by showing the picture to the learners and asking them: *Re bona eng mo, mafokong a a kere go gana, go gana (morutabana o ba bontsha setshwantsho, o se kgomaretsa mo, patitšhokong- o kgomaretsa le dipapetlana tsa mafoko.* (We see on the words. Is it to refuse, to refuse (the teacher shows the learners a picture, she pastes the picture on the board – she at the same time pastes the flashcard of the idiom in Setswana).



Picture 6.10: Girl pointing at the sun



Picture 6.11: Boy biting a girl's ear

The learners immediately responded by saying: *Mam ke go supa letsatsi.* (It is to point at the sun) The teacher confirms and says: *O supile letsatsi a kere? O supile letsatsi a re “Ke a gana”.* (She is pointing at the sun, is that not so? She is pointing at the sun and say “I am refusing”. The teacher immediately pasted the flash card with the idiom and repeated *Go supa letsatsi (To point at the sun).* She again just said: *Lo e tshwere?*(You got it), meaning they have understood and immediately introduced the second idiom in the same manner as the first one by showing them a picture of

the idiom and said: *O mo loma tsebe*. The learners repeated after the teacher and said *Go loma tsebe*. (He is biting her ear). The teacher asked: *He?* (What?) and the learners again repeated *Go loma tsebe* (To bite the ear). The teacher hardly gave the learners a chance to think on their own because she provided the idiom by repeating it and in a rhetorical way, repeated the idiom. Then the learners got the cue from the teacher that they were expected to repeat what she said. In this idiom the teacher then asked the learners: *Ke go dira eng go loma tsebe?* (What is it to bite the ear?) and the learners responded correctly that: *Wa mo, sebela!* (He is whispering to her). The teacher said: *Wa mo, sebela a kere! Mpi tla o tlo mpontsha "Go sebela."* (She is whispering to her is that not so? Mpi come and demonstrate to me "To whisper"). She then continued to put the flashcard of the idiom and the answer next to the pictures.

The third idiom the teacher taught was *Go loma serethe* (To bite the heel). The teacher again showed the learners the picture while asking what they saw (see picture 6.5). The teacher again asked the learners what they saw and the learners appropriately described what they saw – a person biting another one's heel. After asking that, she put the picture on the board and pasted the flashcard of the idiom and the relevant answers. The same procedure was followed when teaching the idioms: *Go fatlha magotlo*. (Learner: He is blinding the mice. (See picture 6.4.)



Picture 6.12: Man eating a tree

Although the same teaching strategy was followed for the idiom *Go ja ditlhare* (To eat trees, meaning to be mad), the interesting part was the different answers that

came from the learners. One learner said: *O nametse setlhare* (He is climbing a tree), while another said: *O thula setlhare* (He is bumping the tree), while the last one said: *O ja metlhare* (He eats trees), which was the correct answer but answered in Sepedi instead of *O ja ditlhare*. The teacher then confirmed the answer and introduced the idiom while putting the picture on the board and said: *Go raya gore motho yo o a tsenwa o etsang?* (It means this person is mad, what is he doing?). The learners responded: *O a tsenwa* (He is mad). The teacher then added: *Kgotso wa gafa* (Or he is crazy). The learners repeated the answer again after her to emphasise the meaning of the idiom after her. For the last idiom, she showed the learners the picture of a beautiful lady with long nails and said: *Fa go diragala eng? A re yeng Amogelang. Amogelang: Go nna dinala ditelele. Go nna dinala ditelele, go etsa eng?* (Teacher: (What is happening here? Let us go (meaning: let us hear if you understand, Amogelang. To have long nails, to have long nails, what is it?). The learners responded: *Go nna dinala ditelele (to have long nails)*. The teacher concluded by putting the picture on the board and stating that: *Go nna dinala ditelele ke fa motho a utswa, ke fa motho a etsa eng?* (To have long nails). It is when someone steals. It is when someone does what?). The learners responded: *A utswa*. (When he steals).

I observed that Teacher B would first show learners the idiom picture while asking the learners what they saw. Then she would immediately put the flashcard with the written idioms, while reading or saying the idiom. Then she would immediately ask one learner to put the written answer of the idiom in a flashcard while saying it. The teacher would let the learners repeat after her or finish the idiom sentences for her. This made the lesson hurried and did not give the learners enough time to think before they were introduced to the next idiom picture. (Researcher's Diary: School 2: 20 March 2014).

6.5.3 Teacher C's lesson presentation of Setswana idioms in picture form programme

The teacher started the presentation of Setswana idioms in picture form by linking it with previous knowledge, telling the learners that previously they had learnt idioms but today they were going to learn them in picture form. Her teaching method was to first put all the pictures on the board first while asking the learners to tell her what

they saw on each picture. After that, she provided the written flash card of an idiom and explained that Batswana could formulate an idiom based on an incident. She would then proceed to put the correct answer in written form on a flashcard next to the picture. The following are the examples of how she went about using some of her facilitating skills:

- **Picture of two women picking out meat from each other's teeth (See picture 6.8)**

The learners first giggled at the two women, and when the teacher asked them what they saw, the learners gave different answers such as: *Ba ntshana meno* and *Ba tshasana melomo* (They are taking out each other's teeth and they are applying (lipstick) on each other's lips). When the teacher noticed that they were struggling to find the correct answer, she painted the following scenario: *Fa o fetsa go ja nama e khibidu, o tsukunya legano go ntsha dinamama. Fa o na le diphatlha, dinamama di tsena mo menong. O batla letlhokwana wa di ntsha. Jaanong re tlhama leele. Leele le re le tthamang ka tiragalo e, ke: Go ntshana se inong. Ke fa batho e le ditsala tse di tona.*

(After eating red meat, you rinse your mouth to take out leftover meat. If you have gaps, the meat gets into them. You look for a toothpick and take the leftover pieces out. Now we coin an idiom. The idiom we coin for this incident is: *Go ntshana se inong*, meaning to be best friends.

- **Picture of a boy urinating (See picture 6.4)**

The teacher put a picture of a boy urinating on the board. The learners were fascinated and started giggling as they tried to figure out what was going on. They did not understand why there were mice in the picture. The teacher asked them questions, but they could only say *Mosimane o a rota* (The boy is urinating); they said nothing about the mice. The teacher then explained what was happening and gave them the idiom *Go fatlha magotlo* (To blind the mice). She explained that the idiom *Go fatlha magotlo* applies to boys. It means boys urinate while standing and girls have to sit (On the toilet seat). The teacher then put the flashcard with the idiom

- **Picture of a family eating a dog (See picture 6.7)**

The learners giggled when they noticed that the family had a dog on the table. There was a lot of noise and amazement and remarks – humans don't eat dogs. The teacher asked them what was happening. One of the learners said: *Ba ja mpya*. The teacher immediately corrected the learner that in the Sekgatla dialect the word *mpya* is used instead of the standard Setswana word *ntšwa*. The teacher explained that the idiom was *Go ja ntšwa* (To eat a dog). The teacher then said: *Rona re le Batswana ga re je ntšwa. Re ja eng?* (We, the Batswana, do not eat a dog. What do we eat?). The learners were excited about giving the correct answer, which is that they eat meat. Therefore, people who are depicted in the picture do not really eat a dog; it means they are poor.

- **Picture of a lady with beautiful long nails (See picture 6.9)**

The learners were again very excited about the picture. One of the learners said: *Ke nna ola*. (I am the one). Another learner said: *Tsa manicure* (Those are manicured). The learners, especially girls, identified with the beautiful lady. They all spoke about how beautiful the lady was with long, beautifully manicured nails. They did not see an idiom. The teacher then explained that if someone steals things, we say *O na le dinala tse ditelele*. (She has long nails). Thus *Go nna dinala ditelele* (To have long nails is someone who steals).

- **A picture of a man with two stomachs (See picture 6.6)**

The teacher started by asking the the learners to look closely at the picture and tell what they saw. The teacher noticed that the learners struggled to notice that the picture depicted a man with two stomachs. Therefore, the learners saw only a fat man who eats too much, but not a man with two stomachs. The teacher then said: *Batswana ba dira leele gore fa o ja thata go twe: Go ja ka mpa tsoopedi* (The Batswana have an idiom for eating too much; they say: to eat with two stomachs). It means one eats too much.

- **A picture of a man eating a tree (See picture 6.12)**

The teacher put up the picture of a man eating a tree. The learners were able to notice that it was a man who was eating a tree. It was funny to them. Again the

learners gave a literal interpretation of the picture. The teacher kept on emphasising that *Motswana a bo a dira leele a re: Go ja ditlhare ka meno* (Motswana then coined an idiom and said “to eat trees with teeth”). The teacher then explained that it meant that someone was mad. She explained it further with another Setswana saying: *Dikolotswana ga di a felela* (*The piglets are not complete*). This still implied that someone was crazy.

Teacher C emphasised every idiom by stating how Batswana formulated idioms. She then made sure that every idiom was emphasised. She asked questions to guide the learners most of the time. The learners showed inquisitiveness and they came up with various answers about each picture before the teacher gave the correct idiom based on the pictures. (Researcher’s Diary: School 2: 20 March 2014).

General remarks: Each teacher was given a set of 16 laminated idiom pictures. From the 16 idioms in picture form, 9 pictures were selected for the lessons. One of the theories that was tested in this research was to see how the learners decode idioms through the five major sub-theoretical frameworks that have been applied in actualising Home Language idiom understanding. The theories are (1) the literal first or idiom list sub-theory; (2) the simultaneous processing or lexical representation sub-theory; (3) the figurative first or direct access sub-theory; (4) the compositional analysis sub-theory and (5) the dual idiom representation model.

In this study, it was observed that all the idioms were decoded by the learners using the first sub-theory (literal first or idiom list sub-theory). These findings are acceptable, because the teachers taught the idioms to the Grade 3 learners for the first time. Idioms were unfamiliar to both the teachers and the learners. Also, the idioms taught to Grade 3 learners in this study were based only on transparent idioms, which are easier than the opaque and the frozen idioms (2.2). These two might be used in other higher grades through progression.

6.6 REVISION AND ACTIVITY ON IDIOMS TAUGHT

After every lesson presentation, there is a section called recapitulation of the lesson taught. This is a very important phase of the lesson, because it is in this phase that

the teacher is able to ascertain whether the learners understood the idioms that were taught. The revision entailed idioms that were introduced by the researcher as anecdotes, by the teachers when introducing their own idioms, during reading and when the introduction of the Setswana idioms in picture form programme was completed. The revision took the following direction:

6.6.1 Revision questions by the researcher

During revision, I again greeted the learners to make them feel at home and reminded them of what they had learnt from the teachers and myself. I said:

Motlhotlhomisi: *Bontsi lo a gakologelwa gore re ithutile ka eng maabane, a ga go a nna jalo? Re buile ka gore go na le ditsela tse di farologaneng tse motho a ka ithutang go bua Setswana ka tsone, mme wa fitlhela gore fa o bua batho ba bangwe ga ba kitla ba utlwa kgotsa ba tlhaloganya gore wa re eng. Fela o ntse o bua kgotsa o tlhalosa dilo tse di tlwaelegileng. Mme fa o simolola o tlhaloetsa motho yo gore o rata gore eng ke gona ba reng Ooh! Nkile ka utlwa nkoko, kgotsa ntemogolo kgotsa malome a bua jaana a kere?*

English translation: (Researcher: Yes! I am fine! Did you sleep very well yesterday, is that not so? Many of you do remember what we learnt yesterday, is that not so? We spoke about the different ways a person can learn Setswana and found that some people might not hear or understand what you are saying. In fact, while saying or explaining familiar things. When you start explaining to them what you really want to say, it is then that they say Oh!

I then asked if one of them could tell me the sentences we learnt and what they were. One learner answered: *Go nesa pula!* I repeated this while I wrote the idiom on the board. I then asked: *Kana re rile go nesa pula ke fa go diragala eng?* (What does it mean to make rain fall?) They responded: *Fa o itumetse!* (It is when you are happy) I praised the learners for giving the idiom and the answer quickly, without probing. I then asked what we call such words and they responded *maele (idioms)*. I asked them for another idiom and the learners said: *Go supa letsatsi*(to point at the sun). I then said: *Go supa letsatsi. A mme e ka re fa ke fitlha kwa ntle ka supa*

letsatsi. E be e le fa go diragala eng? (To point at the sun. Is it possible that I can go outside and just point at the sun? (What is happening?). Then a learner answered: *Fa motho a go roma o re ga o batle* (When someone sends you on an errand and you say you do not want to go).

I then confirmed and emphasised it by saying: *Fa motho a go roma o re ga o batle, e seng fela go roma mo go tlwaelegileng. Ga re reye gore fa batsadi ba go roma, kgotsa moagisani a go roma o gane go romiwa a kere? Re raya fa go diragala eng? Ke fa go diragala eng? Ke fa motho yo o utswang bana kgotsa motho yo o sa mo itseng a batla go go utswa. Motho mongwe le mongwe yo o kgannang sejanaga a sa go itse, a be a go raya a re tlaya ke tla go neela dimonamone o le mosimane kgotsa mosetsana o dire eng?* (When someone sends you to do something and you say you do not want to, not the normal sending to fetch something. We do not mean when the parents or your neighbours send you somewhere and you refuse, is that not so? We mean when what is really happening? What is happening? It is perhaps when someone who steals children or someone someone you do not know wants to kidnap you. Anybody who drives a car who does not know you, and tells you come to him/her and he/she will give you sweets and whether you're a boy or a girl, what must you do?) The learners responded: *O gane* (You must refuse).

I continued asking and probing for more idioms and I was surprised by the learners who remembered idioms from reading, such as: *O ijesa ditoro* (You are eating dreams – you are daydreaming).

I was happy to observe that the learners showed a good understanding of what Setswana idioms are without having to probe or remind them of any idioms that they had been taught earlier. I only had to re-emphasise the meaning to make sure that the idioms were interpreted correctly. The examples of idioms that learners gave were from lessons on anecdotes and idioms in picture form, with only one example from the reading lessons. This shows that Setswana idioms in picture form was effective (Researcher's Diary: School 1: 27 February 2014 and School 2: 20 March 2014).

6.6.2 Idiom activity based on the Setswana idioms in picture form programme

After I had finished with the questions, the teacher introduced and explained how the activity was going to work. The aim was to observe the effectiveness of the Setswana idiom picture programme. The idioms were made into strips which were given to pairs of learners in envelopes. The envelopes contained idioms and their answers. The idioms and answers were mixed and they had to make up matching pairs. The teacher and I went from desk to desk checking on the progress of each group. I kept on reminding the learners of the idioms they had learnt and the formulaic nature of idioms (starting with the prefix *Go-*). They had to read carefully what was written on the strips, then look for the answer and put it next to the idiom. The following insert is how I introduced the activity:

Motlhotlhomisi: *Jaanong ke batla go bona gore ke setlhopha se se feng, se se tla bapisang dipolelo tse. Lo a itse gore dipolelo tse re di bitsa eng ka Setswana? Ra re ke maele, maele a kere? (O kwala maele mo patitšhokong). Jaanong re a itse gore ke puo e re tshwanetseng go e bua letsatsi lengwe le lengwe mo Setswaneng – fela ga re e dirise. Ee, ke puo e o tshwanetseng go ithuta yona go tswa mo go bonkoko borakgadi er... Jalojalo. Re ithuta yona gape go tswa mo batsading le mo go morutabana. Lo tlhole le mo utlwa a ga go a nna jalo?*

(Researcher: Now I want to see which group will be able to match these sentences. Do you know what we call these sentences in Setswana? We say they are idioms. Idioms, is that not so? (I wrote the term *Maele* (idioms) on the board). Now we know that it is the language we must speak daily in Setswana, but we do not use it. Yes, it is the language you must learn from grandmothers and aunties. We also learn this language from the parents and from the teachers. You do hear her (teacher) at times using it, is it not so? **Baithuti: Ee!** (Learners: Yes!)



Picture 6.13: Idiom activity



Picture 6.14: Supervision of idiom activity

6.6.3 Conclusion of the implementation of Setswana idioms in picture-form

I then concluded the lesson on idioms as follows:

Motlhotlhomisi: Aha! Jaanong go raya gore o tshwanetse go itse gore fa o ntse o gola o ya kwa mephatong e e kwa godimo gore o nne rradikgang, yo batho ba tla reng fa e nna nako ya dikgang o be o fitlhela ba batla go mo reetsa. Ba batla go itse gore wena o tla be o ithutile go dirisa puo ya Setswana jang. A re bueng nnete, a mme ke dilo tse lo sa di itseng tse? Lo a di itse. Lo ne lo bua ka tsela e e tlhamaletseng, jaanong lo bua ka e e iphitlhileng.. Fela ga se gore motho ga a kitla a tlhaloganya gore o rileng. Ke solofela fa jaanong lo tla dirisa maele a Setswana fa lo bua le fa lo kwala ditemana.

(Aha! Now it means one is supposed to know as one is growing up and moving to higher grades or becomes a news reader that people want to listen to when it is time for news. They do so because they want to listen to how you have learnt to use Setswana language. Let us tell the truth, the things you have been shown, are they things you do not know? You do know them. You used to speak in a straightforward way but now you speak in a hidden way. It does not mean that someone will not understand what you have said. I now hope that you will be able to use Setswana idioms when you speak and when you write paragraphs).

During revision, I observed that learners seemed to struggle at first because each group was trying to be the first one to get the answers correct before another group. The researcher kept on reemphasising the idioms they learnt and how they answered them. This helped and the groups started matching the correct answers to the correct idioms (Researcher's Diary: School 1: 27 February 2014 and School 2: 20 March 2014).

In order to inform my findings in the next chapter, I compared the analysis of Phases One and Two as indicated in Table 6.7.

6.7 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PHASE ONE AND PHASE TWO

Table 6.1: Comparative analysis of Phase One and Phase Two

Phase One	Phase Two
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers: Teachers did not understand what idioms are as part of imaginative language - Learners: Learners were not taught and did not hear idioms because the teachers did not know them or teach them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers: Teachers were confident about what idioms are, except Teacher B in School 1, who was still struggling with the teaching of idioms. However, with more practice she will improve. - Learners now know and understand idioms and what idioms are and why they are used as imaginative language.
<p>Teachers did not use different strategies when teaching idioms because they were not guided or supported to do so.</p>	<p>I introduced the teaching of idioms to the teachers by means of anecdotes to give them an idea of how to teach idioms. Thereafter, teachers could use their own initiative and creativity in teaching through different teaching methods and strategies, such as role play and demonstrations as well as anecdotes.</p>
<p>Teachers did not have any learning and teaching support material to teach idioms. Prescribed readers had idioms embedded in the stories but the teachers could not identify idioms used in the book or use idioms for any incident in the book that lent itself to using an idiom. The workbooks provided by coaches make mention of how to use imagination, but the teachers did not identify the term <i>maitlhom</i> in Setswana with imagination.</p>	<p>I made the teachers aware of the idioms in the prescribed readers and they had a chance to teach the idioms in the readers. I then provided each Grade 3 Setswana teacher involved in this study with a set of 16 coloured, A3 size laminated Setswana idioms in picture form, which they kept to continue using in the teaching of idioms in their classes. They can use this teaching and learning support material in the higher grades in their schools.</p>

Phase One	Phase Two
Teachers had never seen or taught idioms in picture form before.	Teachers came up with their own strategies when teaching idioms in picture form.
No challenging activities were used after the teaching of Setswana to the learners.	I introduced an activity based on idioms in picture form where the learners were paired and asked to match the idioms in flashcards to their relevant answers. I saw that it was the first time they carried out such an activity in pairs.
During individual interviews with the Grade 3 teachers as well as with the focus groups from Setswana Grade 4, 5, 6, and 7 teachers, a number of sociolinguistic aspects that are an impediment to Setswana language proficiency such as code-mixing and code-switching. Pretoria Sotho and non-standard dialectal words surfaced during the 16 questions asked in the interviews.	The teachers' as well as the learners' Setswana language proficiency improved greatly after all the lessons on idioms had been taught. Teacher B still struggled with Setswana proficiency. She is the only one with a high incidence of code-mixing. This might be a confirmation that code-mixing is an impediment to Setswana language proficiency. However, the other two teachers were aware of how they used Setswana and they corrected all the non-standard words or phrases the learners gave as responses.

6.8 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter focused on the analysis of the implementation of Setswana idioms in picture form and the effect of this intervention programme in teaching idioms as imaginative language to Grade 3 Setswana learners. The implementation took the followings steps:

- Introduction of idioms through anecdotes by the researcher
- Introduction of idioms by the Grade 3 teachers
- Teaching of idioms by the Grade 3 teachers during reading
- Introduction of Setswana idiom programme in picture form
- Questions asked by the researcher as a form of revision of idioms taught
- The activity that followed the implementation of the Setswana idioms in picture form programme activity and supervision thereof
- Conclusion on the implementation of Setswana idiom programme.

The effect of the implementation of the programme was seen in the different strategies the teachers used in teaching idioms and when implementing the Setswana idioms in picture form and how the learners understood and used idioms in speaking. In Chapter 7, the summary and overview of the study as well as recommendations will be discussed.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This research was two-pronged. The first phase investigated whether Grade 3 Setswana teachers knew and understood what idioms are and whether they are well guided in the teaching of Setswana idioms as imaginative language in Grade 3.

The findings from Phase One revealed the following:

- Teachers were not aware that imaginative language is part of idioms in the CAPS (DBE, 2011).
- Some readers had idioms as titles, but the teacher never emphasised any of these idioms during the reading period, let alone several idioms that were in the readers.
- There were no strategies or teaching methods for making learners aware of idioms in their daily speech or the teacher's daily language in class.
- The CAPS (DBE, 2011) ready-made Setswana lesson plans did touch on language proficiency, but the teachers were not aware of it.

The above findings from Phase One in 2013 helped me in developing a *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme, which was implemented in 2014 as Phase Two. The aim of this programme was to help empower Grade 3 teachers to teach idioms while building on the theory of teaching idioms to Grade 3 Setswana learners. The *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme was implemented in the following stages:

- Introduction of idioms through anecdotes by the researcher
- Introduction of idioms by the Grade 3 teachers
- Teaching of idioms by the Grade 3 teachers during reading
- Introduction of the *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme
- Revision and activity after implementing the *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme

The implementation of Setswana idioms in picture form (Phase Two) was documented drawing on the above stages in Phase One. The teachers' understanding of what imaginative language is through the teaching of idioms was observed during the teacher's introduction of the idioms to their Grade 3 Setswana classes. This was also noted during reading and the use of idioms in picture form. The learners' understanding of idioms was observed by both the teacher and the researcher in a collaborative effort. The different strategies used by the teachers and researcher in the teaching of idioms as imaginative language and the impact of these strategies led to a better understanding among the learners of what idioms are (see Chapter 6). The aim was to investigate whether teachers understood the teaching of idioms as imaginative language and how learners decode idioms. The study further wanted to determine to what extent an intervention such as Setswana idioms in picture form can empower teachers to teach idioms to Grade 3 Setswana learners as part of imaginative language. The effectiveness of this programme will at the same time help the learners improve their Setswana language proficiency.

7.2 LITERATURE CONTROL

The following is a summary of the literature control that I used for both Phase One and Phase Two. The literature supports the findings in this study and is presented by giving the themes and categories of Phase One. The summary shows the themes and the categories that support each theme.

Table 7.1: Literature Control

Theme 1: Lack of understanding of policy and imaginative language			
Category	Author and year	Existing knowledge	Interpretive discussion
Teachers' lack of knowledge of idioms as imaginative language	Seboni (1980), Ntsa'wisi (1965), Miruka (1994), Moon (1998), Liu (2003 and DBE (2011) , Cooperr (1998), Von Glaserfeld (1995)	Setswana idioms are formulaic by nature. Definitions in other sources regard idiom definitions as problematic, as they differ by language and culture because even proverbs, sayings, idioms and figures of speech are regarded as idioms. This confusion is confirmed by Cooper (1998): "Idioms are part of a figurative language that includes metaphors, similes and proverbs, which are at times difficult to understand because they depend largely on connotation rather than on denotation or literal meaning". Von Glaserfeld (1995:5) is of the opinion that "ideas have to be conceived first before they are transferred from the teachers to the learners".	In Phase One, teachers indicated that they did not know what idioms are as part of imaginative language and that they are not taught because the Coach did not recommend them. They were also not aware that they are in the curriculum statement. In Phase Two the teachers and learners were introduced to what an idiom is through anecdotes, reading and idioms in picture form. Teacher B really struggled to understand what idioms are.

Theme 2: Idiom teaching strategies			
Category	Author and year	Existing knowledge	Interpretive discussion
Teachers' lack of strategies to teach idioms in Setswana	Wolchock (1990), Applebee and Rush (1992), Duffy and Cunningham (1996)	Learners could be taught idioms using prescribed readers so that they can learn idioms in the context of a story. Idioms in picture form could be used to make the teaching of idioms easier, as they depict different actions that are familiar to the learners.	In Phase One, teachers in both schools had readers that had idioms as titles, but they were not aware of the idioms. In Phase Two the teachers were made aware of the idioms and they had to teach reading using the same readers so that I could observe how they were going to teach the idioms in the context of the story. The teachers were provided with a new strategy to teach idioms using pictures. The manner in which the teachers facilitated the lessons and the learners' responses confirm Von Duffy and Cunningham (1996) that learning is a process that involves active construction of knowledge and not passive acquisition.

Theme 3: Sociolinguistics aspects			
Category	Author and year	Existing knowledge	Interpretive discussion
Use of non-standard languages/dialects non-standard loan-words, code-switching, code-mixing and Pretoria Sotho	Fromkin and Rodseth (1983) Malimabe (1990), Madiba (1994), Napoli (1996), Redford (1996), Meyer-Scotton (1988), Nontolwane (1992). Setati (2002) Schuring (1985)	Dialectal differences can at times cause standardisation disagreements while loan-words are adapted to the orthography of host languages. The multilingual nature of South Africa encourages the use of code-switching and code-mixing, which are regarded as communicative strategies.	In Phase One of this study the sociolinguistic aspects mentioned in the category section were depicted as impediments to Setswana language proficiency. In Phase Two, these aspects featured minimally and appeared mostly in teacher B's teaching. Teachers A and C consistently corrected the learners when they used inappropriate words.

7.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS ACCORDING TO THEMES

7.3.1 Theme 1: Lack of understanding of policy and imaginative language

Teachers' understanding of what an idiom is influences learners' understanding of an idiom. Bloom (1956) is of the opinion that children learn a language by repeating what they hear from their parents. Morals and values are imparted by teachers, parents and people in the community. If the learners are not taught by their role models, they will never learn the correct language usage and its importance. The teachers in Phase One did not understand what idioms are and they could not even decode the curriculum where it indicated the teaching of imaginative language. (DBE, 2011). Their lack of knowledge of the curriculum and of the content they should teach as determined in Phase One guided the design and implementation of a programme for teaching Setswana idioms in picture form. After the implementation of the programme and having had enough practice teaching idioms as indicated in Chapter 6, they could now teach idioms independently from the researcher. Learners' new understanding of what idioms are encourages appropriate language use. This exercise confirmed Vygotsky's (1980) theory that learners are able to solve problems when given assistance in the process of acquiring new knowledge. Learners now know that one should not say *O ile go rota*, but *O fatlha magotlo/O ntsha metsi* (see picture 6.4).

7.3.2 Theme 2: Idiom teaching strategies

Encouraging teachers to use new methods and strategies in teaching Setswana is also supported by researchers such as Piaget (1980), Bruner (1960), Borko and Putnam (1996: 690). The two scholars Piaget (ibid.) and Bruner (1960) agree on using systematic exploration, which is a skill that attempts to help learners approach a problem systematically so that they do not impulsively jump at the first possible solution in a problematic situation. The learners should be made aware that there are many different ways of solving a problem; and that if one method does not work, then another should be tried. Borko and Putnam (1996: 690) argue that the teacher's subject matter makes a difference to how they teach, and that novice and experienced teachers alike often lack the rich and flexible understanding of the subject matter they need in order to teach in ways that are responsive to students' thinking and that foster

learning with understanding. In Phase Two of this study, the teachers were confidently using different strategies to teach idioms, and learners enjoyed and understood what was being taught. This supports the opinion of a researcher such as Badders (2007) that learning is a process of building meaning for oneself.

The teachers' way of teaching through questioning helped the learners tap into their experiences and get a clearer understanding of the idiom. Questioning is part of the teaching and learning act. It is a form of continuous assessment. Participation in a lesson is mainly obtained through the question and answer technique. In this way, both the facilitator and the learners are obtaining feedback. Questions can be regarded as an effective tool to ensure that all learners are actively engaged and participate in the learning act (Ramagoshi, 2010:28). This strategy is confirmed by D'Angelo's (2014) proposition that this method assists learners to deepen their understanding of the subject they are learning and also develops their initiative and creativity as they solve problems.

Another strategy that the teachers used was role-play and demonstration of what an idiom might be derived from. This method encouraged the learners to understand what an idiom is. Goodman (1986) states that learning is easy when "[i]t's whole; it's sensible; it's interesting; it's relevant; it belongs to the learner; it's part of a real event; and it has social utility." Rogoff (2012:324) confirms that one important method of learning a first language is by observing and "pitching in."

Role-play and demonstration played a very important role in this research. The learners were amused by the teachers' role-play and demonstration and they ended up imitating the teachers. This way of learning idioms will remain in the minds of the learners; they will not easily forget the idioms learnt in this manner. Nickerson (1999), cited by Grossman (2008:80), supports this type of teaching by stating that "attitudes and values that are critical to the development and use of creative potentials are best taught by example because the classroom teacher must be a creative person, a facilitator and a role model."

Teaching idioms using a story in a prescribed reader helped learners to understand idioms within the context of a story and not in isolation. Using a prescribed reader is

another method that Wolchock (1990) capitalized on; he used a character (Amelia Bedelia) familiar to US students and the incidents she was involved in. For example, when she is told to hit the road, she would literally take a stick and hit the road with it. The teacher would then explain that the idiom means “to leave a place”. Cooper (1998:257) states that “The mastery of idiom interpretation by children is reflected in an increased use of figurative language by the teachers in the classroom.” The learners enjoyed and understood their readers, for example *Go thuba lebelo* and *Toro ya ga Pule*. Idioms that appeared in both stories were understood within the context of the story. The manner of linking the idioms to the context was appropriate to help the learners understand the story, solve problems and acquire other learning skills (Barrows, 1985; Hmelo-Silver, 2014).

The use of anecdotes in the teaching of idioms to make meaning as the learners use their imagination and to identify the idioms with everyday incidents was also identified in this study. Bruner (1995:25) states that: “Language is mastered at first in collaboration with an adult or more competent peer solely with the objective of communicating.” The anecdote about refusing getting into strangers’ cars was quite easy to align to the idiom *Go supa letsatsi* (to point at the sun) (see picture 6.10), meaning to refuse point blank. All children are taught at home and at school not to get into any stranger’s car. The method used supports the idea that learners were able to fit the new ideas into their already existing conceptual framework (Badders (2007). The strategy further supports Vygostky’s theory of social constructivism, which emphasises that meaning and understanding grow out of social encounters (Vygostky, 1986). At the same time the strategy emphasised Piaget’s theory that learners understand things according to their developmental stages and individual learning styles (Piaget, 1965).

The Setswana idioms in picture form aroused the learners’ curiosity, and they also helped the teachers to approach the teaching of idioms in an interesting and captivating manner. Pictures raised arguments, contradictions, guessing and amazement as they were introduced to the learners. According to Bruner (1960), the learners’ responses indicated that they were still processing the new information. Scholnick et.al, (2006) also state that learning is a process that involves active construction of new meaning. The activity of matching idioms to their meanings

helped learners learn cooperatively, at the same time giving them a deeper understanding of the idioms taught. Ramagoshi (2010:59), citing the North Central Regional Education Laboratory (1992:18), supports group work and activities as follows: i) Language proficiency is the ability to interpret both the spoken and the written word correctly. ii) Students interact with each other as they solve problems together. iii) The teacher talks to students individually to help them choose and design good learning experiences; the teacher coaches and guides children through their experiences. Learners also compare their own thinking with that of others. The learners' reading and understanding of idioms was tested when they worked in pairs. They had to match the written idiom on small flashcards with the correct explanations. The activity proved that the learners could read and understand the written idiom and its meaning.

7.3.3 Theme 3: Sociolinguistic aspects

Sociolinguistic impediments to language proficiency (Pretoria Sotho, dialects, other standard official languages and non-standard languages, code-switching and code-mixing) were observed in both Phase One and Phase Two of this study.

It was indicated in Chapter 2 that different sociolinguistic impediments could hinder learner's use of fluent Setswana. The Setswana language is influenced by its co-existence with the different languages surrounding it. Malimabe (1993:134) states that "Until code-switching is accepted as a universal bilingual strategy, it should be discouraged especially where it interferes with the development of a language." The sociolinguistic influences found in the teachers' and learners' speech after the implementation of Setswana idioms in picture form were minimal compared with the findings in Phase One of this study. Clearly, the programme had helped improve Setswana language proficiency.

7.4 COMPARING RESEARCH FINDINGS WITH EXISTING KNOWLEDGE: CONTRADICTIONARY EVIDENCE WITHIN THE LITERATURE

Table 7.2: Comparison of research findings with existing knowledge: contradictory evidence

Themes and Category	Author and year	Existing knowledge	Findings contradicting existing knowledge	Reasons for this
Sociolinguistic impediments that influence language proficiency: Pretoria Sotho; dialects; other standard official languages and non-standard languages; code-switching and code-mixing.	i) Setati (2000:243)	i) Setati encourages code-mixing as a teaching strategy in the teaching of mathematics because the the language of learning and teaching (LOLT: English) is not learners' main language.	In Phase One the three Grade 3 teachers as well as the teachers in Grades 4, 5, 6 and 7 code-switched and code-mixed during the individual interviews and during focus groups interviews. The transcripts showed all the sociolinguistic influences such as: Pretoria Sotho; code-switching; code-mixing, non-standard loan-words from English and Afrikaans, influence of English; Sepedi and non-standard dialectal words from Sekgatla and other dialects of Setswana. The examples given in 7.5 are impediments to Setswana language proficiency and are a deterrent to mastering idioms because one cannot have an opportunity to use an idiom in conversation if they are	The problem is caused by language contact, which is a general problem that underlies learners' competency in their home languages due to interference or influence of other languages (Rapeane 1996). The other problem is that indicated by Thandeka Mpapi in the Mail & Guardian (15-21 October 2010, p 42-43), namely the attitude of learners towards African Languages. They believe that they will be respected more if they speak English than when they speak their respective African languages. Mabule (1990) also came to the same conclusion with Sepedi learners.
	ii) Myers-Scotton (1988:152) cited by Thipa (1993:167)	ii) Both authors point out that code-switching is both a tool and an index. For the speaker it is a tool or a means of doing something. For the listener code-switching is an index or a symbol of the speaker's intentions.		
	iii) Rodseth (2000)	iii) Rodseth (2000) suggests that code-switching and code-mixing be allowed only when learners are discussing among themselves during group		

Themes and Category	Author and year	Existing knowledge	Findings contradicting existing knowledge	Reasons for this
		work and not in formal presentation of their findings.	code-mixing or code-switching. Nowhere in the history of learning English or Afrikaans taught by home language speakers, was code-mixing and code-switching used from an African language to explain concepts or ideas in English or Afrikaans.	

Even though South Africa is a multilingual and multicultural society, this does not warrant encouragement of code-switching and code-mixing when using African languages, especially during learning of the home language. According to Sridhar (1996:59), language developers, teachers and speakers view code-switching negatively. According to him, this “stems from a purist attitudes and the use of a monolingual paradigm of language” Sridhar (1996:59). I believe code-switching and code-mixing are communicative strategies, but they have disadvantages in other situations. The fact remains that at the end of the year, when learners write examinations in Mathematics or Setswana, they will lose marks if they code-switch or code-mix. Another important factor is that some teachers are neither competent in their Home Language nor in English. Therefore, a teacher who uses code-switching (and not code-mixing) in the teaching of content subjects in class should be competent in both standard English and a standard African Language.

7.5 COMPARING RESEARCH FINDINGS WITH EXISTING KNOWLEDGE: SILENCES IN THE RESEARCH DATA

Table 7.3: Comparison of research findings with existing knowledge: silences in the data

Findings	Author and year	Interpretive discussion
Learners decoded the idioms literally instead of applying all five theories (1: literal first or idiom list sub-theory; 2: simultaneous processing or lexical representation sub-theory; 3: the figurative first or direct access sub-theory; 4 the compositional analysis sub-theory and 5: the dual idiom representation model).	i) Bobrow and Bell (1973); Liu (2008), Cooper (1998), Gibbs (1987) ii) The dual idiom representation model espoused by Titone and Connine (1999) and enhanced by Abel (2003)	The findings in this study showed that learners interpreted the idioms using the literal first or idiom list sub-theory. This could be due to a number of reasons. First, idioms were not taught to the learners. They were never emphasised by the teachers or the parents during daily conversations. Second, the idioms appeared in the respective prescribed readers but they were never explained as idioms to the learners. Third, the teachers did not know that idioms were part of imaginative language. There are three types of idioms: frozen idioms; transparent idioms and opaque idioms. Transparent idioms were selected for Grade 3 learners in this study. The other two types are more difficult for Grade 3 learners to understand.

Findings	Author and year	Interpretive discussion
		Perhaps that is the main reason why the learners decoded the idioms literally. The dual idiom representation model was not used in this research due to its complexity for Grade 3 level.

The first sub-theory, the literal first or idiom list, suggests that a person first understands an idiom literally before understanding it idiomatically, while the second sub-theory, the simultaneous processing or lexical representation sub-theory, suggests that idioms are interpreted literally and idiomatically at the same time. The third sub-theory, figurative first or direct access, believes that indigenous speakers know and understand an idiom at first sight, while the fourth, the compositional analysis sub-theory, is composed of decomposable idioms with either a literal or figurative meaning or non-decomposable idioms, which are those idioms of which individual components do not contribute to the figurative meaning of the phrase. The dual idiom representation model or the DIR Model, which is a comprehensive model encompassing the five models, also takes the frequency of usage of the idiom into consideration. The teachers in both schools and the researcher explained the idioms by using Piaget's (1980) theory of teaching the learners from the known to the unknown, making sure they understood what the picture stood for literally before steering them to its idiomatic meaning.

Therefore, in these research findings, the literal first or idiom list sub-theory was evident in the learners' interpretation of the Setswana idioms in picture form programme.

7.6 COMPARING RESEARCH FINDINGS WITH EXISTING KNOWLEDGE: NEW INSIGHTS PRODUCED BY THE STUDY

Table 7.4: Comparing research findings with existing knowledge: New insights

Categories	Description	Interpretive discussion
<p>Teachers had a better understanding of what imaginative language is and how to teach it as part of idioms at Grade 3 level .</p>	<p>Some teachers are not able to download DBE's curriculum statement from the website. Therefore some teachers do not have the CAPS policy document. They rely only on the coaches for the interpretation of the curriculum. This study will empower teachers to ask the coach and the principal for a copy of the curriculum policy. They will then be able to use their initiative and creativity to interpret the curriculum and adapt or add to some of the suggestions made by the coach if they do not work in their classes.</p>	<p>The problem of misinterpreting the curriculum by focussing on what the teacher is competent in, for example teaching literature only because they do not like grammar, has been a bone of contention in teaching languages in some schools. This is important because the study made both the teachers and the learners aware of hidden meaning of language in idioms. The learners will be aware of how elderly people use idioms in their daily lives, so that they can bring that knowledge from the home to the classroom.</p>
<p>Learners gained a better understanding of idioms, which improved their proficiency in Setswana. They also learnt morals and values, e.g. describing incidents in a more polite way by using idioms.</p>	<p>Learners were able to learn some of the indigenous knowledge encouraged in the CAPS document that is hidden in idioms, e.g. addressing elders and peers in different ways according to age.</p>	<p>Moral degeneration and loss of ubuntu among the youth is a concern in schools and in society. The study will help to remind the teachers and the learners of values and morals which will be re-emphasised in the teaching of idioms at an early stage in Grade 3. There is a proverb in Setswana that says: <i>Lore lo rojwa lo sa le metsi</i> (It is possible to bend a branch while still green). The same applies to teaching learners idioms in Grade 3 to help with Setswana language proficiency at an early age.</p>

Categories	Description	Interpretive discussion
Different teaching methods and strategies gave teachers confidence in teaching idioms. At the same time, these different strategies encouraged learners to use their imagination to learn and decode idioms in a meaningful way.	Role-playing, demonstrations, use of anecdotes, activities and use of idioms in picture form used in the teaching of idioms stimulated the learners' imagination and curiosity during learning. The teachers were also empowered to teach differently from their set ways.	Teaching idioms in picture form in Setswana has never been attempted before. This strategy has been used in the teaching of idioms in Afrikaans, English and German. The studies showed that it can be done in an African language as well. This method fixes the idioms in the learners' minds, as it builds on what the curriculum calls "lifelong learning".

Grade 3 teachers' understanding of idioms as imaginative language (*Puo ya maitlhamo* in Setswana) was derived from the curriculum's definition of imaginative language in the glossary. Through the explanation and demonstration of teaching idioms with the aid of anecdotes in this study, the teachers were able to get a better insight into what idioms are. At the same time the teachers learnt a strategy that they can use or improve to help them with their self-initiated strategies for teaching idioms. Role-play and demonstrations of what idioms are during the teachers' lesson presentations confirmed their readiness and their understanding of the *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme. The stage was also well prepared for the learners to be taught idioms in picture form.

The teachers' facilitation skills (questioning and guidance) elicited different reactions from the learners. Discussions were loud; disbelief, amazement and amusement were perceived in the learners' body language and remarks as the *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme was taught to them. An idiom such as *Go ja ntšwa* (to eat a dog, a rude reference to a poor person) was explained in two more ways: a direct, but neutral statement (*Ba ja ntšwa* or *Ba a dila/ Ke badidi* (they are poor), or compassionately (*Ba a tlhoka* (they lack). In this way, the aspect of morals and values is brought into play while at the same time improving the teacher's and learners' proficiency in Setswana.

The teaching of idioms during reading focusing on idioms within the context of the story is well espoused by Wolchock (1990), while the use of idioms in picture form is well illustrated by Applebee and Rush (1992). However, the teaching strategies or

methods for teaching idioms as imaginative language are not provided to the teachers in the CAPS policy document nor by the material provided to the teachers by the Coaches of Setswana. Teaching and learning of idioms should not be done in isolation, but should form part of everyday language during reading and speaking in the Setswana classrooms in Grade 3.

The *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme was explicitly designed to use the learners' imagination and to help them align a normal everyday incident to an idiom. The idioms in picture form stimulates their thinking and association skills, culminating in an idiom. The Grade 3 teachers' skills in teaching idioms were honed and the learners' morals and values were enhanced.

7.7 FINDINGS BASED ON THE 10 EMPOWERMENT EVALUATION PRINCIPLES

The findings are based on the 10 empowerment evaluation principles method. The findings are meant to strengthen the two theories used and the emerging model presented in Chapter 3 to help in the teaching of Setswana idioms as imaginative language. These findings are discussed in the table below:

Table 7.5: Empowerment evaluation principles

Principles that guide the empowerment evaluation process	Discussions and implementation of the principles
Improvement	<p>The teachers did not know what idioms were as imaginative language in Phase One, but now they do. In 2015, a brief interview was carried out with Teacher A and Teacher C (unfortunately Teacher B was absent from the school). This is what they had to say about the programme: Teacher A: The learners loved the idioms and they were even able to use them, for example when one of the children does something that the other one does not like when playing with friends. When busy with creative writing, they would use those idioms that they still remembered and understood. For the teacher this Setswana idiom in picture form is a good strategy to teach idioms to learners, especially helping them to use such language. She felt that there was a need for more pictures and activities to be used in teaching idioms, unfortunately they do not know how to draw pictures. (Researchers' Diary: School 1: 17 February 2015)</p> <p>Teacher C: Teacher C said that the learners liked learning more idioms after the introduction of the programme. The learners started using the</p>

Principles that guide the empowerment evaluation process	Discussions and implementation of the principles
	<p>idioms when writing paragraphs. She recommended that the curriculum in the Foundation Phase should use idioms in the curriculum. She also said that the learners in Grade 4 this year are expected to learn idioms as part of the curriculum and she is now making use of the 16 idioms in picture form that I gave her. The learners who were respondents in Grade 3 loved the colourful pictures and made them more interested in learning Setswana idioms. She also gave the learners a creative activity in which they must write a paragraph and she was surprised to see that the learners used some of the idioms that had been taught (Researchers' Diary: School 2: 16 February 2015).</p>
Community ownership	<p><i>Community ownership – value and facilitate community control:</i> Some of the learners in Teacher C's class were already using the idiom <i>Go fatlha magotlo</i> (To blind the mice – meaning to urinate) when asking permission to go to the toilet. Teacher C also emphasised that the learners could also say <i>Go ntsha metsi</i> (to take out water – meaning to urinate) In one of teacher A's lessons, she emphasised the fact that one cannot just say to someone <i>Ko ga lona ba ja ntšwa</i> (At your home they eat a dog –, meaning they are poor). The polite way of describing situations in the community was emphasised.</p>
Inclusion	<p>The findings of the study will be presented to School 1 and School 2 principals and the Departments of Education in Gauteng and North-West provinces. All the Grade 3 classes have a set of 16 laminated coloured idioms in picture form to ensure that the findings of the study are enjoyed and used further to improve the teaching of Setswana by all the stakeholders.</p>
Democratic participation	<p><i>Democratic participation – open participation and fair decision making:</i> The teacher and the learners were very cooperative throughout the stages of the research. None of the teachers or learners withdrew from the research in School 1 and School 2.</p>
Social justice (morals and values)	<p><i>Social justice – address social inequities in society:</i> During their teaching, the teachers emphasised why idioms are used and why they also help build values and morals in oneself and in the community.</p>
Community knowledge	<p><i>Community knowledge – respect and value community knowledge:</i> The Setswana teachers and the learners are part of the community, which to some extent was ignoring idioms before the implementation (Phase One) of the Setswana idioms in picture form programme. After the implementation of the programme, the learners as well as the teachers will be seen as knowledgeable members of the community as far as idioms are concerned.</p>

Principles that guide the empowerment evaluation process	Discussions and implementation of the principles
Evidence-based strategy	<i>Evidence-based strategies – respect and use of both community and scholarly knowledge:</i> The 16 laminated idioms in picture form and the experience teachers gained by presenting idioms equip the teachers with scholarly knowledge of idioms in the community and the ability to teach them. The learners, as members of the community, will also have scholarly knowledge of idioms.
Capacity building	<i>Capacity building – enhance stakeholder ability to evaluate and improve planning and implementation:</i> The teachers in both schools acquired new information and were able to observe which method or strategies worked or did not work during the teaching of idioms with pictures and other strategies. It is now up to the teachers to add more methods and strategies to enable them to continue with the Setswana idioms in picture form programme. The Department of Basic Education in Gauteng and North West University should be the ones that enhance and carry on with this programme.
Organisational learning	<i>Organisational learning – apply data to evaluate and implement practices and informed decision making:</i> The findings in Phase One helped me and the teachers to come up with a programme that was implemented in Phase Two and showed the impact it had in the teaching of idioms (see principle 1 above).
Accountability	<i>Accountability – emphasise outcomes and accountability:</i> In Phase Two, the Grade 3 learners took the opportunity to learn new idioms and apply them to their situation. Two teachers attested to the learners being able to use idioms in their daily speech and to write short paragraphs in which they also used some of the idioms (short interviews with Teachers A and C on 16 and 17 February 2015). This is proof that from now on, teachers A, B and C are accountable for ensuring that they use idioms in their daily speech and during reading. The learners involved in the research will also be alert to idioms in their own and others' daily speech.

7.8 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

The findings in this study proved that there is a need for teachers to use programmes such as these to help teach idioms and assist learners to decode what idioms are. The following secondary research questions that directed this study are answered below.

7.8.1 How do Grade 3 teachers use Setswana daily in the classroom?

Sociolinguistic aspects that emerged during the implementation of the Setswana idioms in picture form programme revealed the language used by teachers and learners in the classroom. The three teachers who were observed during the

implementation of the programme come from an urban area and semi-rural area. In the urban areas, Setswana is in contact with all 11 official languages, which might influence Setswana proficiency in both the teachers and the learners. Some of the learners are not mother-tongue speakers of Setswana, but because of the close proximity of the school to the learners' home, they end up learning a 'Home Language' they do not speak at home. The learner comes into contact with the language only in the classroom. In the semi-rural areas, Setswana is the predominant language. During Phase Two of the study, the researcher was interested in determining the teachers' and learners' improvement of language usage in terms of sociolinguistic impediments to teaching idioms.

Table: 7.6 Sociolinguistic aspects related to language proficiency in the teaching of idioms

Use of Setswana non-dialect words	Standard Setswana	English translation
<i>O apere diaparo tse dipila.</i>	O apere diaparo tse dintle	She is wearing beautiful clothes
Use of non-standard loan words -Sepedi	Standard Setswana	English translation
O na le swele <i>Go šiana</i> <i>Aowa!</i> <i>Ba ja mpya.</i> <i>Ka sejwalejwale</i>	<i>O na le pelo e mpe</i> <i>Go taboga/siana</i> Nnyaa! <i>Ba ja ntšwa</i> <i>Se gompieno</i>	He/she has a cruel heart To run No! They are poor Modernity
Use of non-standard loan words - English	Standard Setswana	English translation
O na le jelase <i>Go tla llata</i> <i>Nnese</i> Mistress <i>Dishopong</i> Colour blocking <i>Ba re ke go swenka.</i> Crocodile <i>Mo laeneng</i> On your mark, get set ready, go!	<i>O lefufa/mona</i> <i>Go nna thari/Go tla morago ga nako</i> <i>Mooki</i> <i>Morutabana</i> <i>Mabenkeleng</i> <i>Go apara mebala e e farologaneng.</i> <i>Ba re ke go ikgantsha/Go ipona</i> <i>Kwena</i> <i>Mo moleng</i> <i>Nngwe, pedi, tharo! Sianang!</i> <i>(Not translatable)</i> <i>Manala a ntlafaditsweng</i> <i>Nnyaa! Morutabana</i>	He/she is jealous To be late Nurse Teacher At the shop To wear clothes of different colours To be swanky Crocodile In the line On your mark, get set ready, go!

Use of Setswana non-dialect words	Standard Setswana	English translation
<i>Tsa manicure</i> No! Teacher Yes! Teacher	<i>Ee! Morutabana</i>	That is manicured. Yes! Teacher No! Teacher
Pretoria Sotho	Standard Setswana	English translation
Kwatile derived from Afrikaans <i>Kwaad</i> .	<i>O befetswe/ O galefile</i>	He/she is angry
Use of non-standard loan words - Afrikaans	Standard Setswana	English translation
<i>Go reisisa</i> derived from the Afrikaans “ Om te reis ”	<i>Go thuba lebelo</i>	To race
Use of code-switching	Standard Setswana	English translation
<i>Go nwa cooldrink</i> <i>Ee!Teacher</i>	<i>Go nwa senotsididi</i> <i>Ee! Morutabana</i>	To have a soft drink Yes, teacher!

Language proficiency in Setswana is an integral part of this study. Therefore, it was important to observe during the teachers’ lessons how language proficiency was handled by both the teachers and the learners. The above examples of influence by other standard and non-standard languages seemed to be less than in the earlier findings of these impediments in Phase One of the study (see Chapter 5). Two of the teachers consistently corrected the learners’ use of non-standard languages. Only one teacher seemed to allow the learners to use non-standard words without making an effort to correct the misuse of these languages by providing appropriate Setswana words or phrases. Code-switching and non-standard dialectal words as well as Pretoria Sotho were used to a lesser extent than the non-standard loan-words derived from English. It is also important to note that non-standard Setswana was used more often by the learners than by the teachers in Phase Two. This is encouraging, as learners tend to imitate the language used by their teachers.

7.8.2 What is Grade 3 Setswana teachers’ understanding of idioms as part of Home Language teaching and learning?

The teachers’ understanding of idioms at first seemed a little bit shaky. However, after the researcher’s demonstration of own strategies in the teaching of idioms by using anecdotes, the teachers seemed to have some understanding of what idioms are and how they could be approached. Teacher A came up with her own strategies

and introduced totally new idioms to the learners. Teacher B took most of the idioms from the reader. However, she seemed to struggle to maintain consistency and flow during teaching. All her selected idioms started correctly with the formulaic prefix *Go-* found in Setswana idioms, but her answers also started with the prefix *Go-*. The teacher was confusing herself because she could not differentiate between an idiom and the relevant answer. At one stage, she gave synonyms for the idiom as the explanation of the idiom. She also mistakenly used a non-idiom as an idiom by adding the prefix *Go-*. Teacher C did not introduce any new idioms, selected by herself, at all; instead she revised the anecdotes taught by the researcher. In a sense, this was a good strategy, because she helped emphasise the idioms taught in the anecdotes by the researcher. Although two different readers were used in the two schools, the teachers were constantly on the alert to explain in detail what the idioms meant in the context of the story that had been read. Teachers A and C made sure that the learners understood the content of the story (comprehension) before using or explaining the idiom relevant to a specific incident in the story. Teacher B struggled with the content of the story, because she was the only active reader and the learners were instructed to just follow the reading in their books by pointing at each word as she read. She asked the questions and answered them without taking comprehension of the story into account. Although the learners were involved in the lesson, the teacher was the expert pouring information into the learners, a method discouraged by scholars like Sebate (2011) and Ogumbamero (2010). The reading by teacher B could have been interesting, as she would now be reinforcing the idioms she had introduced previously within the context of the story and not in isolation, as before.

7.8.3 How do teachers make learners master the use of idioms as part of a programme in their language learning within the classroom?

Each Grade 3 Setswana teacher used her own methods to help learners master the use of idioms as part of imaginative language. They relied on role playing and demonstration of idioms as a way of making learners use idioms efficiently in daily language use. They also applied their questioning skills to elicit the learners' prior knowledge and align it with the new information. One of the teachers relied more on the show and tell method, making the lesson more teacher centred. The teachers' emphasis on cultural values embedded in idioms and their usage was the integral

part of their teaching method. All three teachers were empowered by using the sixteen idioms in picture form together with flashcards of the written idioms and their meanings. They were also involved in the supervision of group work activity of the idioms using flashcards.

7.8.4 What are the learner's responses towards the teaching of idioms as part of a programme in Setswana Grade 3 classes?

Throughout the teaching of Setswana idioms, the learner's responses were enthusiastic; they were keen to learn a new concept of idioms as imaginative language. This is evident from the learners' learning from anecdotes, reading and idioms in picture form. In some instances the learners struggled with the concepts shown in the pictures, for example, the idea of "A grandfather making the rain fall," as rain is a natural phenomenon. However, the teacher was able to direct them to the relevant idiom. In some cases, learners guessed what they saw in the pictures by giving the opposite of the answer of the idiom. In some cases the anecdotes used had to be demonstrated through role-play to tap into their imagination before the idiom was fully understood. When they were guided by the teacher through questions, they were able to provide correct answers to the questions. Where the teacher did not understand the idiom, the learners also failed to decode its meaning. In most cases, the learners interpreted the idiom pictures literally. This supports Liu's sub-theory that learners understand and interpret an idiom literally first before they interpret it as an idiom. Bruner (1960) asserts that learners are able to shape, organise and adapt newly developed information if it makes sense and fits into their structure of knowledge. The learners showed inquisitiveness and they came up with various answers to each picture. During revision lessons, the learners showed good understanding of what Setswana idioms are because they did not need to be prompted to remember any of the idioms that they had been taught earlier. Another observation of the learners' responses to the picture programme was that learners seemed to struggle during group work to match the meanings to the idioms. This could have been because they were not familiar with this type of activity. In constructivism, group work is encouraged because learners learn through collaboration with each other, since learning is a group or social concept (Tam, 2004; Newby et.al, 2006).

7.8.5 What constitutes a programme that will empower teachers to teach idioms as imaginative language?

The *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme consists of 16 idioms in picture form. Each teacher was given the different Setswana idioms in picture form accompanied by the loose flash cards of the idioms in Setswana and their meanings in another separate set of flash cards. The sixteen idioms had been carefully selected, because the level of difficulty of the idioms should match the abilities of Grade 3 learners. Therefore only transparent types of idioms were selected; frozen and opaque idioms are more difficult and suitable for higher grades (see 2.2). A summary of what to take into account when selecting idioms is given by Cooper (1998:259) (see 2.5.1). The researcher and the teacher implemented the Setswana idioms in picture form programme by means of various classroom activities. The researcher conducted revision activities (see 6.7) in order to analyse the effect of the programme,

7.8.6 The main research question

The primary question of the study was:

To what extent can a *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme empower teachers to teach idioms to Grade 3 Setswana learners as part of imaginative language?

This study demonstrated that with proper guidance, Setswana teachers were able to understand and improve the teaching of Setswana idioms as part of imaginative language. The learners' understanding of what idioms are and how to decode the meaning of idioms used in various contexts improved. This also impacted on their Setswana proficiency as well as how they use language appropriately in their daily communication.

During the course of the study it was observed that the teachers' teaching methods improved greatly after the introduction of anecdotes, reading and use of idioms in picture form. They learnt new strategies for facilitating a lesson on idioms, which triggered their initiative and creativity; some teachers used role-play and

demonstrations to teach the idioms they had selected. The teachers' new strategies aroused learners' curiosity through the use of enquiry-based learning, which helped learners to think and come up with relevant questions and answers to the content taught. This also showed a better understanding of what an idiom is and how it is used.

During Phase One there was interference with Setswana standard language by other non-standard language varieties. After the implementation of *Setswana idioms in picture form*, I observed that there was minimal interference by non-standard language varieties on both teachers' and learners' language usage in class.

During Phase Two of the study, the use of activities, anecdotes, reading as well as idioms in picture form brought a change in the teaching methods and as well as in the understanding and usage of idioms. Learners' imagination was challenged through the use of anecdotes and idioms in pictures, which were at first decoded literally instead of figuratively. The revision helped both the teachers and the learners to understand what idioms are. This is in line with Bruner's (1960) view that it is important to train learners to reflect back on what information they have learnt and how they learnt it.

The results of the study in both Phase One and Phase Two showed the need to guide teachers in interpreting the curriculum and teaching idioms creatively. The use of anecdotes, role-play, demonstrations, reading lessons, activities and Setswana idioms in picture form led to effective teaching strategies and an understanding of the decoding of idioms by both the teachers and learners. This intervention strategy not only empowered teachers with new teaching strategies, but indicated the need to build on the existing theory of teaching idioms that is applied internationally (see 3.8). In this study, only one of the five sub-theories of decoding idioms was realised, namely the literal first or idiom list. The study also showed that further research of idioms based on the three types of difficulty (see 2.2) was needed.

7.9 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1

This chapter provided the background to the study and the reasons why it was undertaken. The problem statement, research questions, rationale and the purpose and objectives of the study, the theoretical framework the research methodology and crucial concepts are discussed and defined in this chapter and the research design is discussed.

Chapter 2

In Chapter 2 the researcher reviewed literature that formed the basis of the theoretical framework of the study. The literature review that was presented covered the definition of idioms and why we should teach idioms as part of imaginative language. Literature on sociolinguistic and impediments to Home Language teaching and learning were reviewed.

Chapter 3

In this chapter, the theoretical framework was based on both constructivism theory and the theoretical framework on decoding idioms by learners. The views of different researchers who researched these topics were synthesised to position this study. Furthermore, the teaching strategies and theories of teaching and learning, such as constructivism and guided learning theories of teaching idioms, were reviewed.

Chapter 4

The research approach, methods of data collection and analysis were explained in this chapter. The aim was to try and produce data that would inform the Setswana idioms in picture form programme that would be designed to empower teachers to teach idioms to Grade 3 Setswana learners as part of imaginative language.

Chapter 5

This chapter dealt with the analysis of data collected in 2013 in Phase One of the study. The findings of this study proved that teachers did not know what imaginative language is. This led to the design of the Setswana idioms in picture form programme.

Chapter 6

This chapter dealt with the implementation and analysis of the Setswana idioms in picture form programme in Phase Two of the study. The implementation sequence was as follows: introduction of idioms through anecdotes by the researcher; introduction of idioms by the Grade 3 teachers; teaching of idioms during reading by the Grade 3 teachers; introduction of Setswana idioms in picture form programme and revision and activity on Setswana idioms in picture form programme.

Chapter 7

An overview, synthesis of findings and recommendations are presented in this chapter. The research questions are answered and the literature is compared with the findings. In conclusion, recommendations for future research and study are made.

7.10 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The findings of this study showed clearly that if teachers are properly guided and included in the planning of their subjects, their initiative and creativity will be stimulated. The coach system, which was presented as very rigid and prescriptive, seems to be doing more harm than good; it leaves no room for teacher initiative and seems to follow a “one size fits all” model where “rote learning” seems to have been added to “rote learning”. Imaginative language cannot be taught by non-imaginative teachers. If teachers are to be facilitators, as the theory of constructivism recommends, then they must be motivated and guided to decode the curriculum in the specific languages they teach.

At first teachers in Grade 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 as well as the learners were not aware that idioms are part of imaginative language and can be used in their everyday communication. After guidance, during which anecdotes were used to introduce idioms to the learners (and the teachers), the teachers were able to teach idioms on their own. This was a practice run before the Setswana idioms in picture form programme was implemented. The collaboration with the teachers and the learners in Grade 3 Setswana classes saw teachers’ and learners’ imagination activated as

they understood idioms as part of imaginative language. The Setswana idioms in colourful pictures aroused interest and curiosity among the learners, while the teachers were challenged to think of different strategies and techniques they could use in their teaching. Their questioning skills were put to the test and helped keep the learners on their toes while forcing them to think and come up with solutions or answers to the questions asked by the teachers. In short, the teachers were successful in the teaching of idioms after being taught how to fish instead of being given a fish, as the expression goes.

When the teachers presented the idioms in picture form after having watched me teach idioms with the aid of anecdotes, they had practised teaching idioms twice. First they had chosen their own five idioms to teach – without using pictures, but using their own anecdotes. Then they used the prescribed readers during a reading lesson. The learners decoded each picture literally, and the teachers had to use different strategies and techniques such as anecdotes, role-playing and demonstrations until the learners understood that a specific action or picture can have two different meanings captured in one idiom. They also learnt that idioms could be used in a different context than that of the story in their readers as well.

In Phase One, the sociolinguistic aspects that interfere with language proficiency in a Home Language class, such as non-standard words, Pretoria Sotho, code-switching and code-mixing, were very much in evidence. After discussing the findings with the teachers, the incidence of such interference was much lower, especially in the presentations by Teacher A in School 1 and Teacher C in School 2. Teacher B in School 2 did not seem to be making any effort at all in this respect (see Appendix D CD1). Teacher B's way of teaching proved that the use of non-standard language, dialectal influence, code-switching and code-mixing were impediments to Setswana language proficiency. My conclusion was that it is not possible to teach an idiom in Home Language if code-switching and code-mixing are used.

Morals and values have declined drastically in our society through lack of *botho/ubuntu* (humanism). Traditional sayings and idiomatic expressions remind learners of good behaviour and polite ways of using words instead of being disrespectful. They learnt to use idioms to express respect. For example, they learnt

through idiom teaching that one does not say *O a rota* (Hou are urinating), but *O fatlha magotlo* (You are blinding the mice) or *O ntsha metsi* (you are taking out water). If someone steals, we say *O dinala ditelele* (She has long nails), meaning the person is a thief.

The research findings of Phase Two showed that the teachers and learners who were involved in this research phase both benefited from being reminded of the idioms learnt. Naturally, the communities in which they live also benefit. Morals and values are enhanced, and learners can also be asked to ask their parents to teach them at least two idioms a week which they can come and share with the class. Lists of these idioms can also be compiled for use during orals and creative writing. This will raise their cultural awareness and make them more respectful and polite. A set of 16 laminated, colourful A3 idioms in picture form was given to each Grade 3 class to put on their classroom walls as a constant reminder of the idioms they had learnt. This also serves as reinforcement of the idioms learnt and encouragement for the teachers to come up with more idioms in their daily speech, even if it is not during a reading or language lesson. It was very surprising for me when the teachers said “We do not teach idioms”, especially as idioms form part of the Setswana Home Language they speak daily – if they speak Setswana correctly.

I can state positively that the *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme made a huge difference to the teachers’ and the learners’ knowledge of idioms as part of imaginative language, which can be and is in fact used in their daily lives – as shown by a learner who no longer asked the teacher to go to the toilet, but said: *Ke kopa go yo fatlha magotlo?* (May I go and blind the mice?). This proved the difference the programme made to the behaviour of many learners and teachers.

Readers with idioms in picture form: I intend to use the idioms which were used in this study to design readers, so that the learners can learn the Setswana idioms in the context of a story and not in isolation. Other authors that write Setswana children’s stories will be invited to write original stories instead of using stories translated from English. I will arrange with known authors who write children’s stories to come and present a workshop to interested Setswana teachers on writing original stories for

Grade R to Grade 7. With these readers, questions and activities based on idioms used in the story book will be encouraged.

I have developed 2 **workbooks** as part of the *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme described above for use in different activities, for example, an entry in a diary using idioms, a letter to a friend using one or two idioms as well as matching an idiom and its answer to a picture. The list of the idioms and their meanings are given at the end of the workbook for easy reference if the teacher does not know what idioms and their meanings are. A copy of these workbooks will be presented to the Department of Basic Education as well as to the schools that were involved in the research (see Appendix E CD2).

I will **develop more idioms in picture-form** that will be used in the different grades in primary schools based on transparent, opaque and frozen idioms (see 2.2). More learning and teaching material will be developed and used in different contexts based on function, register, connotation, objective and language proficiency (Liu (2008). I intend to ask young learners to assist me to develop idioms in picture form, and their contributions will be acknowledged. This will align with the constructivist theory adopted in this research project.

The use of multiple intelligences: I plan to write a booklet explaining the multiple intelligences method in teaching Setswana idioms. I will hold workshops in which this method will be implemented to help teachers with more teaching strategies and techniques that will accommodate learners with different intelligences as well as accommodating slow and fast learners in the different schools that teach Setswana as Home Language. I will also be able to help other African languages to develop their own examples based on this method.

Thematic approach to the use of idioms based on body-parts: Themes such as body parts in the teaching of idioms will also be explored during workshops. Many learners in Grade 3 are taught different rhymes based on body parts. I will group idioms according to different body parts and use them in teaching other aspects of grammar such as nouns, verbs and adjectives.

E-learning: I will also develop pictures and illustrations for e-learning in teaching and learning Setswana idioms. In this way, the teachers and the learners' technological skills will be developed as well.

Training programme: I have experience in teaching teachers at the In-service Training College. I will therefore develop a training programme to train more teachers on how to teach idioms in lower classes. Teaching techniques and strategies will be taught and teachers will give practical lesson presentations. These will in turn encourage more teachers to use their initiative and creativity. The teachers attending the workshop will evaluate each other's presentations. A booklet with new initiatives for improving language proficiency will be compiled by the groups for the African languages represented at the workshop. The learnt skills and strategies will not only be used for teaching idioms, but also for proverbs, riddles and figures of speech, thus promoting creativity in African languages.

Revision of the curriculum: The Department of Basic Education should make the curriculum for Home Language clearer by explaining what idioms, figures of speech, riddles and proverbs are as imaginative language. A letter with this recommendation will be sent to the Department.

7.11 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This section offers recommendations based on the implementation of the *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme. In this programme 16 idioms in picture form were used to implement the programme. Each class was given a set of 16 laminated idioms in picture form to use in Grade 3. These idiom pictures can also be used in the higher grades at primary schools. Since there are more than 16 idioms in Setswana, there is a need to develop more idioms in picture form and increase the number of strategies for presenting idioms (see 2.5).

It is also important to select idioms that match the learners' abilities. The three types of idioms according to level of difficulty are transparent idioms, which were used in this study, frozen idioms and opaque idioms; the latter two can be introduced gradually in the teaching of idioms from Grade 3 to Grade 7. For the latter types of idioms, further

research is needed. Furthermore, a longitudinal study could be conducted on the use of idioms and their impact on the language attitude of learners.

7.12 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following limitations may have affected the results of the study:

The lack of clear guidelines and content in the CAPS documents and the failure to teach idioms as well as teachers' ignorance of idioms as imaginative language made the study take longer. Only Liu's (2008) first sub-theory was implemented and tested. This was because the idioms taught were of the transparent type, which are easier and at the level of Grade 3 learners. If the Home Language learners and their teachers had known and taught idioms for some time, more teaching strategies for teaching idioms could have been observed or introduced (see 2.5.2).

Another limitation, which prevented a better understanding of how idioms are taught in the rural areas, was the refusal by some officials to allow me to conduct the study in the rural areas where Setswana is predominant. In the end, the study could only be conducted in the urban and semi-rural areas. Home Language speakers in rural areas are expected to be more proficient in the use of Setswana and have a higher level of idiom usage which could have strengthened my study.

7.13 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study focussed on how teachers in Grade 3 Setswana classes teach idioms as well as how the learners understand and decode idioms. Various methods and strategies for teaching idioms (including using idioms in picture form) were implemented, but not exhaustively. This study showed to what extent the Setswana idioms in picture form programme can empower teachers to teach idioms and learners to understand and use Setswana idioms as imaginative language in Grade 3 classes as well as in their daily lives. Some of the idioms touched on values and morals and how one can promote these among friends and in the community. The teachers were able to come up with different teaching strategies after the demonstration of how to teach idioms. They creatively used anecdotes, demonstrations and role-playing.

Language proficiency showed a big improvement on Phase One proficiency. The interrelationship of aspects related to idiom teaching and learning as well as sociolinguistic impediments to the teaching of idioms in a multilingual situation were highlighted. Making the teachers aware of the importance of being Home Language teachers (because learners imitate the way teachers speak) made the teachers guide the learners to use appropriate Setswana words during lesson presentations while at the same time making the teachers conscious of how they used Setswana as a Home Language in class.

Another important observation is that the teaching of African idioms, proverbs and figures of speech is an area that has not been well researched. Language proficiency as well as different interesting teaching strategies are much needed to promote African Languages. The *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme has exposed a new field that needs to be explored in detail when compared with research done abroad by researchers such as Liu (2008), Gibbs (1987) and Cooper (1998). As a result the *Setswana idioms in picture form* programme will contribute to theory building in the teaching of idioms as illustrated in Figure 3.2 of this study.

The Grade 3 teachers' follow-up remarks in 2015 highlighted the need to include the *Setswana idiom in picture form* programme as well as other strategies for teaching idioms, which were not exhausted (see Chapter 2). The teachers felt that idioms should be introduced from the Foundation Phase in view of the learners' responses to the programme. Grossman (2008:84) reiterates the importance of teaching methods by stating that: "I began to realise that the way I taught was, in fact, more important than what I taught." The learners' responses to the new information and how it was presented confirmed many scholars' theories on learning and processing information (Bruner, 1960); D'Angelo, 2014) and Badders, 2007).

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