

**The contribution of a text-based approach to English
education
for communicative competence**

by

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Dedication

To late my late parents, Abner and Dorcas Mohlabi,
and to my daughters Mary, Dima, Ayanda, Zaza
and my grandchildren,
for their immense love, respect and encouragement.

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Thanks be to God! He laveth the thirsty land.

(Felix Mendelsohn: Elijah No. 20)

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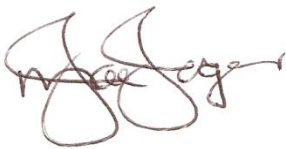
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23 February 2016



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Abstract

The text-based approach is prescribed alongside the communicative approach in the CAPS. This study explores the implementation of the text-based approach and its contribution to English FAL for the development of communicative competence in Grade 4 in public schools in South Africa. Grade 4 is the entry level into the Intermediate Phase of primary schooling, subsequent to a three or four year period of schooling in the Foundation Phase. A number of educational reports have shown that in many schools learners across all phases fall short of the requisite language and literacy skills in English. Studies also reveal that as a result of teachers' lack of high literacy levels, poor subject knowledge and inadequate teaching methods, many public schools fail to develop learners' communicative competence that is essential for cognitive development, for using English as a Language of Learning and Teaching and for successful academic learning. Moreover, research reveals that little is known on how academic literacy is developed at primary level. Teachers' knowledge and skilfulness denote what is termed 'pedagogical content knowledge', which is deemed vital in any teaching and learning situation. It is thus imperative that the text-based approach to language teaching be executed optimally to benefit learners as they progress through the years of basic education.

This study employs a congruent parallel mixed method strategy which incorporates both qualitative and quantitative research designs for complementarity, and crystallisation is achieved by means of the employment of different data collection methods. It is anchored in the interpretivist-constructivist philosophical paradigm and underpinned by renowned and internationally acclaimed theories of language teaching and learning.

The results reveal that the traditional approach to teaching was still maintained and that the text-based approach was implemented by means of achieving daily requirements, in the form of scripted lesson plans, of the departmental intervention strategy, the GPLMS. Furthermore, teachers had limited knowledge of what the approach entailed and curriculum matters were not adequately understood. Although the approach was found suitable and advantageous, its major deficiency was failure to develop learners' communicative competence.

Key words: Communicative Competence, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, English, First Additional Language, Grade 4, Language of Teaching and Learning, Pedagogical Content Knowledge, Text-Based Approach.

Abstrak

In die Kurrikulum- en Asseseringsbeleidsverklaring (KABV) word die teksgebaseerde benadering naas die kommunikatiewe benadering voorgeskryf. Hierdie studie ondersoek die implementering van die teksgebaseerde bandering en die bydrae daarvan tot Engels Eerste Addisionele Taal vir die ontwikkeling van kommunikatiewe bevoegdheid in graad vier in openbare skole in Suid-Afrika. Graad vier is die intreevlak tot die Intermediêre Fase van primêre skoolopleiding wat volg op die drie- of vierjaartydperk van skoolopleiding in die Grondslagfase. Dit blyk uit verskeie opvoedkundige verslae dat leerders in baie skole in alle fases nie oor die nodige taal- en geletterdheidsvaardighede in Engels beskik nie. Studies toon ook dat onderwysers se beperkte geletterdheid, swak vakkennis en ontoereikende onderrigmetodes tot gevolg het dat baie openbare skole nie daarin slaag om leerders se kommunikatiewe bevoegdheid te ontwikkel nie. Hierdie bevoegdheid is noodsaaklik vir kognitiewe ontwikkeling ten einde Engels as Taal van Onderig en Leer en vir suksesvolle akademiese leer te gebruik. Navorsing toon verder dat min bekend is oor hoe akademiese geletterdheid op primêre skool ontwikkel. Onderwysers se kennis en vaardigheid bepaal die term '*pedagogical content knowledge*' (pedagogiese inhoudskennis) wat as kritiek in enige onderrig-en-leersituasie beskou word. Dit is dus noodsaaklik dat die teksgebaseerde benadering tot taalonderrig optimaal tot leerders se voordeel aangewend word namate hulle met hul basiese onderwys vorder.

'n Kongruente, parallelle, gemengde metode wat kwalitatiewe en kwantitatiewe navorsingsontwerp vir komplementariteit insluit, word in hierdie studie aangewend en kristallisering word verkry deur die toepassing van verskillende data-insamelingsmetodes. Die studie is geanker in die vertolkend-konstruktiewe filosofiese paradigma en word ondersteun deur befaamde en internasionaal erkende teorieë oor die onderrig en leer van taal.

Die resultate toon dat die tradisionele benadering tot onderrig steeds gehandhaaf word. Die teksgebaseerde benadering tot onderrig is toegepas deur die vereistes na te kom wat in die vooropgestelde lesse van die departementele ingrypingstrategie, die *Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS)*, voorgeskryf is. Die resultate toon ook dat onderwysers beperkte kennis het van wat die teksgebaseerde benadering behels en dat hulle kurrikulumaangeleentheid nie behoorlik verstaan nie. Alhoewel daar bevind is dat die benadering geskik en voordelig is, is die grootse gebrek daarvan dat leerders se kommunikatiewe bevoegdheid nie ontwikkel word nie.

Sleutelwoorde: Kommunikatiewe bevoegdheid, Kurrikulum- en Assesseringsbeleidsverklaring, Engels, Eerste Addisionele Taal, Graad 4, Taal van Onderrig en Leer, Pedagogiese Inhoudskennis, Teksgebaseerde benadering

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List of abbreviations

ANA	Annual National Assessments
BLP	Balanced Language Programme
BNC	British National Corpus
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CC	Communicative Competence
CDE	Centre for Development and Enterprise
CI	Comprehensible Input
CiPELT	Certificate in Primary English Language Teaching
CO	Classroom Observation
DBE	Department of Basic Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FAL	First Additional Language
FL	First Language
FLC	Foundations for Learning Campaign
GHS	General Household Survey
GPLMS	Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy
GSi	Graduate Student Instructor and Resource Centre Home
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HL	Home Language
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
IH	Input Hypothesis
IP	Intermediate Phase
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LIEP	Language in Education Policy
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
MML	Maskew Miller Longman
Moi	Medium of Instruction
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit

NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OALD	Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
READ	READ Educational Trust
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SL	Second Language
TBI	Text-based Instruction
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

Chapter 1: The study and its context

“We are generally required to use our knowledge of the language system in order to achieve some kind of communicative purpose.”

(Widdowson, 1978:3)

1.1 Introduction

The implementation of the text-based approach for effective communicative competence in English is at the centre of this study. The text-based approach is prescribed alongside the communicative approach in the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Department of Basic Education, 2011a) wherein a variety of text types to be taught are stipulated and clear definitions on how learners acquire language proficiency through the mastery of different text types are pronounced. The approach is meant to ensure that learners become “competent, confident and critical readers, writers and viewers of texts” (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:18).

In South Africa English – a second language for many learners – is taught as the subject English First Additional Language (FAL) in most public schools. It is also used as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) or Medium of Instruction (Mol) up to Grade 12, which is the culmination of basic schooling (McCabe, 2013:159). At this point, learners are expected to have gained substantial knowledge of English to be communicatively competent in a multilingual society (Tlaka, 2002:8). However, many learners struggle to cope with English – both in basic and higher education (Jordaan, 2011:1; Schlebush & Motsamai, 2004:38; Seligmann, 2011:ix).

The immensity of the challenge stated above is witnessed by the low levels of most students’ language proficiency in institutions of higher learning. Studies show that many learners enter tertiary education “poorly equipped with the requisite literacy skills” and many, particularly from non-English speaking backgrounds, “do experience language difficulties which affect their academic performance” (Holder, Jones, Robinson & Krass, 1999:20; Van Schalkwyk, 2008:4). Undeniably, a large number of learners go through all levels of schooling “under-prepared ... clearly going to need considerable guidance

and direction if they are to achieve any form of **success** (my emphasis)” (Van Schalkwyk, 2008:108). Jordaan (2011:3) captures the scenario experienced in South African schools and institutions of higher learning as follows:

... it has become evident in studies of university students (Pienaar, 2009) that language problems are perpetuated at this level, and there is growing concern among academics that many students, regardless of educational background and whether they are L1 or second-language (L2) speakers of the language of instruction at the university, enter the tertiary level with weak language and literacy skills and are ill-equipped to deal with the demands of academic language in the various disciplines. This is particularly reflected in their writing skills. Questions can therefore be raised regarding the language-learning and consequent literacy skills required for the increasing conceptual demands of the curriculum in the higher grades and beyond.

Evidence from the 2005 National Systemic Evaluation and the 2009 Limpopo Khanyisa School Transformation Programme baseline study shows that learners in public schools read and write at levels much lower than the expected standards, and disturbing low literacy levels have been reported (Department of Education, 2008b:4–5; Department of Basic Education, 2011b:3; Government Gazette 30880, 2008:4; Hart, 2009:6; Jordaan, 2011:1; Limpopo Department of Education, 2009:7; Limpopo Department of Education, 2011:1; McCabe, 2013:160; Mouton, Louw & Strydom, 2013:35; National Education Evaluation and Development Unit, 2012:19; Pretorius, 2012:75).

Ritter (n.d.:1) points out that “the English classes in the majority of private and public schools fail to enable students to learn the language”. Hart (2009:4) (quoting Taylor, 2008:27), emphasises that:

The acquisition of subject knowledge is what empowers children to reach their full potential; for poor children this is the only route out of poverty. And too many schools are substantively failing to teach their children this powerful knowledge.

A study conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and McCarthy in rural KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) revealed that the average South African 14-year-old reads at

the level of a seven-year-old. The study reported that “in high schools, most rural children could not understand textbooks” and it confirmed that the problem was not unique to KZN (Houghton & Furlonger, 2010:78)

The Centre for Development and Enterprise (2011b:2) admits that “the public schooling system is failing too many young South Africans ... few experts believe the system will improve dramatically over the next five, ten, or even 20 years”. This statement echoes a combination of challenges in the education system; a system that focuses on matriculation results as a yardstick to measure ultimate learner achievement in basic education (Education, 2013:2). Passing Matric creates the impression that learners have acquired the requisite skills to cope with the demands of higher education whereas, in reality, by the end of the twelfth (in some cases thirteenth) year most learners have not acquired adequate language skills to cope with academic learning. Risimati (2007:6) asserts that “judging success by examination results alone does not fully capture the objectives of education because teaching for examination denies learners the opportunity to access the breadth of knowledge associated with education. Moreover, looking at examination results does not take into consideration the context in which education takes place ... a narrow focus on examination results does not take cognisance of the diverse contexts in which teaching takes place in South Africa”.

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for the Intermediate Phase (IP) states that the standards in the IP “must be such that learners can use their additional language at a high level of proficiency to prepare them for further or higher education or the world of work” (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:12). In view of the statement, a question thus arises: Do teachers implement the text-based approach adequately to ensure that learners are able to use the additional language at the level envisaged by the curriculum?

This study focuses on the text-based approach for the development of learners’ communicative competence. Hence, the overriding aim of the study is to explore whether teachers are well equipped with the knowledge and understanding to implement the text-based approach to engender communicative competence in the Grade 4 language classroom.

Concerns about teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) surface frequently in educational debates, as many teachers lack adequate knowledge thereof. The issue at hand relates to the problems emanating from the history of education in South Africa that led to the production of poorly educated teachers. Many teachers, due to problems not of their making, are caught in a professional situation for which they were not adequately prepared. Van Schalkwyk (2008:2) confirms that due to the past Bantu Education system in South Africa, many talented students had to endure a poor and unproductive schooling – a system that deprived many black people of good education and disadvantaged them for many years. Sailors, Hoffman and Mathee (2005:7–8) point out that “the school system was inferior, with only the most basic skills taught, thereby restricting opportunity”. The authors demonstrate that “[u]nder Bantu policies, black teacher preparation became a complex affair ... an inferior system of education designed to produce manual workers”.

The situation has been exacerbated by the ever-changing school curriculum since the dawn of the new political dispensation. The school curriculum has changed from Curriculum 2005 to the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) which was amended into the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:3). Curriculum change, as has been experienced in South Africa, might be a contributing factor to the poor implementation thereof at grass-roots level. Hence the aim of this study is to determine whether teachers implement the text-based approach in accordance with curriculum stipulations.

1.2 Problem statement

In view of the above, it is evident that many learners in South African public schools, particularly those in rural and disadvantaged backgrounds are promoted to higher grades with poor communicative competence in English. The lack of competence in English creates a major educational problem because the learners ought to be adequately prepared to be able to learn in English. Whereas the curriculum envisages high levels of proficiency in FAL, what the learners acquire is, unfortunately, nothing close to the expected degree of language competence.

The majority of these learners enter high school and tertiary institutions without the required academic proficiency in English (Manyike, 2007:iv; READ Educational Trust, 2005:24). Lucantoni (2002:13) defines the required proficiency as “the ability to use English effectively for purposes of practical communication in a variety of second language situations”. Hence, universities have academic support programmes put in place to address specific language problems of students in the first academic year, with the aim of improving students’ academic literacy skills (University of Venda, 2010:7). Afful (2007:143) states that such programmes “assume[s] a preparatory, facilitative, and catalytic role for fresh students, ensuring their smooth transition from pre-university to university level”. The lack of adequate language skills at upper levels of schooling is an indication that learners have not been adequately prepared at lower levels of schooling.

As mentioned above, the education system expects satisfactory performance in Grade 12, which implies that learners in the final schooling stage should have acquired relevant language skills to cope with academic learning. Academic learning involves “adapting to new ways of knowing, new ways of understanding, interpreting and organizing knowledge” (Seligmann, 2011:3). This form of adaptation requires that learners be equipped with a solid and firm foundation in language and literacy development in their elementary schooling. McCabe (2013:162) concurs that “if the problem is to be solved at tertiary level **it needs to be addressed earlier on at the school level** (my emphasis)”. However, teaching and learning at school level may not be credited for providing quality, effective language teaching because in reality, many learners move on to higher grades without the requisite language skills (Van Schalkwyk, 2008:108; Jordaan, 2011:3).

This study resonates with many others that suggest that the earlier language and literacy skills are acquired, the easier it becomes for learners to develop more advanced language skills (Pretorius, 2012; Department of Education, 2008b). Therefore, this study intends to analyse the implementation of the text-based approach as stipulated in the curriculum and whether effective language teaching strategies, which underpin the text-based approach, are employed, ensuring adequate development of practical language skills required for effective communicative competence and academic success.

1.3 Research questions

The main research question, together with the sub-questions that follow, is addressed in the empirical study and the findings are analysed by arguing from the literature.

The main research question for this study is:

How is the text-based approach to teaching English as FAL implemented in Grade 4 to ensure communicative competence?

The sub-questions for the study are:

- What is the teachers' knowledge of the curriculum stipulations as far as English FAL education is concerned?
- What is the teachers' understanding of the text-based approach?
- How are learners exposed to various types of texts in the Grade 4 classroom?

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to analyse how the text-based approach to FAL teaching is implemented for the development of communicative competence. It is based on the notion that learners “should be taught how to use an additional language clearly, accurately and effectively for *genuine* communication” (Judd, Tan & Walberg, 2001:6). It is imperative for teachers to strive towards handling texts in a systematic manner that will foster full engagement and understanding of the text. Guiding learners to engage with and make meaning of text “is a complex interaction of a variety of skills” and teachers should therefore know how to exploit [different kinds] of texts for language teaching and skills development (Marina & Marmiené, 2006:99).

1.5 Rationale

In South Africa, Grade 4 is the entry level into the Intermediate Phase. Learners in this phase of primary schooling are at a crucial developmental stage where they start opening up and awakening to the realities of life. Their intellectual abilities are blossoming, and it is important to respect their intelligences and efforts (Mednick, 2006:3). Mullis, Martin, Foy and Drucker (2012:25) confirm that the fourth grade is an

important period of transition in children's development "because at this stage most students should have learnt to read, and are now reading to learn". Many learners enter the phase at age 10 or 11, depending on their commencement of schooling. The harsh reality is that in many public schools learners battle to read, let alone write in the FAL.

Reports have shown that learners' language proficiency across all phases is disturbingly lower than the expected standards (Van Dyk, 2005:38; Krugel & Fourie, 2014:220). Consequently, the learners progress to higher grades and phases without the requisite knowledge and language skills. Pretorius (2012:92) affirms that learners in her study bear "testimony to a system of schooling that engenders literacy inequalities from an early age and enables a large number of learners to reach Grade 6 without the basic reading skills that are supposed to be well developed by the end of Grade 3".

Learners' poor and inadequate language skills create a perpetual and recurring problematic situation which contributes to the lack of intellectual growth necessary for national socio-economic development. For instance, the lack of adequate language skills has been pointed out as one of the contributory factors to the high dropout rate in the early years and across a broad spectrum of schooling in South Africa (Van Schalkwyk, 2008:2; Sailors, et al., 2005:8; Jeevanatham, 2004:48). Richek, Caldwell, Jennings and Lerner (2002:3) assert that "[p]eople with low reading levels comprise many of the unemployed, high school dropouts, the poor and those convicted of crimes". Sabates, Akyeampong, Westbrook and Hunt (2010:3), READ Educational Trust (2005:24) and (Mouton, et al., 2013:33) mention that children in many countries start "primary school in greater numbers than ever before but dropout rates are significant and lead to low levels of primary school completion". In addition, the lack of adequate and convincing communicative competence prohibits many young aspirant graduates to find employment, albeit having a qualification.

In my opinion, schools are not doing enough to help learners develop the requisite language skills. Notwithstanding the challenges experienced in the teaching fraternity, teachers should make an effort to understand what the curriculum stipulates, and to carry out their mandate by teaching according to curriculum guidelines. The National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (2012:19) confirms the seriousness of the

situation in schools by raising concerns about why schools are not doing what is expected of them. This statement clearly shows that somehow schools are not doing much to meet the expected curriculum requirements. As a nation we cannot afford seeing learners being promoted to higher grades, and to higher education with little knowledge and inadequate communicative competence. In essence, the education system has to be accountable by ensuring that the problem is addressed adequately and timeously. The curricula in the new dispensation were meant to redress past educational imbalances, yet the situation is not getting better, particularly in rural schools.

During the period I spent as a lecturer of English Communication Skills at the University of Venda, I acknowledged that many students came from disadvantaged rural backgrounds. Many of the students' language proficiency and academic literacy skills were extremely poor to the extent that they found it laborious to express themselves in English. My observation and judgement pointed to a lack of basic knowledge of grammar, poor reading and writing skills, and a lack of confidence in using the English language. It became apparent that the lack of basic language skills dated back to primary and high school years; yet it would be unfair to blame the students for their inadequate levels of communicative competence. They were simply not given the opportunity to learn in a more beneficial and effective manner. For example, through formal and informal conversation, students disclosed the kinds of learning situations they had been exposed to. These included, among others, being taught English and other subjects through their mother tongue (MT) – subjects supposedly to be taught through English as the LoLT. The situation, therefore, warrants research that should, to some extent, provide answers to questions regarding classroom language teaching and learning.

An important issue often raised is the quality of education. In many South African schools the quality is affected by, among other factors, teachers' lack of knowledge of the rudiments of the English language, a language they must teach as a subject and employ as a LoLT. Reports teem with comments such as: "many teachers are not literate", "they lack a high level of literacy", they are "under-skilled" and "have poor

subject knowledge”, they display “weak academic and professional knowledge base ...” and “inadequate methods of instruction” are often used in the classroom (Centre for Development and Enterprise, 2011:4; Department of Basic Education, 2011b:18; Department of Education, 2008b:7; Jansen, 2008; Jansen & Taylor, 2003:9; Jeevanatham, 2004:48; Jordaan, 2011:4; Ouane & Glanz, 2010:28; Umalusi, 2010:64). In addition, the Limpopo Department of Education (2009:7) laments the teachers’ low level of pedagogical content knowledge.

For ten years I worked for READ as a teacher trainer and my interaction with teachers has taught me that whenever the curriculum changes, teachers need to be adequately trained and taken on board so that they are able to put what they have learnt into best classroom practice. This includes educational campaigns that endeavour to improve teaching and learning, for instance the Foundations for Learning Campaign (FLC) (2008–2011) and Certificate in Primary English Language Teaching (CiPELT) (2012). My contention is that we cannot let learners go through many years of basic schooling, moving from one phase to the next, without the requisite knowledge and skills as this is unfair and undemocratic. The best we can do is to try to intervene at an early stage, in the early years of schooling, to give learners the intellectual support and self-assurance they need as they progress to higher grades.

The situation depicted above was the motivation to conduct this study. Moreover, co-authoring an English FAL Grade 4 learner’s book and teacher’s guide, I was motivated to take a closer look at the complexities and nuances of the curriculum and to look at the implementation of the text-based approach in schools. Therefore, it is crucial to explore, analyse and evaluate the approach in order to ensure that its execution in the classroom yields the intended language proficiency levels as envisaged by the curriculum.

1.6 Definitions of terms

The following crucial terms are defined as used in context of this study. The terms are also discussed and elaborated on in the literature review (chapter 2).

1.6.1 Approach

An approach is based on and determined by theories of language learning or linguistic theories that explain how language acquisition takes place. An approach, thus, informs teaching practices as prescribed by the curriculum. It reflects the curriculum structure and content, and provides fundamental teaching parameters and guidelines for the achievement of curriculum goals and objectives. An approach is a set of ideas and philosophical thoughts that influence our thinking about how learning takes place and “the role of teaching as a way to support learning” (Kramer, 2005:1). An approach describes the nature and fundamental aspects of the subject matter to be taught, encompassing the foundations, the domains, and the theoretical principles of curriculum (Ornstein, 1987:208), thereby encompassing both theories of language and language learning (Richards & Rogers, 1982:155). Brown (1994:159) declares that “a language learning approach consists of: views about the nature of language, beliefs about language learning, and ideas about how the views and beliefs should be applied practically to language learning and teaching”.

1.6.2 Communicative competence (CC)

The term “communicative competence” was developed by Hymes (1966) and refers to the knowledge of using language appropriately in different, real-life situations. That is, the appropriate use of the target language in a social and cultural context (De Jager, 2012:7). CC denotes the knowledge and understanding of linguistic rules for “producing both the referential and the social meaning of language” (Paulston, 1974:349), and it incorporates the knowledge of both linguistic competence and pragmatic competence – the ability to use language correctly and effectively in any given societal context. For the purposes of this study, CC is aligned to the basic communication skills theory that “can be characterised as one that emphasises the minimum level of communication skills needed to get along in, or cope with, the most common second language situation the learner is likely to face” (Canale & Swain, 1980:9) within and outside the classroom situation.

1.6.3 First additional language (FAL)

The CAPS document describes a first additional language as “a language which is not a mother tongue but which is used for certain communicative functions in a society, that is, medium of learning and teaching in education”. It is also called a “second language (SL)” and assumes that learners do not necessarily have any knowledge of the language when they arrive at school (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:12). In South Africa, there is a distinction between home language (HL), referred to as first language (FL), and the first additional language. This second language is learnt in addition to one’s home language and it may be learnt formally at kindergarten and at school. It may be introduced earlier by parents at home and/or, as learners interact with others in their immediate environment (Manyike, 2007:14; National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2006:4). Ellis (1994:693) provides a contextual clarification of the use of the term “additional language”. He purports that in South Africa, the term “additional language” is preferred to “second language” because it will exist alongside the first language and be of equal but not necessarily of greater importance to the learner. This clarification is of importance for its relevance to the South African constitution and the Language in Education Policy (LIEP) (Department of Arts and Culture, 2002:8).

1.6.4 Learner

The term “learner” denotes any person undergoing tuition and learning to gain knowledge and skills, thereby learning to do something (Le Roux & Khanyile, 2012:2). The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (2010:846) defines that a learner is “a person who is finding out about a subject or how to do something”. The word is used officially in South African schools and in other institutions for somebody who studies or learns to do something, particularly under guidance and supervision. In this study, the term will be used to refer to any child who acquires knowledge and skills under the guidance of a teacher at primary level and, in South Africa, in high school. Learners are normally under the age of 18 and they are classified as children. It is not used in the same way as the term “student”, which refers to anyone who takes up

studies at a higher level, particularly at an academic institution or institution of higher learning.

1.6.5 Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK)

The concept “pedagogical content knowledge” was introduced by Shulman (1986), “a teacher education researcher who was interested in expanding and improving knowledge on teaching and teacher preparation that, in his view, ignored questions dealing with the content of the lessons taught” (Solis, 2009:2). PCK comprises three components: “knowledge of representations of subject matter (content knowledge); understanding of students’ conceptions of the subject and the learning and teaching implications that were associated with the specific subject matter; and general pedagogical knowledge (or teaching strategies)” (Solis, 2009:2; Asselin, 2000:35). The three components represent bodies of knowledge which, in combination, are essential contributory factors to quality education. The importance of PCK is encapsulated in the emphasis that “to teach all students according to today’s standards, teachers indeed need to understand subject matter deeply and flexibly so that they can help students map their own ideas, relate one idea to another, and re-direct their thinking to create powerful learning” (Solis, 2009:2).

1.6.6 Scaffolding

Scaffolding, a term first used by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976:90), includes mediation in teaching and learning, linked to the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), wherein mediation through another human being and mediation in forms of organised learning are involved (Hammond & Gibbons, 2001:13; Kozulin, 2003:17). The teacher’s role becomes crucial as one who has the expertise in taking “steps to support the attempt by another to carry out a task which is initially too difficult to be carried out independently” (Parkinsons, Jackson, Kirkwood & Padayachee, 2007:444). Scaffolding thus refers to the optimal support, guidance and assistance the teacher provides in the classroom by demonstrating and modelling to learners, and gradually letting learners work with peers to master a skill. On mastery, learners are expected to have gained substantial confidence to practice independently, and to use the skill appropriately. Scaffolding

provides the opportunity to include learning aspects that are a step beyond the learners' level in order to help them through their ZPD.

1.6.7 Text

A text is described as “any form of communication from which meaning is created” (Department of Education, 2013a:3). Richards (2006:36) defines text as “structured sequences of language that are used in specific ways ... it exists as a unified whole with a beginning, middle, and end ... it conforms to norms of organization and content, and it draws on appropriate grammar and vocabulary”. It is any written, spoken or visual form of communication involving the purposeful use of language (Mthembu-Funeka, 2009:1). While the CAPS document (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:159) defines text as a “statement or creation in any written, spoken, or visual form of communication”, the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (2010:1544) explains text as “any form of written material”. These definitions concur and provide a clear meaning of “text” as should be understood in relation to the types of texts prescribed in the curriculum, and as used in this study.

1.6.8 Text-based approach

The text-based approach in language teaching refers, primarily, to the teaching of language built on the exposure to, and the handling and manipulation of different text types. This approach is aimed at providing learners the opportunity to engage meaningfully with texts and to interpret appropriate texts using a variety of skills, for example, interpreting visuals, prediction, reading, responding to the text and writing. Learners should be able to communicate with texts in the process of “unpacking” or “unlocking” information contained in the text (Marina & Marmiené, 2006:99).

The CAPS English FAL specifies that:

A text-based approach explores how texts work. The purpose of a text-based approach is to enable learners to become competent, confident and critical readers, writers and viewers of texts. It involves listening to, reading, viewing and analysing texts to understand how they are produced and what their effects are. Through this critical interaction, learners develop the ability to evaluate texts. The

text-based approach also involves producing different kinds of texts for particular purposes and audiences. This approach is informed by an understanding of how texts are constructed. This approach will require quite a lot of modelling, support and scaffolding in the First Additional Language classroom (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:18).

1.7 Outline of the research design and methodology

This study employs the congruent parallel mixed method approach (Creswell, 2007:52) which combines the qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The quantitative design was incorporated to validate and complement the qualitative research design. According to De Vos, Schurink and Strydom (1998:15) the qualitative method deals with data that are primarily verbal, the quantitative deals with data that are numerical. The combination of research methods offers “the parameters for a systematic and valid research design” (Sarantakos, 2005:31).

Different data collection methods, namely, classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, the questionnaire and document analysis of learners’ work were used to collect data. By virtue of the study being founded on three language teaching theories, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the Input Hypothesis (IH) and Cambourne’s Conditions of Learning (cf. chapter 2), the data collection strategies used helped me focus on finding information within the parameters of the aforementioned theories. Self-designed protocols were used for each data collection method and the questions were formulated purposely to provide answers to the research questions.

The study was triangulated through the use of four different data collection methods for the purpose of corroborating evidence, to validate the findings, and to provide opportunities for thick descriptions in a quest to produce a quality study. Triangulation is “the process of corroborating evidence” and it “ensures that the study will be accurate because the information draws on multiple sources of information and individuals, or processes” (Creswell, 2012:259; Creswell, 2007:208). In social research, chances of bias are probable and triangulation offers prospects to circumvent and minimise “personal biases that stem from single methodologies” and researchers “can partially

overcome the deficiencies that flow from one investigator or method” (Denzin, 1989:236; Brink, 1993:37).

In research, triangulation is considered as important for various reasons. Creswell (2005:510; Creswell, 2012:535) states that a “mixed method research design is a procedure for collecting, analysing, and mixing both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study to understand a research problem ... When one combines quantitative and qualitative data, we have a powerful mix ... we can develop a complex picture of social phenomenon”. The purpose of triangulation is “to simultaneously collect both quantitative and qualitative data, merge the data, and use the results to understand (the) research problem” (Creswell, 2005:514). In this study triangulation was achieved by collecting data from teachers and from learners’ written work, thus collecting data “from multiple levels in an organisation” (Creswell, 2005:512).

Esterberg (2002:176) explains that triangulation is “often used to mean bringing different kinds of evidence to bear on a problem”, because each source of evidence has its own strengths and weaknesses. This study triangulates by using different data collection strategies, namely, observations, interviews, questionnaires and analysis of learners’ activity books.

Table 1.1 portrays the qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and data analysis strategies employed in this study. In line with the nature of this study and the congruent parallel mixed method, data were eventually merged and interpreted comprehensively. A detailed discussion of the research design, as well as the data collection and analysis strategies, is presented in chapter 3.

Table 1.1: Data collection methods and data analysis strategies

DATA COLLECTION METHODS	DATA ANALYSIS STRATEGIES
<p>Classroom observation</p> <p>Grade 4 teachers were observed while presenting lessons. The type of text, methodology, instruction and instructional language, learner engagement and classroom environment were observed.</p> <p>Detailed field notes were noted on a self-designed checklist which provided a specified section for recording observable data and a section for the researcher's reflection.</p> <p>The proceedings were videotaped to serve as back-up material to be used for verification of observed data.</p>	<p>Data were classified into identifiable categories which were elaborated to depict how each lesson was conducted.</p> <p>Emerging themes and patterns were presented and discussed.</p> <p>Descriptive analysis was employed to interpret the findings.</p>
<p>Semi-structured interviews</p> <p>Teachers answered questions relating to their knowledge and understanding of the implementation of the text-based approach, as well as open-ended questions which provided participants with the opportunity to express their views.</p>	<p>Data were presented, and the linkage between the interview items and the sub-questions were indicated.</p> <p>Data were analysed in comprehensive narrative form.</p>

<p>Detailed notes were noted on the interview protocol.</p> <p>The interviews were audiotaped to be used for corroboration.</p>	
<p>Document analysis</p> <p>Learners' written work was examined to determine the amount, quality, and progression of the work, and whether the tasks were text-based and in line with curriculum guidelines.</p> <p>In addition, the work was examined to establish whether the tasks promoted practicing communication skills.</p>	<p>Document and content analysis were employed to evaluate the learners' work.</p>
<p>Questionnaires</p> <p>The teachers answered questions based on their understanding and knowledge of the text-based approach, curriculum stipulations, knowledge of text-types, scaffolding and personal opinion regarding the teaching of English as FAL.</p>	<p>Descriptive analysis was used to analyse the teachers' responses. The responses were evaluated and scored to determine the level of knowledge and understanding of curriculum concepts. External auditing was employed for evaluation and corroboration.</p>

1.8 Validity and reliability

As indicated in section 1.7 above, triangulation was employed as it is "generally considered to be one of the best ways to enhance validity and reliability" in research

(Babbie & Mouton, 2001:275). Validity plays a major role in research in that it has implications on the research findings. It is important that ultimately, the research findings “should approximate reality as closely as possible” (Mouton & Marais, 1990:15). Validity refers to “the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration” (Babbie, 2010:153). It also implies that a study “demonstrate[s] what actually exists and a valid instrument ... actually measure[s] what it is supposed to measure” (Brink, 1993:35).

Mouton and Marais (1990:50–51) distinguishes between “internal validity” and “external validity” – the former being used to refer to “the fact that a study has generated accurate and valid findings of the specific phenomena”, while the latter refers to a stage where “the findings of a given project are generalizable to all similar cases”. This study aims to warrant internal validity while, on the other hand, the findings are not intended to be generalized to all public schools. The researcher takes into cognisance the importance of context and that, in other similar situations, things might be different due to contextual factors.

Reliability of a study relates to stability and consistency of the measuring instruments and observations. The instruments used should, therefore, yield similar results; for example, “[w]hen an individual answers questions one way, the individual should consistently answer closely related questions in the same way” (Creswell, 2012:159). Reliability is “concerned with the consistency, stability and repeatability of the informant’s accounts as well as the investigator’s ability to collect and record information accurately” (Brink, 1993:35).

Babbie and Mouton (2001:120) caution against reliability problems that might crop up during a study, “because we have no certain guard against the impact of that observer’s subjectivity”. The authors mention issues such as researchers’ attitudes and demeanours that could probably impact on a study and the way it is conducted. However, they assure that reliability measures can be obtained. For example, the authors advise that “when asking people for information – if your research design calls

for that – be careful to ask only about things the respondents are likely to know the answers to” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:121). For relevance to this study, this reliability measure captures the gist of achieving the desired outcomes as the researcher attempted to adhere to the planned mode of questioning and observation throughout the data collection process.

Crystallisation, which includes “deep and thick description” and “attention to complexity of interpretation” (Vik & Bute, 2009:340), was achieved by means of member checking, peer reviewing, thick descriptions and external auditing. Crystallisation is referred to as a “formalized sub-methodology for conducting social research” which “falls within a social constructionist ‘worldview’ offering a valuable way of thinking and creative inquiry to produce knowledge, and to create a ‘conceptual analysis’ of the data” (Cungo & Thomas, 2009:112). In member checking the researcher “solicits participants’ views of the credibility of the findings and interpretations”, while peer reviewing “provides external check[ing] of the research process” (Creswell, 2007:208). Thick descriptions are achieved when a researcher “collects sufficiently detailed descriptions of data in context and reports them, with sufficient detail and precision, to allow judgements about transferability to be made by the reader” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:277). These aspects were carefully considered, because the researcher strove to provide measures that would ensure crystallisation of the study.

1.9 Significance of the study

The study provides insight and more information regarding the research problem and may be useful in finding possible practical solutions that will help improve the status of English FAL education in schools. The study relates to Mji and Makgato’s (2006:257) assertion that an “important element in an endeavour to find solutions to problems of poor performance by learners is to undertake investigations that will help inform the stakeholders. Research investigations on reasons why learners fail are important because they help identify the problem that needs to be resolved”.

In addition, research plays an important role in four areas, which are all relevant to this study in the sense that it does not only intend to generate answers to research questions, but is intended to add value in the field of education. Creswell (2005:3–7) states that research

- adds to our knowledge
- improves practice
- informs policy debates
- builds student research skills

Conducting this research equipped me with the requisite conceptual skills “to make sense of data, analyse complex relationships among ideas, and synthesise disparate ideas” (Creswell, 2005:6). In addition, I learnt more about the topic through reviewing of the literature, thus adding to my personal knowledge and contributing to existing knowledge in the broader teaching and learning fraternity.

The study will contribute to the improvement of teaching practice at school level by raising awareness of what goes on in the classroom and what can practically be done to improve the status quo. The study will also contribute towards upholding beneficial aspects that promote effective teaching and learning for the achievement of curriculum objectives. Policy and decision-making bodies will be informed about what is actually taking place in the classroom regarding the implementation of the text-based approach, about teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge and their viewpoints and aspirations. In this manner, existing problems will be uncovered and appropriate measures could be taken to address them.

Furthermore, I trust that this study will elicit debate on issues that involve education at grass roots level, engender more research on the topic, and open up the possibility of generating advanced research on a larger scale. The results would, hopefully, serve as an eye-opener, as well as posing a challenge to policymakers to ensure that policies are implemented and if needed, policies should be reviewed and amended so that they achieve the purpose for which they were intended.

1.10 Population and sampling procedures

The participants in this study were selected from a target population of teachers who represent a group of “individuals with some common defining characteristics that the researcher can identify and study” (Creswell, 2012:142). Purposive non-probability sampling was used due to availability, convenience, and representation of the characteristics that the researcher intended to study (Creswell, 2012:145). Babbie and Mouton (2001:172) confirm that “[s]amples need not be representative in all respects; representativeness is limited to those characteristics that are relevant to the substantive interests of the study”.

For the purposes of this study, 4 primary schools were selected in Tshwane North district, Gauteng Province. The schools are located in previously disadvantaged areas and they were purposely selected on the grounds that they implement the text-based approach in FAL teaching. Only one Grade 4 teacher per school was requested to participate in the study. Chapter 3 provides the context of selection and explains, in detail, crucial matters and events that unfolded during the process of data collection.

The selection of participants was dependant on convenience as well as the researcher’s familiarity with the target population and field of study. The participants would provide valuable information regarding the text-based approach, thus making it possible for the researcher to arrive at the desired outcomes of the study.

1.11 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations, also called “ethics of science”, are meant “to provide guidelines on what constitutes appropriate moral behaviour in the sphere of science” (Mouton, 2009:10). The guidelines relate to moral values, professional standards and conduct that need to be considered to ensure transparency, trustworthiness and confidentiality. Strydom (1998:24) identifies the following as ethical issues in social research: “harm to experimental respondents, informed consent, deception of respondents, violation of privacy, actions and competence of researchers, cooperation with collaborators, release or publication of the findings and the restoration of respondents”.

Ethics in research should be respected to protect the rights of participants, as well as upholding the researcher's integrity. According to Creswell (2005:11) ethical issues "relate to respecting the rights of participants, honouring research sites that you visit, and reporting fully and honestly". Participants need to know beforehand,

the purpose and aims of the study, the use of the results, and the likely social consequences the study will have on their lives. They also have the right to refuse to participate in a study and can withdraw at any time. When they participate and provide information, their anonymity is protected and guaranteed by the researcher. ... Participants also have the right to gain something from a study. Researchers need to actively look for ways to 'give back' (or reciprocate) to participants in a study because the participants have freely provided their time (Creswell, 2005:12).

The University of Pretoria advocates the following Code of Conduct applicable to all researchers at the University. Academic and research staff, students and research collaborators of the University

- are compelled to be intellectually honest at all times and always conduct themselves professionally
- should at all times meet the legal requirements of a specific research project or which may be affected by it
- should comply with the research ethical rules applicable within the University, Faculty and/or discipline
- should comply with the research ethical rules laid down by a particular professional body within the field supervised by that body
- should at all times refrain from any action that may be considered as research misconduct (University of Pretoria, 2007:2)

As the researcher, I undertook to honour and uphold ethical standards and conducts in order to honour and uphold the authenticity of this study and the integrity of the University of Pretoria.

Furthermore, if approved by the University of Pretoria, I plan on conducting basic language teaching workshops at the participating schools. The workshops would qualify as community engagement (CE) which the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) defines as “initiatives and processes through which the expertise of higher education institutions in the areas of teaching and learning are applied to address issues relevant to its community” (University of Venda, 2011:3). This venture would be a token of appreciation to the schools and to thank the staff members for the collegiality and encouragement offered whenever I communicated with them.

1.12 Limitations of the study

This study is limited to an analysis of the text-based approach in selected Grade 4 classrooms in the Intermediate Phase in Tshwane North district, Gauteng Province, and the findings thereof are not intended for generalising the situation in all public schools. It is also limited to the selected participants and schools, and to the scope of implementation through classroom teaching only, excluding the ambit of assessment. Notwithstanding the small scale and limitations, valuable lessons can be drawn and more research may be generated from the findings of this study.

The study is further limited to the situation as it prevailed in the classroom. I was concerned about how the participants would handle the situation, as it could possibly be the first time they taught while being observed and videotaped. Allwright and Bailey (1991:70) allude to “the observer’s paradox” which explains how participants might react – “reactivity” – during observations. Nevertheless, I believed the participants’ minds were set at ease with the briefing sessions conducted prior to data collection.

1.13 Outline of the study

Chapter 1 presents the background to the study which leads to the problem statement. The purpose, rationale, an overview of the research methodology, ethical considerations and study limitations are provided.

Chapter 2 provides the literature review and elaborates into exploring the text-based approach and theoretical framework underpinning the study. Some text-based research

studies are reviewed and presented as a support base to this study. Linkages and possible gaps in relation to this study are identified. The chapter also reviews communicative competence and its implications for language teaching and learning, and discusses some useful text-based teaching strategies for successful language teaching.

A detailed account of the research design, research methodology and philosophical paradigms is provided in chapter 3. The account reflects the significance of conducting research of this nature and the justification of my choice to employ the research design, the data collection strategies and the sample size for this study. The data analysis, findings and the interpretation of the findings are discussed in chapter 4.

Chapter 5 presents conclusions drawn from the interpretation of the findings and how these provide answers to the research questions. Study limitations are revisited and recommendations to the relevant stakeholders are put forward. The chapter closes with suggestions for further research in similar domains.

Chapter 2: Exploring the text-based approach

“In receiving an exceptional education, an individual embraces a responsibility to foster such opportunities for others.”

(Nelson Mandela)

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present the relevant literature review and the conceptual framework underpinning the study. The literature review provides a discussion of the text-based approach to language teaching and teaching techniques that have been found useful for effective classroom implementation of the text-based approach. I mentioned in chapter 1 that the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) recommends the text-based approach alongside the communicative approach to FAL teaching in South African schools. It further advises on the reading and writing teaching strategies (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:16–17) in a relatively superficial manner such that I believe an elaboration might possibly be necessary. The elaboration would be more helpful in providing guidance on how the strategies could be carried out in a real classroom situation.

This study follows strongly on the five-phase implementation model advanced by Richards (2006), which serves as guidance to the practical cyclical execution of the text-based approach. I present the Foundations for Learning Campaign (FLC) and the Balanced Language Programme (BLP) as supportive models, because in my view, these models complement the one presented by Richards. Some text-based teaching strategies linked to the model I deem befitting as guidance for classroom implementation are presented. In addition, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is included as a crucial component for the implementation of the text-based approach, and communicative competence (CC) as the anticipated end product. These concepts are linked to the theories of language teaching and learning that underpin this study. I present the interrelation of both the concepts and the theories with the intention of focusing on making connections and cues to finding answers to the research question and sub-questions. The conceptual framework underpinning this study is communicated

owing to the significance of the theories in teaching and learning and by virtue of their reputation and support in the field of education.

As I mentioned in chapter 1, in my view, not enough is done in the classroom to assist learners with the development of adequate language and communication skills.

Therefore, this study focuses on areas that I believe could be useful in the implementation of the text-based approach for the development of learners' communicative competence. The concept of communicative competence should be thought of as being developed at the appropriate developmental level. It is thus crucial for this study to present the concepts in a manageable form for teachers within the Intermediate Phase (IP) context. I find it befitting to include the aforementioned explanation, in view of the status of English education prevailing in most South African public schools, and in view of the fact that by policy, English serves as both a FAL and a LoLT.

2.2 The structure of the study

Figure 2.1 represents the interrelationship of key concepts presented in the study, showing PCK and CC as essential aspects for implementing the text-based approach as informed by the supporting theories of language teaching and learning.

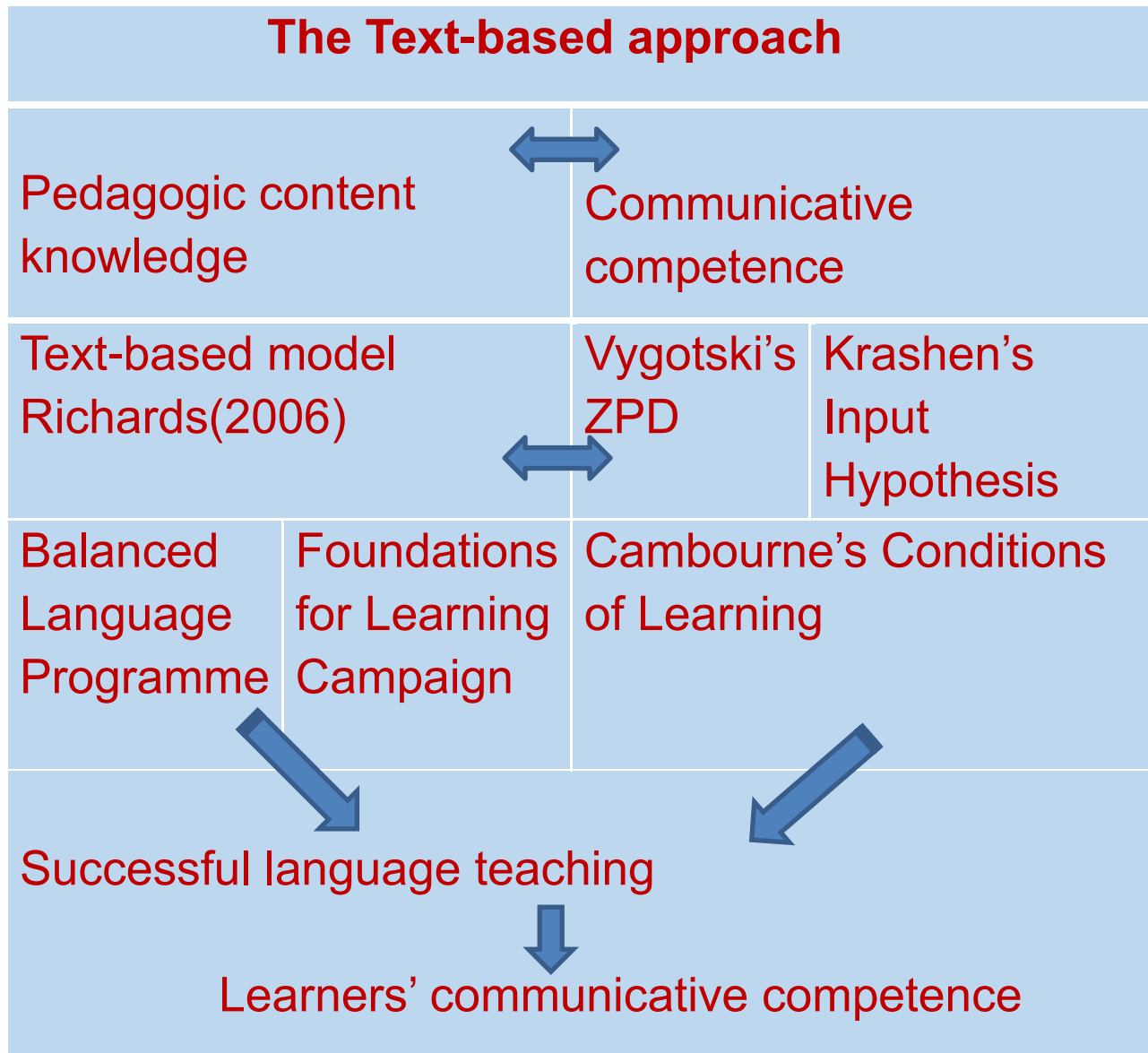


Figure 2.1: Interrelationship of key concepts

The relationship of the key concepts is viewed in complementary terms, serving as agents for successful movement towards more meaningful and effective language teaching. In combination, the key concepts are viewed as support mechanisms for the fulfilment of the purpose of this study.

2.3 The text-based approach in perspective

In essence, the foundation of teaching in the text-based approach is based on the use of a variety of text types, with the inclusion of mastery of text features such as grammar,

vocabulary, topics and functions, as well as graphics presented in texts (Richards, 2006:37). Communicative competence is thus developed through the integration of language skills and the teaching of language in context. These aspects are evident in the CAPS guidelines, with the inclusion of values and attitudes, thereby promoting awareness of cultural and societal issues that arise in language use.

2.3.1 Prescribed texts in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)

The curriculum statement prescribes and provides the types of texts (learning and teaching support materials) as foundation for all FAL teaching. The texts are grouped into core materials that include a language textbook and dictionary, a reader or readers containing stories, poetry, drama, information texts, social texts and media materials in the form of newspapers, magazines, television and radio programmes (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:19–20).

Based on the prescribed texts, the language skills and purpose are articulated as follows:

Listening and [s]peaking

Listening and [s]peaking are central to learning in all subjects. Through effective [l]istening and [s]peaking, learners collect and synthesise information, construct knowledge, solve problems, and express ideas and opinions. Critical listening skills enable learners to recognise values and attitudes embedded in texts and to challenge biased and manipulative language.

Reading and [v]iewing

Well-developed [r]eading and [v]iewing skills are central to successful learning across the curriculum. Learners develop proficiency in reading and viewing a wide range of literary and non-literary texts, including visual texts. Learners recognise how genre and register reflect the purpose, audience and context of texts. Through classroom and independent reading, learners become critical and creative thinkers.

Writing and [p]resenting

Writing is a powerful instrument of communication that allows learners to construct and communicate thoughts and ideas coherently. Frequent writing practice across a variety of contexts, tasks and subjects enables learners to communicate functionally and creatively. Writing, which is appropriately scaffolded using writing frames, produces competent, versatile writers who will be able to use their skills to develop and present appropriate written, visual and multi-media texts for a variety of purposes.

Language [s]tructures and [c]onventions

A good knowledge of vocabulary and grammar provides the foundation for skills development (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the First Additional Language. Intermediate Phase learners will build on the foundation that was laid in Grades R–3. Learners will learn how [l]anguage [s]tructures and [c]onventions are used, and will develop a shared language for talking about language (a ‘meta-language’), so that they can evaluate their own and other texts critically in terms of meaning, effectiveness and accuracy. They will also be able to use this knowledge to experiment with language to build meaning from word and sentence levels to whole texts, and to see how a text and its context are related. Through interacting with a variety of texts, learners extend their use of vocabulary and correctly apply their understanding of [l]anguage [s]tructures and [c]onventions (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:13–17).

The use of texts as the foundation for language teaching is corroborated by the use of literary and information texts in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) fourth grade tests (Mullis, et al., 2012). The PIRLS is a comparative international study aiming at “helping countries make informed decisions about how to improve teaching and learning in reading” (Mullis, et al., 2012:25). In the PIRLS report, the literary texts used “were complete short stories or episodes accompanied by supportive illustrations” and the information texts “included a variety of continuous and non-continuous texts” with “presentational features such as diagrams, maps, illustrations, photographs, or tables” (Mullis, et al., 2012:63).

The ability to communicate thoughts and ideas in spoken and written form emerge distinctly as the intention of the text-based curriculum, evident in the skills and purpose for their development (cf. listening and speaking, reading and viewing, writing and presenting, language structures and conventions). Hence, the purpose of this study is to establish the contribution of the text-based approach for communicative competence.

2.4 The text-based approach in context

In view of curriculum stipulations and text types, this study recognises that the word “text” is used and explained differently, with relevance to the context in which it is used by the author. Lee (2001:38) confirms that

[m]ost corpus-based studies rely implicitly or explicitly on the notion of genre or the related concepts register, text type, domain, style, sublanguage, message form, and so forth. There is much confusion surrounding these terms and their usage, as anyone who has done any amount of language research knows.

Informed by the definitions of the concept “text” (cf. section 1.7), this study views the text-based approach as teaching that uses different kinds or genres of relevant texts as prescribed for language teaching with the intention of developing learners’ communicative competence. In addition, the study embraces the text-based approach as referred to and used in various ways in the literature.

The following references illustrate the diverse ways in which the text-based approach is referred to, as mentioned above. Richards (2006:36) presents the approach as “text-based instruction” (TBI) which involves “being able to use different kinds of spoken and written texts in the specific contexts of their use”. It is also known as “a genre-based approach” (Maxim, 2004:1; Hart, 2009:1; Mthembu-Funeka, 2009:1) which “sees **communicative competence as involving the mastery of different types of texts**” (my emphasis); “a framework for literacy education that places texts (i.e. coherent chunks of language larger than a sentence) as the centerpiece of instruction and curricula” (Rivera, 2012:112). Derewianka (2003:135) purports that the terms “genre” and “text type” are used “interchangeably” and “[i]n some cases, the term ‘text type’ has been adopted because it is more transparent and immediately accessible to teachers

and students”. Martinez (2007:52–53) alludes to “the story-based approach” as one of the best ways to teach language, content, cultural aspects, solve problems and to enable learners “to engage in real and effective communication”.

The READ Educational Trust (READ) makes reference to “a book-based approach to teaching English as an additional language” which benefits learners by providing a strong motivation in children for additional language learning, an emphasis on meaning rather than form, increased exposure to the target language, exposure to natural language which is not artificial or controlled, opportunities to learn naturally from context and excellent models of written English (READ Educational Trust, n.d.:14).

The READ Educational Trust (n.d.:13) maintains that “[a]ccessibility of books is a key factor in studies of children’s reading abilities around the world” and “[a]chievement in all subjects is enhanced by book provision”. Important factors mentioned are: 1. the approach fosters and “stimulates a holistic and balanced growth of all aspects of literacy” and 2. it must be ensured that in selecting texts, the text is of an age-appropriate interest level, promotes positive values, is free of negative stereotyping, it is meaningful, it is well illustrated, is supportive particularly of younger learners, makes use of appropriate language for the genre and has accessible layout and design (READ Educational Trust, 2003:23).

Segler (2001:46) corroborates the notion of text selection by stating that “[t]he most obvious requirement for a text is that it be at a suitable level of difficulty to roughly match the learners’ ability. Ideally, it should be slightly higher than the subjects’ L2 proficiency” to provide growth in thinking and reasoning skills, and to stretch learners into using language at a bit more advanced level. Kapp and Arend (2011) concur in stating that

[t]here is coherence between the construction of learners as critical thinkers and the explicit text-based approach in the new curriculum which stresses the development of close, critical analysis of a range of texts. The approach has its theoretical base in Genre Theory, which emphasises the

need to facilitate access to dominant discourse by explicit teaching of the text types that characterise the discourse (Kapp & Arend, 2011:4).

In view of the scenario set above, this study adopts using the term “the text-based approach” as referred to in a variety of ways in the literature.

2.5 National and international text-based studies

National and international studies (Crome & Garfield, 2004; Marina & Marmiené, 2006; Mthembu-Funeka, 2009; Nel & Theron, 2008) based on the text-based teaching approach reflect positive results in different fields of learning including language, information technology and computing, philosophy, filming and religion. The studies also offer advice on the advantages and disadvantages of the approach, advice which is considered crucial for an attempt to explore the text-based approach in this study.

The following represent some of the studies that have shed light on the text-based approach. The studies are useful for understanding the approach and the development of argument for the purpose of this study. As I mentioned in section 2.3, the text-based approach in this study is adopted as referred to in various ways in the literature. This adoption will become evident as I present the ensuing studies that helped me understand the text-based approach, the nature of texts and the significance of the text-based approach in teaching.

In their study, Marina and Marmiené (2006:99–100) describe “the essential features of a connected text to raise learners’ awareness of its structure and organization and improve their skills of reading comprehension”. The study provides valuable information in respect of the description of texts and the value of texts. The authors explain three ways used to describe texts: 1. Text as a linguistic object (TALO); 2. Text as a vehicle for information (TAVI); 3. Text as a springboard/stimulus for production (TASP). In TALO, a text is used for language work such as grammar and vocabulary. TAVI is more meaning focused, where “information within the text is seen as more important than the language” (Marina & Marmiené, 2006:100). TAVI texts are said to be “motivating, authentic and based on the communicative approach” and TASP texts are used as “a

springboard for another task – usually a reading or writing task” (Marina & Marmienè, 2006:100). Although the study is on Information Technology and Computing, the knowledge of how texts are described and used is crucial for the understanding and implementation of the text-based approach in a language classroom.

The study conducted by Crome and Garfield (2004) outlines the importance of the text-based approach in philosophy. The authors acknowledge (as alluded to in chapter 1), that “a significant proportion of students who have attained the pre-requisite standards for admission to Higher Education lack many of the reading skills demanded by the course of study they are to follow” (Crome & Garfield, 2004:115). For reading ability, active engagement with text is encouraged. According to the authors, “one learns to read by reading” and “if it is necessary to teach students to read, then this must be done concretely and by **repeated engagement with various types of writing and text** (my emphasis), based on curriculum prescriptions” (Crome & Garfield, 2004:116). Crome and Garfield (2004:123) also justify the text-based approach as “an approach that is intrinsically linked to what must be the aim of all philosophy teaching”.

Mthembu-Funeka’s (2009) study investigates how the genre-based approach to isiZulu Home Language education is a means to successful English First Additional Language learning. The author defines genres as “texts that are patterned in a distinctive way to achieve particular goals ... concerned with the overall purpose of a text” (Mthembu-Funeka, 2009:1). The link between genre and text is clearly articulated, including what genre and text signify in a classroom situation. The connection is explicitly evident in the section she presents on “Genre in the Classroom” (Mthembu-Funeka, 2009:134), and principles pertaining to the use of texts. The principles include, for example, that “[t]exts are socially constructed. The influence of community and culture, however these are defined, is considerable, in both text processing and production. Texts are purposeful, and their functions are determined by the context and community ... Some genres, like some language registers, are valued more than others within a community ...” (Mthembu-Funeka, 2009:137–138). The association is also shown as the author describes how the Zenex Foundation and partners discuss texts and genres (Mthembu-Funeka, 2009:148). Mthembu-Funeka’s study reveals that the genre-based approach in

home language is instrumental in, among others, the improvement of learners' performance in English, encouraging teachers to focus on exposing learners to reading, viewing and thinking skills, and enabling learners "to obtain, share and learned language skills and values in both home and additional languages [sic] ..." (Mthembu-Funeka, 2009:466).

Miyoun (2007:34) conducted a study on the genre-based approach to teaching writing. Genre is defined as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes". The author uses personal letters, film reviews, and police reports as examples of genres and shows how they "use conventions related to communicative purposes". The link between genre and text is evident, as in the aforementioned study, and relevant to this study. Miyoun (2007) states that the genre-based approach incorporates "a wheel model of a teaching-learning cycle having three phases: modelling, joint negotiation of text by learners and teacher, and independent construction of text by learners" (Miyoun, 2007:35). The findings are positive, indicating that if balanced in the curriculum, the genre-based approach "will improve writing skills for the better". The approach works well in Korea and "can be effective in helping Korean students to learn the organisation structure as well as linguistic features of a certain genre" (Miyoun, 2007:39). Miyoun (2007:37) also states that some proponents have suggested that the genre-based approach could be "more suitable for learners at beginning or intermediate levels of proficiency in second language". It follows that the South African curriculum could, to some extent, be given credit for recommending the text-based approach in the primary years of schooling.

In a story-based study, Loukia (2006:27) recognises that "storybooks can enrich the pupils' learning experience". The author raises salient points that are relevant to South African schools. The points are that stories can motivate learners to develop positive values and attitudes; and they "create opportunities for developing continuity in children's learning (among others, school subjects across the curriculum). Other important factors are that stories create excellent opportunities for "providing learners with examples of authentic language use" and for raising "cultural awareness issues" (Loukia, 2006:30). Loukia (2006) recommends story-based teaching and learning as a

“powerful tool” that can make learners “explore many features of the language” and make them “learn consciously and assume responsibility for their learning” (Loukia, 2006:34).

Nel and Theron (2008:203) report on a Story-based Language Enrichment Programme (SLEP) that they compiled for Grade 4 English Second Language (ESL) learners with “limited English proficiency”, with the purpose of improving the learners’ proficiency levels. The authors developed the programme using some of the challenges faced by teachers in general. The challenges include, inter alia, learners’ lack of mastery of the mother tongue before learning a second language, learners’ limited exposure to the use of English, teachers with a limited proficiency in English teaching ESL learners, and many learners only being exposed to English in Grade 4 after having been taught in their mother tongue up to that point (Nel & Theron, 2008:204–205). Nel and Theron (2008:206) recognise the usefulness of stories in language teaching and they provide fundamental aspects that are “critical for the usefulness of stories to augment language”. The study yielded positive outcomes, suggesting that “SLEP was useful to participants teaching Grade 4 learners” (Nel & Theron, 2008:213). However, “it appeared that SLEP did not cater for the needs of rural educators and learners” because of particular circumstances and limitations (Nel & Theron, 2008:214). The significance of this study is that it was conducted in the context of South African schools and it serves as an eye-opener that, due to circumstances peculiar to certain schools, the prescribed curriculum might not be suitable for implementation in every school.

The studies above were significant as they enriched my knowledge in my quest to explore the text-based approach to language teaching. Consequently, I believe this study is a significant addition as it fills an existing gap, because it focuses on the contribution of the text-based approach in English education for communicative competence in Grade 4.

2.6 Teaching models in support of the text-based approach

As indicated in section 2.3.3, the text-based approach has shown positive impact in language development. By comparison, the South African curriculum could match those

of other countries such as Singapore, where the text-based approach was adopted for primary and secondary schools (Richards, 2006:38).

2.6.1 The text-based model

Implementing the text-based approach for effective communicative competence is of prime importance in this study. Richards (2006:39–41) presents the following model by Feez and Joyce (1998) for successful implementation of the text-based approach:

Phase 1: Building the context

- Introduction to the social context of an authentic model of the text type
- Exploring features of the general cultural context in which the text type is used and the social purposes of the text
- Building knowledge of the topic of the model text and knowledge of social activity

Phase 2: Modelling and deconstructing text

- Investigating the structural pattern and language features, comparing the model with other examples of the same text type
- Comparing the model with others of the same type

Phase 3: Joint construction of the text

- Beginning to contribute to the construction of whole examples of the text type
- The teacher gradually reducing the contribution as learners move closer to being able to construct texts independently

Phase 4: Independent construction of the text

- Working independently with text
- Listening, reading comprehension, speaking, oral presentations and writing tasks which demand drafting and presentation of whole texts

Phase 5: Linking to related texts

- Reflecting on texts learnt
- Comparing the use of text types across different fields
- Role-playing what happens if the same text type is used by people in different roles and relationships

- Researching other text types and how key language features are used in other text types (adapted from Richards, 2006:39–41)

This model represents my understanding of how teachers should use the different text types for classroom teaching and learner engagement. The phases correspond with the Foundations of Learning and Balanced Language Programme models (discussed in subsequent sections), for relevance in the development of language and literacy skills and communicative competence, using different text types. In addition, the model corresponds with the CAPS stipulations regarding the purpose of the text-based approach (cf. section 1.7).

2.6.2 Foundations for Learning Campaign (FLC)

Several years ago, almost similar to the model above, the Department of Basic Education published the Foundations for Learning Campaign (FLC) (Government Gazette 30880, 2008) which introduced a model for the systematic teaching of languages through employment of different methodologies, in the nature of “scaffolding learning cycles” as represented in Vygotsky’s “Zone of Proximal Development” (ZPD) (Rose, 2006:9). The model is in line with the Balanced Language Programme (BLP) (cf. section 2.6.3), which seeks to develop all language and literacy skills in a balanced and systematic manner. The model gives teachers and learners, in particular those with poor language levels, the possibility to utilise and engage with texts to achieve advanced language skills (Gauteng Department of Education, 2010:8).

The FLC (Government Gazette 30880, 2008:4) was a

four year-year campaign to create a national focus to improve the reading, writing and numeracy abilities of all South African children ... a national response to national, regional and international studies that have shown over a number of years that South African children are not able to read, write and count at expected levels, and are unable to execute tasks that demonstrate key skills associated with [l]iteracy and [n]umeracy ... The campaign will provide teachers and schools with clear directives on the Department of Education’s expectations

of schools and teachers to achieve the expected levels of performance ...with the intention to ensure that ultimately learners and students across the system acquire and sustain a solid foundation for learning.

The FLC recommended and provided guidance on the use of different text types for language development in context, on a daily basis. The texts included, for example, “grade-level shared texts of different types (as per NCS; informational texts, short stories, poems, etc.) in the form of Big Books, textbooks or readers ... read-aloud texts, e.g. short novels, newspaper articles, etc.” (Government Gazette 30880, 2008:16).

2.6.3 Balanced language programme (BLP)

The BLP features elements necessary for language development and in particular, the teaching and learning strategies relevant for the implementation of the text-based approach. The programme emanated from international debates on language teaching approaches and questions about which approach to language teaching was more appropriate. The well-known Great Debate, also known as “The Reading Wars”, created a disturbing uncertainty for teachers, and confusion on which approach to adopt in language teaching (Wren, 2003:2). Although it affected the education and other sectors of society, the debate was considered an educational and political battle raging between proponents of phonics and whole language teaching (Reyhner, 2014:1; Nichols, 2009:1). Pearson (2004:216–217) paints a clear picture of the political scenario prevailing at the time that affected language teaching and learning in the classroom.

During that era, two major approaches to language teaching were in use: the “top-down” and “bottom-up” approaches. Advocates of the bottom-up emphasised teaching of phonics while proponents of the top-down believed in whole language teaching. To strike a balance between the two approaches, a “balanced approach”, described as “mixing some [p]honics with [w]hole language” (Wren, 2003:2) was promulgated. The mixed approach combines the two in a “complementary manner – a method that presents the two as mutually supportive and taught in a manner that makes the interrelationships clear to children. This approach can be achieved when phonics instruction is provided within the context of real reading tasks and texts, especially

through the use of quality children literature” (Trachtenburg, 1990:648). Hence the simultaneous incorporation of the two approaches, the top-down (emphasising the meanings that readers bring to the text), and bottom-up (emphasising decoding skills) (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gounden, 2006:5; Reyhner, 2008:2).

The combined approach did not go without criticism (Pearson, 2004:224). Teachers were cautioned that it required a “very comprehensive, integrated approach, demanding that teachers know a great deal about literacy research ... and the teacher must meet the demands of a multicultural society that requires him or her to be knowledgeable about teaching English learners to read” (Cowen, 2003:2). Incorporating the two approaches resulted in the Balanced Language Programme (BLP) which, according to research, proved to be an effective tool for developing reading and various other language skills through different methodologies when appropriately administered (READ Educational Trust, n.d.:8).

Backed by philosophy and research, the BLP draws on language theories that “embed learning and teaching practice within an interactive learning context” thereby facilitating “the development of communicative competence so that the learners may interact with their peers” (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gounden, 2006:3). These include Vygotsky in terms of “his recognition and integration of learners’ own cultural funds of knowledge into new learning, and his theory of Zone of Proximal Development” (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gounden, 2006:3).

The programme is integrated and systematic, offering learner support in a holistic manner that caters for learners’ different learning styles. The incorporation of various language and literacy skills: listening, speaking, thinking and reasoning, reading and viewing, phonemic awareness, comprehension and communication, is at the heart of the BLP.

Research has shown that learners possess individualistic learning styles, a concept that emerged as “a framework in the 1970s in an effort to explain the factors that account for differences on how students learn” (Brew, 2002:373). Oxford (2003:273) explains learning style as “the general approach preferred by students when learning a subject,

acquiring a language, or dealing with a difficult problem ... an overall pattern that provides broad direction to learning and makes the same instructional method beloved by some students and hated by others”. Learning styles should be considered in all forms of teaching as they inform teachers to consider the possible underlying differences and should be considered when planning lessons and daily activities.

To cater for different learning styles, where some learners may like certain methods over others, the BLP language components are neither taught in separation, nor in isolation. The components are rather assimilated and taught simultaneously and interactively (Mbatha, 2012:62) as suggested in the CAPS curriculum, which provides guidance on how language aspects and components are to be taught systematically for the development of language skills. Inclusion of culture and context is one of the features of the BLP and meaningful comprehension is achieved through a process of combining a set of three inseparable bodies of knowledge, while engaging with different kinds of grade-appropriate texts.

Figure 2.2 depicts the methodologies in the BLP. The methodologies indicate scaffolding and support of learning starting with reading aloud, where the teacher reads meaningfully with expression, while learners develop good listening skills and gain vocabulary by understanding content words. The teacher models and demonstrates reading in shared reading, and invites learners to join in (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:158). Learners experience support and gain confidence by reading together with the teacher in a non-threatening atmosphere. In group reading, learners practice with peers in a smaller, manageable group, and when they have mastered the skill they are able to read and work independently (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:154). These skills are also applicable in shared, group and independent writing activities. In guided reading and writing, the teacher assists learners with specific skills relevant to their needs. This opportunity can be equated to remediation for learners who struggle, and advancement for more capable learners.

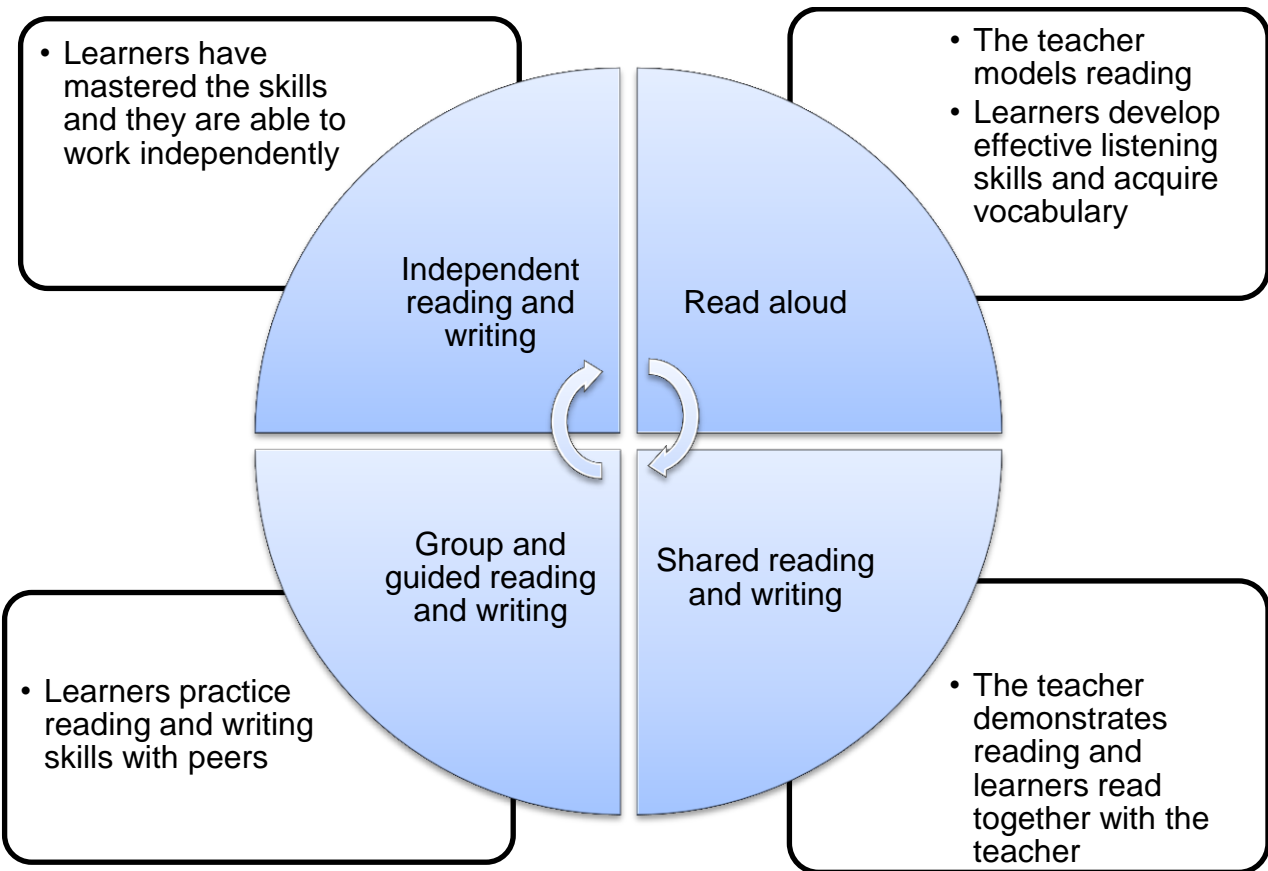


Figure 2.2: Methodologies in the BLP

For the purposes of this study, the methodologies in the BLP are executed within the context of Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), Krashen’s Input Hypothesis (IH) and Cambourne’s Conditions of Learning (cf. section 2.10). Therefore, teachers would benefit greatly by applying the methodologies within the context of curriculum stipulations, using different kinds of texts.

2.7 Using texts to incorporate three bodies of knowledge

As mentioned in section 2.4.3, the methodologies in the BLP incorporate a set of three inseparable bodies of knowledge in the teaching process. The three bodies of knowledge, reflected in figure 2.3, represent semantic knowledge, syntactic knowledge and graphophonic knowledge. The bodies of knowledge are also known as cues, and referred to as “the Linguistic Cueing System developed by Pearson (1976)” (Department of Education, 2013a:2).

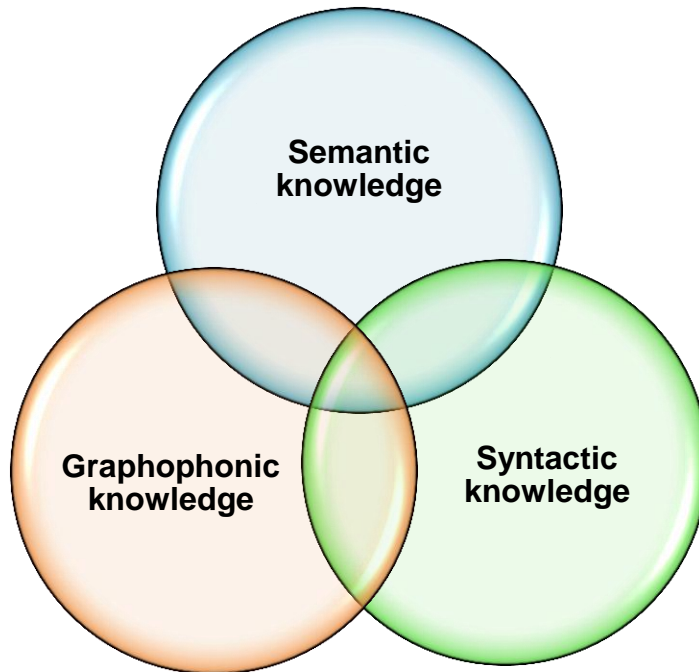


Figure 2.3: The three bodies of knowledge (adapted from Department of Education, 2013a:3)

For the purposes of this study, the successful implementation and execution of the text-based models (cf. section 2.4) would, to a great extent, depend upon the incorporation and integration of the bodies of knowledge in the teaching process. Each body of knowledge has significant value as it represents linguistic features to be developed when dealing with different text types. The key concepts included in each body of knowledge are described in the following section.

2.7.1 Semantic knowledge

Semantic knowledge covers the background knowledge (often called prior knowledge) (Mills, 2009:325) that the learner has acquired and possesses. Semantic knowledge includes world and cultural knowledge, topic and concept knowledge, and visual perception, which are crucial for the ability to communicate one's thoughts and ideas and making "personal connections with a text" (Department of Education, 2013a:3).

2.7.2 Syntactic knowledge

Syntactic knowledge involves knowing the structure of language and its grammatical patterns (Department of Education, 2013a:4). The syntactic knowledge includes “sentence structure and grammatical relationships that belong to a language” (Chapman, 1991:2). Accordingly, different texts would be uniquely structured and would present relevant grammatical patterns. Text is organised and presented in different ways for different purposes, therefore, syntactic knowledge is needed for understanding how textual information is presented.

2.7.3 Graphophonic knowledge

Graphophonic knowledge is the in-depth knowledge of letters and sounds and their relationship. This knowledge provides the emergent reader with word attack skills as they recognise the relationship between letters and sounds (phonics). For example, learners would recognise that the letters “d-o-g” combine to form the word “dog” and they would be able to distinguish between onsets and rimes. Onsets “are beginnings of words” and rimes “are ending parts of words from the vowel to the end” (Chapman, 1999:3), for example, “br-” in the word “branch” and “-ot” in the word “spot”.

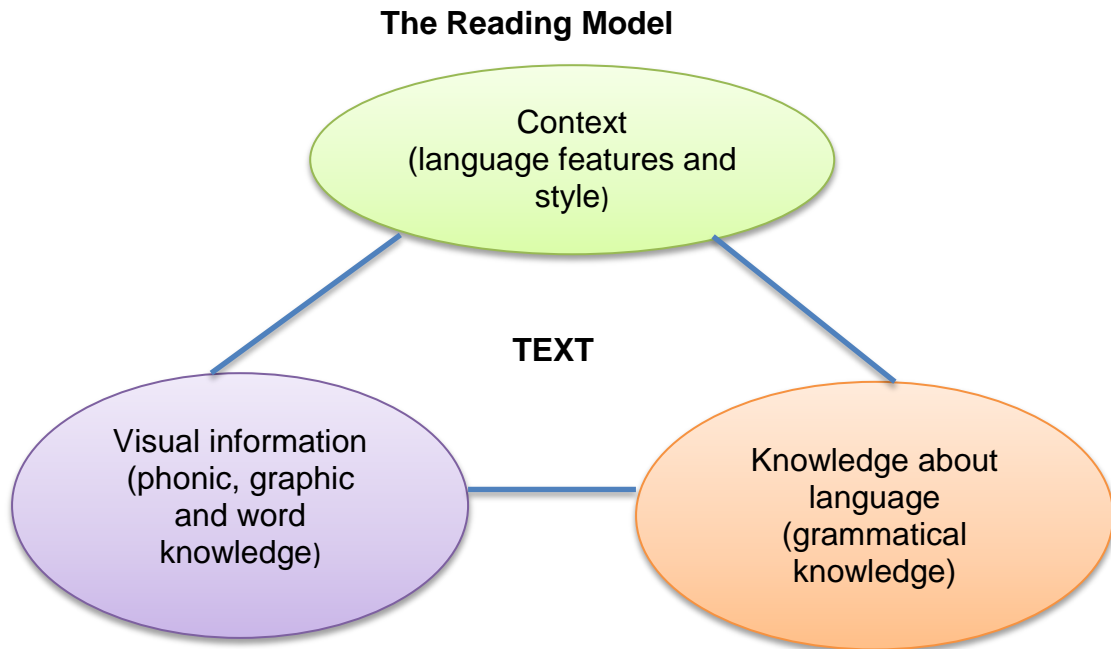


Figure 2.4: The Reading Model (Phenix, 2002:4)

Figure 2.4 shows the importance of text, placing it as the central and starting point for the development of language skills. The bodies of knowledge are interpreted and clarified in accordance with their relationship and value in text-based teaching.

The bodies of knowledge, when incorporated in teaching, eliminate out-of-context language teaching, which was prevalent for many years in the past, through the use of traditional English textbooks and ineffective traditional teaching methods. For various reasons, the reliance on the use of traditional English textbooks has failed to develop effective communicative skills in teaching. Textbooks form the basis “for much of the language input learners receive in the classroom” (Kirkgöz, 2009:79) and they are regarded as “the main sources of authority” by teachers and learners and they “are the most potent instruments, which help in building up the desirable attitudes in children” (Kobia, 2009:57). Textbooks are listed as additional resources in the curriculum (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:20). However, textbooks ought to have good quality content material and the system is obligated to ensure that teachers are “able to use good textbooks and sound teaching methodologies” (Owen-Smith, 2010:37).

2.8 Limitations of the text-based approach

The text-based approach has not gone without criticism, however. The text-based approach

is heavily wedded to a methodology based on the study of model texts and the creation of texts based on models. Likewise, critics point out that there is a danger that the approach becomes repetitive and boring over time since the five-phase cycle described above is applied to the teaching of all four skills (Richards, 2006:41).

In my view, the text-based approach, as defined in the curriculum (cf. section 1.6.8), involves learning by exploring texts in different ways, for example viewing, analysing and evaluating texts. The “creation of texts” (Richards, 2006:41) can be compared to the “production of different kinds of texts” (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:18), not the same kinds of texts. As such, learners will be taught through modelling and scaffolding how to produce, for instance, stories, dialogues, invitations, and more varied texts. This could be done using various methodologies such as shared reading, group projects or individual writing (cf. figure 2.2). Considering the standards of teaching and learning in our schools, much is needed in terms of teaching practice and learner engagement for skills development, particularly in the lower classes.

As indicated in the problem statement, the lack of adequate language skills contributes to the high school dropout rate in South Africa and elsewhere in the world. The issue of teachers’ inadequate and low pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) has also been alluded to. That being considered, repetition of methodology or repetition in any form would help entrench and reinforce knowledge and skills in both the teachers and the learners. In addition, it is envisaged that given the opportunities and regular practice, teachers will master the skills and PCK will improve, which in turn will lead to more creative and innovative teaching. Importantly, the curriculum provides guidelines on all aspects to be taught per term and per week. Prescribed texts include core materials, dictionary, stories, information texts, media texts (Department of Basic Education,

2011a:19–20) and grammar items, for example, nouns, determiners, tense, connecting words and vocabulary (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:26).

The issue of boredom can be reversed by engaging learners in a variety of activities while following the teaching cycle. As shown in Phase 3 (Richards, 2006:39–41) (cf. section 2.6.1), learners begin to contribute and the teacher reduces the contribution to constructing different text types. I believe that in a situation where learners are struggling to learn a FAL, providing support and differentiated language activities would play a role in avoiding boredom. In addition, it would encourage learners to participate meaningfully as they engage with texts under the teacher’s mediation and learning from their peers.

In response to the criticism, Richards responded as follows:

... However the syllabus also usually specifies other components of texts, such as grammar, vocabulary, topics and functions, hence it is type of mixed syllabus [sic], one which integrates reading, writing and communication and which teaches grammar through the mastery of texts rather than in isolation. Text-based teaching involves explicit teaching of the structure of different text types and an instructional strategy in which the teacher introduces the text and its purpose features, guides students through the production of texts though [sic] the process of scaffolding (Van Wessem, 2012:1).

Richards (2006) underlines the key aspects to teaching language for communicative competence. In the sense of Hymes’ (1966) description of communicative competence, texts should be used for a holistic and contextual development of language skills, rather than teaching language aspects in isolation.

2.9 Communicative competence (CC)

The term “communicative competence” was developed by Hymes (1966) in response to Chomsky’s (1965) linguistic theory of grammatical competence. Chomsky (1965:3) posits that “[l]inguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitation,

distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance”. Hymes counteracted Chomsky’s theory because it focused on the speaker’s ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, disregarding context and socio-cultural aspects of language use. Hymes claims that “[a] person who chooses occasions and sentences suitably, but is master only of fully grammatical sentences, is at best a bit odd” (Hymes, 1966:60).

As such, communicative competence accounts for the knowledge of using language competently and appropriately in a speech community. Hymes (1966:60) asserts that

[w]e have then to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He acquires competence as when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner.

Kitao and Kitao (1996:1) posit that Hymes argued that language speakers should not only have the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, but they should produce contextually appropriate sentences: “In communicative competence, he included not only the ability to form correct sentences but to use them at appropriate times ... the basic idea of communicative competence remains the ability to use language appropriately, both receptively and productively, in real situations”.

Larsen-Freeman (1986:131) explains that communicative competence involves the ability “to use the language appropriate to a given social context” and, therefore, learners need the knowledge of “linguistic forms, meanings and functions”. Ellis (1994:13) clarifies that communicative competence includes “knowledge the speaker-hearer has of what constitutes appropriate as well as correct language behaviour and also of what constitutes effective language behaviour in relation to particular communicative goals”.

Communicative competence entails the ability to use language effectively and meaningfully for communication in different situations. This involves using a set of complex cognitive skills that include among others, the knowledge and application of linguistic rules, analysing and synthesizing information for effective oral and written

communication. Acquiring this form of competence, particularly in FAL, takes time. It is a gradual, systematic process that needs a well-defined approach to language teaching and skills development (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1999:11).

Richards (2006:3) distinguishes between grammatical competence as the “knowledge we have of a language that accounts for our ability to produce sentences in a language” and communicative competence as the capability “to use the language for meaningful communication”. Richards (2006) explains that the key aspects included in communicative competence are: knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions, how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g. knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication), how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g. narratives, reports, interviews, conversations), and how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one’s language knowledge (e.g. through using different communication strategies).

Canale and Swain (1980:7) claim that communicative competence includes both grammatical and sociolinguistic competences and assume that “communicative competence is the highest or broadest level of language competence that can be distinguished or that is relevant to second language teaching”. In that sense, communicative competence should be considered central to teaching language through the text-based approach; and that forms the crux of this study. In my opinion, the ability to use language for different purposes and in different situations could be gradually achieved.

De Jager (2012:20) emphasises the importance of communicative competence in developing language proficiency. She affirms that besides developing the four basic language skills, “speakers need to go one step further to gain what is called communicative competence” which means “acquiring both linguistic and pragmatic competence”. Pragmatic competence is the ability to use language effectively in any given context and it is crucial in language teaching because it provides the opportunity for learners “to communicate in the target language” (De Jager, 2012:21). For the purposes of this study, while using the text-based approach, teachers should provide

ample opportunities for the development of both the linguistic and pragmatic competencies.

Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991:7) also raise important points that are relevant to this study in the sense that learners in our schools should be prepared in and taught the FAL so that they can use it for a variety of purposes and in different situations. Most importantly, the FAL is a LoLT and learners should be able to use it while learning other subjects. The points raised are that learners acquire language for a variety of reasons and that communicative competence can mean different things to different people. The latter has implications for teaching, because it is essential that teachers understand the underlying purpose of FAL learning. Their understanding will promote, to a greater extent, successful implementation of the text-based approach to language teaching for effective communicative competence.

Another key aspect to the study is the understanding of the “notion of communicative competence and the implications we can draw from it for language teaching” (Paulston, 1974:347). Paulston unpacks Hymes’ communicative competence as “knowledge of the rules for understanding and producing both the referential and the social meaning of language” and she affirms that it “is what we are trying to do in language teaching today” (Paulston, 1974:349–350).

The aspects relating to communicative competence tabled above, including Paulston’s idea of the implications of communicative competence in language teaching – which I think is still relevant in recent times – are fundamental to this study because they resonate with what the CAPS curriculum entails and envisages. The fact of poor and inadequate language skills in our schools has been alluded to. That constitutes the crux of the problem in this study, hence, its attempt to demonstrate that the goal of language teaching should be communicative competence. Furthermore, the implementation of the text-based approach for the development of communicative competence in the early years of schooling is encouraged.

2.10 Pedagogical content knowledge

Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) refers to subject matter, subject knowledge and academic knowledge, and according to Soils (2009:1), “craft knowledge”. Without this knowledge teachers may not be able to offer quality teaching in the classroom and impart knowledge as expected. Turnuklu & Yesildere (2007:1) posit that PCK comprises three interrelated components: knowledge of content, knowledge of the curriculum and knowledge of teaching. Elliot (1985:280) maintains that knowledge is a substantial part of what teachers are responsible for and that they themselves must be knowledgeable if they are to impart knowledge to others.

The National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) (2013:27) provides a picture that represents the full understanding of PCK and its implications for classroom teaching. According to NEEDU

PCK includes the most useful forms of representation (analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations) of key concepts in the curriculum, which renders them comprehensible to learners (Shulman, 1986). It also includes an understanding of what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult: the conceptions and preconceptions that students of different ages and backgrounds bring with them to the classroom. If those preconceptions are misconceptions, teachers need knowledge of the strategies most likely to be fruitful in reorganising the understanding of learners... If PCK is knowing the kinds of strategies which are effective in teaching certain subject topics, classroom competence is the practical ability to deploy these strategies with learners as to effect learning. A good teacher is one who engages her learners’ cognitive attention through a set of activities and interactions with text and other materials (National Education Evaluation Development Unit, 2012:27).

Ndawi (2004:35) outlines salient aspects relating to content knowledge, which should be the focus of enrichment in teacher training. These aspects include the nature of the central concepts, principles and contents of the subject, the logical structure, the place of the subject in the school curriculum and its application to the learning needs of the

learners, the learning of the subject by the learners of various age groups and abilities, and the skills for teaching the subject.

PCK links to the aims of this study because it helps in the endeavour to answer questions relating to teachers' knowledge of English as a subject, knowledge of the curriculum as well as knowledge of how to implement the text-based approach for effective classroom teaching.

2.11 Conceptual framework

In all teaching and development, the understanding of theories of learning plays a vital role in policy development, planning and execution. The relationship between the approach to teaching and the underpinning theories of learning is an essential step towards the understanding of how people learn. The knowledge of how people learn in turn helps in the interpretation of the curriculum. In my view, it is important for teachers to have a fair understanding of the theories of learning in order for them to guide learners appropriately. Harris, Turbill, Fizzsimmons and McKenzie (2006:26) agree that “theory is at the centre of the educational enterprise and plays a crucial role in delivering quality instruction”. The theories discussed in this section underpin and represent the nature of this study from its conception and they constitute a supporting structure on which the research questions were formulated.

This study is grounded and informed by the theory of social constructivism, developed by Vygotsky (Churcher, Downs & Tewksbury, 2014:35). Jordaan (2011:17) contends that “social constructivism can be applied to language acquisition and learning, if it is correctly interpreted”. In social constructivism, knowledge is actively constructed by means of collaborative learning and teaching for meaning and understanding (Crotty, 2012:1). Table 2.1 below unpacks social constructivism according to the Graduate Student Instructor Teaching and Resource Centre Home (GSI) (2005:1).

Table 2.1: Social constructivism

Social Constructivism	
View of knowledge	Knowledge is constructed within social contexts through interactions with a knowledge community.
View of learning	Integration of students into a knowledge community. Collaborative assimilation and accommodation of new information.
View of motivation	Intrinsic and extrinsic. Learning goals and motives are determined both by learners and extrinsic rewards provided by the knowledge community.
Implications for teaching	Collaborative learning is facilitated and guided by the teacher. Group work.

(Graduate Student Instructor Teaching and Resource Centre Home, 2005:1)

The use of terms such as “social, collaborative, integration” and “interaction” in the model above, suggest the importance of learning “in a social setting”. As such, communication and collaboration with others, in written and spoken forms, become vital to effective learning. Vygotsky viewed “the sociocultural context of learning as a socially constructed, mediated process” (Jordaan, 2011:13). Therefore, this study works from the premise that communicative competence is integrated within the social constructivism ambit due to the construction of knowledge through interactions within the social context.

The Graduate Student Instructor Teaching and Resource Centre Home (2005) model above adds the essential dimension of learner motivation. Motivation plays a role in building learner confidence. It also urges for learners to share their knowledge and experiences, for example in group work and presentations. It is, thus, important for teachers to establish motivation strategies in the classroom, and to acknowledge learners’ efforts. It is a well-known fact that highly motivated individuals are responsible beings who have potential and are capable of good performance. Motivation is primarily linked to the desire to participate and engage fully in a learning situation. It is described

as a “process through which individuals instigate and sustain goal-directed activity” and viewed as a process through which “an individual’s needs and desires are set in motion” (Rakes & Dunn, 2010:79). Motivation is seen as a “key factor in successful learning” and it can be “intrinsic (i.e. derived from the personal interests and inner needs of the learner)” or “extrinsic (i.e. derived from external sources such as material rewards)” (Ellis, 1994:36).

2.11.1 Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

ZPD, a concept formulated by Vygotsky (1978) is defined as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978:86). The READ Educational Trust (2009:56) explains that the ZPD is “the developmental state between a child’s actual development and his or her potential development”. The ZPD helps to conceptualize the difference between the level of actual performance and the learning potential of the child (Kozulin, 2003:17). Pea (2004:426) defines the ZPD as “the zone of activity in which a person can produce with assistance what they cannot produce alone (or can only produce with difficulty)”.

The ZPD appeals for mediation and scaffolding in the learning process and Vygotsky himself “primarily emphasized symbolic tools – mediators appropriated by children in the context of particular sociocultural activities, the most important of which he considered to be formal education” (Kozulin, 2003:17). The ZPD assures learner development through help and support which ultimately leads to independence. The importance of the ZPD is that development and learning are certain with the necessary guidance and support. The ZPD assures that “[w]hat the child is able to do in collaboration today he will be able to do independently tomorrow” (Chaiklin, 2003:40).

Scaffolding (defined in chapter 1), is a concept most often used concurrently with the ZPD. It, thus, cannot be overlooked as a necessary entity in language teaching and learning, and it is viewed in this study for its potential and implications in relation to the support learners need in language teaching and development. Scaffolding refers to the

“support given to young learners which helps them achieve higher levels of performance in a task than they would achieve attempting it independently” (McCabe, 2013:166). It becomes crucial for teachers to realise that this form of support (evident in the text-based models, cf. section 2.4), can be achieved and that it can be provided in various ways, “by multiple agents: the educator, fellow students, print materials, posters, technology and many others” (McCabe, 2013:166). By implication, scaffolding can be viewed as a technique supporting both the teacher and the learners, in the sense that teachers develop systematic lesson planning and application, including creativity and flexibility. In the process, learners benefit from the support, thereby gradually gaining courage to attempt tasks independently.

In my view, the ZPD recognizes that learners at any given level or age have potential for development, and through appropriate and systematic mediation, scaffolding and support by teachers, meaningful learning can be achieved. Therefore, the ZPD is relevant to implementing the text-based approach in the sense that through mediation and scaffolding learners’ potential could be unlocked for further development.

2.11.2 The Input Hypothesis (IH)

Research has shown that learners learn an additional language when they are able “to understand most of the target language used during communication. Thus, the child builds on what is already known while he/she is introduced to new words, phrases and structures” (National Council of Curriculum and Assessment, 2006:62). The IH thus plays a significant role in language teaching as it informs the teacher’s classroom instruction and communication, where learners are moved ahead by gradually being introduced to new concepts and new knowledge. Although significant in language teaching, the IH has been criticised for concentrating on language acquisition rather than language learning, and a lack of clarification of how to measure the level, amount and quantities of comprehensible input in Krashen’s advocacy of the Input Hypothesis (Zafar, 2009:143–144).

Ellis (1990:95; 1994:27) explains that Krashen advanced the “Input Hypothesis to account for how learners’ interlanguages develop as a result of comprehensible input

that contains linguistic features one step beyond their current knowledge”. Krashen (1985:2) believes that “humans acquire language in only one way – by understanding messages, or by receiving ‘comprehensible input’ ... that contains structures at our next ‘stage’ – structures that are a bit beyond our current level of competence”, expressed as “ $i + 1$ ”. Krashen (1985:101) emphasises that “acquisition” is the result of comprehensible input and not production. Input is made “comprehensible because of the help provided by the context” (Ellis, 1994:57). Thus, it is evident that the teacher’s role is to provide learners with input that they are able to comprehend and “lots of meaningful and understandable language” (Judd, et al., 2001:7). Contextualizing text, as quoted above, should be one of the aspects the teacher should be able to master. “Building the context” has been identified and emphasised as an essential aspect in the implementation of the text-based approach (Richards, 2006:36; READ Educational Trust, n.d.:14). Judd, et al. (2001:7) contend that “[c]omprehensible input refers to meaningful oral and written language somewhat above the learners’ current level of mastery” and Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991:242) explain it as “language that is heard or read and understood”.

Teachers should, in their mediation and instruction, use well-formulated sentences and vocabulary they know their learners will understand. While doing so, they should build in new concepts, language structures and vocabulary slightly above the learners’ ability, for advancement and progression to a higher linguistic level. It would be a futile exercise to use language learners do not understand when teaching, because that would leave many learners behind, potentially frustrated and demotivated.

2.11.3 Conditions of Learning

The constructivist, Brian Cambourne (1995), developed the Conditions of Learning as a theory that “suggest a concrete and viable means to enhance student development in literacy learning” (Rushton, Eitelgeorge & Zickafoose, 2003:11). When applied, the conditions “help foster a creative learning environment for students to develop their knowledge and grow as independent problem-solvers” (Rushton, et al., 2003:12). Cambourne’s Conditions of Learning are explained as follows:

Immersion: This condition gives learners the opportunity to be exposed, surrounded, “flooded by, steeped in, saturated by and enveloped in” different kinds of texts relevant to their level and interest. Some texts should be slightly above the learners’ ability for advancement and the development of problem-solving skills. The notion of a “print-rich” learning environment “allows for different forms of texts that are created by the children and reflects the real world” (Rushton, et al., 2003:13). Access to different texts (cf. the FLC) will stimulate the learners and will foster the love of reading and production of text.

Demonstration: Teachers should provide good models and examples, such as story frames, lists, recipes and procedures. They themselves should demonstrate fluent reading and accurate writing skills through scaffolding and supporting strategies (cf. IH). Demonstrations assist “learner[s] in experiencing the desired outcome” (Rushton, et al., 2003:12).

Engagement: Teachers should move away from teacher-centred, out-of-context teaching by involving learners as active participants in the learning situation. Learners should be engaged meaningfully and purposefully and they should all be given opportunities to contribute. The classroom atmosphere should be free from anxiety and inhibited learners should be invited to participate.

Expectation: Rushton, et al. (2003:12) advise teachers to set realistically high expectations, “enough so as to challenge the students yet without the risk of failure”. Expectations should be congruent to the learners’ level in order to allow them to cope and manage most of the tasks they tackle in the classroom.

Responsibility: Learners should be guided to take responsibility for their own learning in “a manner that is appropriate for their best learning styles” (Rushton, et al., 2003:12). They should know how to be in charge of themselves (self-management) and how to manage resources provided to them. It has been noted that in scaffolding, teachers offer sufficient support and gradually release the support while encouraging and motivating learners to attempt applying the skills they have acquired independently.

Approximation: Learners should be given room to make mistakes, and to learn from their mistakes. Mistakes should be seen as part of learning and development. In most

cases learners become scared of making mistakes for fear of “criticism and chastisement” (Rushton, et al., 2003:12).

Practice and use: Learners should be given enough chances to practise the skills by reading, writing, working with the teacher and other learners. Much support and praise is needed for learners to be motivated to carry on. Practice and use always lead to confidence and perfecting the desired skills.

Response: Positive feedback by the teacher and peers is needed for learners to move from one step to the next. Reflecting on what was done and achieved helps learners realise that their efforts are constantly bearing fruit. Individual achievement and that of the whole class should be discussed and celebrated. This will help learners move gradually to greater heights and be motivated to put more effort to their work.

Rosenblatt (2005) supports the concept of Conditions of Learning as proposed by Cambourne. She maintains that “an underlying requirement must be faced. The atmosphere in the classroom, the relationship between teacher and pupil, and among the pupils, must permit a personal response to what is read” (Rosenblatt, 2005:64).

Figure 2.5 below is a representation of the Conditions of Learning which Cambourne refers to as “a model of learning as it applies to literacy” (Cambourne, 1995:187). Evidently, the conditions promoted are linked to the application of a text-based approach. For the purposes of this study, the success of the text-based approach and its optimal execution lies in the availability of different types of texts. For example, the conditions “immersion” and “demonstration” advocate that learners should be “immersed in texts of all kinds” and they have to “receive many demonstrations of how texts are constructed” (Cambourne, 1995:187). Therefore, the Conditions of Learning assume a pivotal role in this study, for emphasising teaching and learning principles that support the Zone of Proximal Development, the Input Hypothesis, scaffolding and the support needed by learners in the classroom.

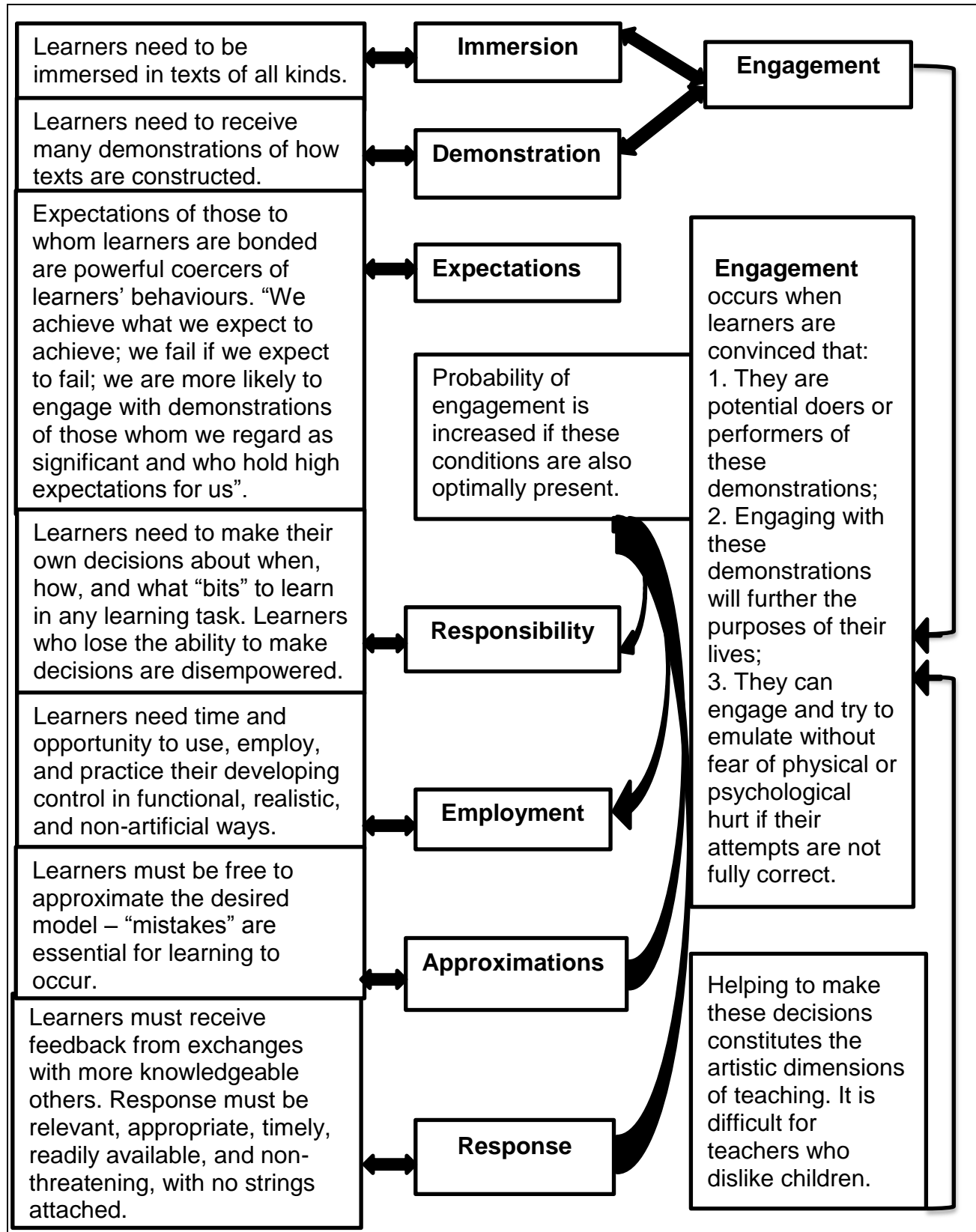


Figure 2.5: The Conditions of Learning (Cambourne, 1995:187)

2.12 Successful language teaching

Successful language teaching is linked to a variety of factors, and experts encourage the development of language in the early years of childhood. Research has shown “that at home and in early childhood education settings, young children learn important skills that can provide them with the cornerstones needed for the development of later academic skills” (National Institute for Literacy, 2009:4). Therefore, it is important to note and discuss the significance of early childhood development (ECD) as one of the factors contributing to successful language learning.

Research has proven that, due to socio-economic factors, many children in rural areas start formal schooling without having undergone formal early childhood development (ECD). According to the READ Educational Trust (2005:19) “40 per cent of children in our country grow up in conditions of abject poverty and neglect, and unless they are provided with quality early childhood development to counter-balance some of the effects of neglect, there is not much hope for them to achieve their full potential”.

Although the 2009 General Household Survey (GHS) (Department of Basic Education, 2011b:15) statistics show an increase in the number of learners in Grade 1 who had attended pre-primary schooling, it is highly likely that the ECD practitioners were not adequately trained to employ appropriate intervention strategies needed for holistic development of children at that level (READ, 2005:20; Ngobeli, 2004:2–3).

Research indicates that ECD plays a pivotal role in the education of children because at this level “[e]arly childhood development services need to be holistic and should attend to the child’s health, nutrition, development, psychosocial and other needs” (Department of Social Development, 2006:1), thereby developing them cognitively, physically and emotionally. ECD offers more than educational development opportunities. Studies have shown that at this level children are provided with nutrition and it has been found that “better nourished children perform significantly better in school, partly because they enter school earlier and thus have more time to learn but mostly because of greater learning productivity per year of schooling” (Glewwe, Jacoby & King, 2001:345).

Grantham-McGregor, Cheung, Cueto, Glewwe, Richter, Strupp and The International

Child Development Steering Group (2007:61) assure that “[e]arly cognitive and social-emotional development are strong determinants of school progress”.

The success of teaching language for communication lies in the teacher’s skilful and integrative execution of the text-based approach. “Teaching language as communication calls for an approach which brings linguistic skills and communicative abilities into close association” (Moghadam & Adel, 2011:1643; Widdowson, 1978:144). Judd, et al. (2001:6) advocate that “students should be taught how to use an additional language clearly, accurately and effectively for genuine communication”. The importance of “bringing linguistic and communicative abilities into close association” is the crux of the text-based approach, as implied and encapsulated in the CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2011a).

Success in teaching English as FAL should be considered as the major focus and aspiration of language and subject teachers, for the fact that English is the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in most South African public schools. In addition, Grade 4 serves as an entry point into the Intermediate Phase. Given the situation of the commencement of English in either Grade 3 or 4 in most public schools, it is, therefore, essential that teaching at Intermediate Phase level should build on the amount of knowledge laid in the Foundation Phase and be rigorous in bringing learners to the expected competencies.

The result of successful language teaching and learning is the learners’ ability “to use English effectively in real communication situations” (Davies & Pearse, 2000:2). If learners are exposed to good communicative language models and demonstrations (cf. Conditions of Learning), they will manage in situations inside and outside the classroom. Language teachers should, to a large extent, seek to establish English as the main classroom language, and they should “never lose sight of the overall long-term goal of English language teaching, to enable learners to communicate effectively, and as far as possible accurately, in English” (Davies & Pearse, 2000:3).

Realistically, not all teaching circumstances can be the same. Davies and Pearse (2000:2) agree that successful teachers may differ owing to factors such as experience,

training or educational backgrounds and “level of English”. Essentially, successful teachers should

- have a practical command of English, not just a knowledge of grammar and rules
- use English most of the time in every class, including beginners’ classes
- think mostly in terms of learner practice, not teacher explanations
- find time for real communication activities, not just practice language forms
- focus their teaching on learners’ needs, not just ‘finishing’ syllabus or coursework (Davies & Pearse, 2000:2).

The suggestions and guidelines mentioned above are crucial and can be helpful, particularly in the South African context, where English is learnt as a FAL and used as LoLT. The purpose of learning English should be clearly spelt out (Davies & Pearse, 2000:5) so that learners are encouraged and motivated to participate. It is a gradual and systematic process that needs the teachers’ support and guidance, including the promotion of favourable learning conditions.

2.13 Conclusion

This chapter presented the interrelated key concepts of the study and an exploration of the text-based approach in context. Several international and national studies which shed light on the implementation of the text-based approach were referred to, and discussed. In addition, text-based teaching models were alluded to and discussed, as guidance on how the text-based approach could be effectively applied for successful language teaching and learning. The conceptual framework, regarded as the pivotal point of the study, was elaborated on due to the fundamental value the theories carry and their implications in language teaching.

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

“A good communicator empathises with respondents, establishes rapport, asks good questions, and listens intently”.

(Merriam, 1998:23)

3.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters set the pace for the prediction of the design and methodology relevant for this empirical study. This anticipation was made possible through the creation of an alignment between the research problem, the literature review and the conceptual framework in relation to the research questions. Researchers advise that an important step to take after stating the problem and formulating research questions is the selection of an appropriate research design, with a clear understanding of how the design will be useful in answering the research questions (Mouton, 2001:55).

This chapter presents the research design and methodology of the study. The mixed method is the design of choice due to the opportunity it offered me to combine two mainstream methodologies – qualitative and quantitative – in my quest to answer the research questions. The design is anchored in the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm, based on the argument that epistemology – the theory of knowledge – is constructed and interpreted through natural interactions in real-life situations (Brooks & Brooks, 1993:1). This paradigmatic orientation of the study was considered as it supports the role of constructivism in educational and teaching practice presented in chapter 2.

3.2 Paradigmatic orientations

Researchers and scholars emphasize the importance of knowing and understanding research paradigms, the implications of paradigms in research, and making reference to the paradigms in research studies (Bahari, 2010; Corrigan, 2014; De Jager, 2012; Feilzer, 2010; Mkansi, & Acheampong, 2012; Sefotho, 2013:26; Sefotho, 2014; Tuli, 2010). In essence, research paradigms help with the formation and clarification of epistemological, ontological and methodological dimensions relevant to a particular study.

McGregor and Murnane (2010:421) maintain that philosophy and paradigms are entrenched in the following list of axioms on which any research study should be anchored:

(a) what counts (is worthy) as knowledge and how people come to know it (*epistemology*); (b) what counts as nature, reality, feeling, existence or being (*ontology*); (c) what is acceptable as rigour and inference in the development of arguments, judgements or insights (*logic*); and, (d) what counts as fundamental values and what is consciousness (moral choices, ethics, and normative judgements) (*axiology*).

A number of studies illustrate how the subject of philosophy and paradigms in research pose a predicament and challenge to students (novices like me) in establishing the relevant paradigms to their research studies (Corrigan, 2014; Kinash, n.d.; Mkansi & Acheampong, 2012; Sefotho, 2014; Seltzer-Kelly, Westwood & Pena-Guzman, 2012:265; Tang, 2011). These studies reveal how the issue of paradigms – “the paradigm wars” (Alise & Teddlie, 2010:106) – has been debated in terms of interchangeable, inconsistent usage (overlap) of terminology and lack of consensus in research, for instance. Tang (2011:211) categorically declares the paradigm issues as “warring schools and approaches” that are both “intimidating and confusing”, and challenging to students in the social sciences. Sefotho (2014:2) states that “[o]ne of the most outstanding challenges of usage forming part of the dilemma may be aggravated by how paradigm is used interchangeably with its pillar principles in the form of ontological paradigm or epistemological paradigm”. Mkansi and Acheampong (2012:132) indicate that “studies have used different descriptions, categorisations and classifications of research paradigms and philosophies in relation to research methods with overlapping emphasis and meanings” and they suggest that a concerted effort should “eventually result in the development of a planned, systematic framework and procedure that show some consensus to bail research students from these bewildering classifications and debates”.

A paradigm is defined as “the entire constellation of beliefs, values and techniques shared by members of a research community” (Goduka, 2012:126), and as “a set of

interrelated assumptions about the social world which provides a philosophical and conceptual framework for the organized study of that world” (Ponterotto, Mathew & Raughley, 2013:43). A paradigm can be explained as a “school of thought” (Hergenhahn & Olson, 1993:24) and it is considered paramount to how people develop theories “as well as how others form belief systems about theories preceding their metatheories” (Sefotho, 2014:5). Paradigms have become synonymous with the essence of research. They are understood through their “core ontological and epistemological assumptions emanating from distinct worldviews” (Sefotho, 2014:3; Tuli, 2010:99) and beliefs “as to how the world is perceived which then serves as a thinking framework that guides the behaviour of the researcher (Wahyuni, 2012:69). The worldviews and beliefs thus inform the researcher’s practices and influence the methodological and methodical choices and preferences. Paradigm thus becomes crucial and should be “central to the crafting of research studies” (Sefotho, 2014:4) and it ought to “direct[s] research efforts” (Feilzer, 2010:7). Accordingly, the researcher’s perspectives are expected to be “clearly defined in terms of ontology and epistemology” (De Jager, 2012:60; Scotland, 2012:9).

Epistemology refers to a “theory of knowledge and concern of what is considered as acceptable knowledge in a particular discipline” (Bahari, 2010:21). It represents the theory of knowledge that informs the research (Tuli, 2010:99), “a school of thought concerned with the nature of knowledge” (Hergenhahn & Olson, 1993:31:275). Ontology is defined as a “theory of the nature of social entities ... the nature of reality” (Bahari, 2010:23), “the study of being” (Scotland, 2012:9), “the theory and nature of existence of what there is, why and how” (De Jager, 2012:60). Furthermore, Scotland (2012:9) elaborates by explaining that “[o]ntological assumptions are concerned with what constitutes reality, in other words what is. Epistemological assumptions are concerned with how knowledge can be created, acquired and communicated, in other words what it means to know”. Therefore, when conducting research, “[r]esearchers need to take a position regarding their perceptions of how things really are and how things really work” (Scotland, 2012:9).

Consequently, central to my quest to know and understand the underlying meaning and implications of paradigmatic dimensions is how these were related to my research study. The paradigmatic dimensions were also useful in shaping my application of methodologies for the purpose of communicating what constitutes reality and the newly created knowledge as encapsulated in the explanations above.

Although a number of research studies align mixed methods with pragmatism (Bryman, 2007:17; Feilzer, 2010:7; Hanson, Creswell, Plano Clark, Petska & Creswell, 2005:226; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:16; Mkansi & Acheampong, 2012:133), I believe that it is permissible to opt to associate this study with the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm as the driving factor, based on my understanding of the role of paradigms in research, including my personal worldview and interpretation of this paradigm.

The interpretivist-constructivist philosophical paradigm

sees the world as constructed, interpreted, and experienced by people in their interactions with each other and with wider social systems, ... the nature of inquiry is interpretive and the purpose is to understand a particular phenomenon, not to generalize to a population (Tuli, 2010:100).

For the interpretivist, meaning is socially constructed and re-constructed through experience, “resulting in multiple interpretations”, thereby seeing the importance “to discover and understand these meanings and the contextual factors that influence, determine and affect the interpretations reached by different individuals” (Goduka, 2012:127).

The interpretivist-constructivist paradigm befits the description of this research study as it seeks to find answers in a naturalistic, real world, unobtrusive and non-controlling real-world situation (Tuli, 2010:100). In this study, I argue from the interpretivist-constructivist viewpoint by drawing understanding of the phenomenon – the text-based approach – from the collected data (Goduka, 2012:127) and by constructing meaning and reality as created in a social context – the Grade 4 classroom. The predominant perspective is that meaning is constructed through the interpretation of data as

presented by participants as “social actors” and drawing understanding of “their world from their point of view” (Goduka, 2012:127).

By virtue of their position, researchers become social actors too, interpreting “their everyday social roles in accordance with the meaning given to these roles and interpret[ing] the social roles of others” from their own perspective (Bahari, 2010:22). Therefore, meaning and reality are socially constructed and interpreted by both the researcher and participant as “social actors” (Goduka, 2012:127), playing profoundly different roles in a research study.

On another level, for learners to acquire communicative competence, they have to construct meaning of what is taught and have the ability to interpret what is mediated by the teacher. In essence, constructivism supports “learning in which learners use their own experiences to construct understandings that make sense to them, rather than having understanding delivered to them in already organised form” (Sesemane, 2004:52).

It is also my contention that knowledge and understanding are constructed through a process of interaction and reflection and action (Rushton, et al. 2003:11). Furthermore, in chapter 2 I mentioned and discussed the social constructivism theory and the theories of learning underpinning this study, namely, the Input Hypothesis, the Zone of Proximal Development and the Conditions of Learning. In a sense, the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm reinforces the conceptual framework, intended for the formation of foundational premises of the study. Table 3.1 depicts the chosen research paradigm as aligned with this study.

Table 3.1: Alignment of the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm with this study

Interpretivist-constructivist paradigm	
Ontology	<p>Reality is actively and socially constructed, and both reality and truth are constructed by humans through human relationship and interaction within a given social context (Goduka, 2012:125).</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">In this study, reality is what happens in the classroom and it is evident in the way teachers understand and implement the text-based approach.</p>
Epistemology	<p>Epistemology provides base for the best ways to study the world and social reality (Bhattacharjee, 2012:18). Therefore, the researcher endeavours to construct knowledge through the perspective of both the researcher and the participants.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">In this study, the different methods, observation, interviews and questionnaires are interpreted and the researcher gets to know more (constructing knowledge) in terms of what teachers know, how much they know and by understanding what they do.</p>
Methodology	<p>Methodology is defined as a theory and analysis of how research should proceed – the justification of methods – (Carter & Little, 2007:1317), and it determines the methods the researcher chooses to find answers to the research questions.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">In this study, the mixed method approach was utilised, drawing from both the qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The combination was intended to yield more rigour and validity to the study.</p>
Methods/ instruments	<p>Methods, often called techniques or strategies, represent the tools or protocols used to collect data as evidence in a research study (Carter & Little, 2007:1317). These methods are congruent with the selected methodology (Mouton, 2001:104), and they benefit the nature of the study and are considered relevant and useful in</p>

	<p>answering the research questions.</p> <p>In this study I employed classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and document analysis as protocols for data collection.</p>
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(adapted from Goduka, 2012:133).

Based on the discussion presented above and my understanding and interpretation of paradigmatic dimensions, this study echoes the diagram in figure 3.1.

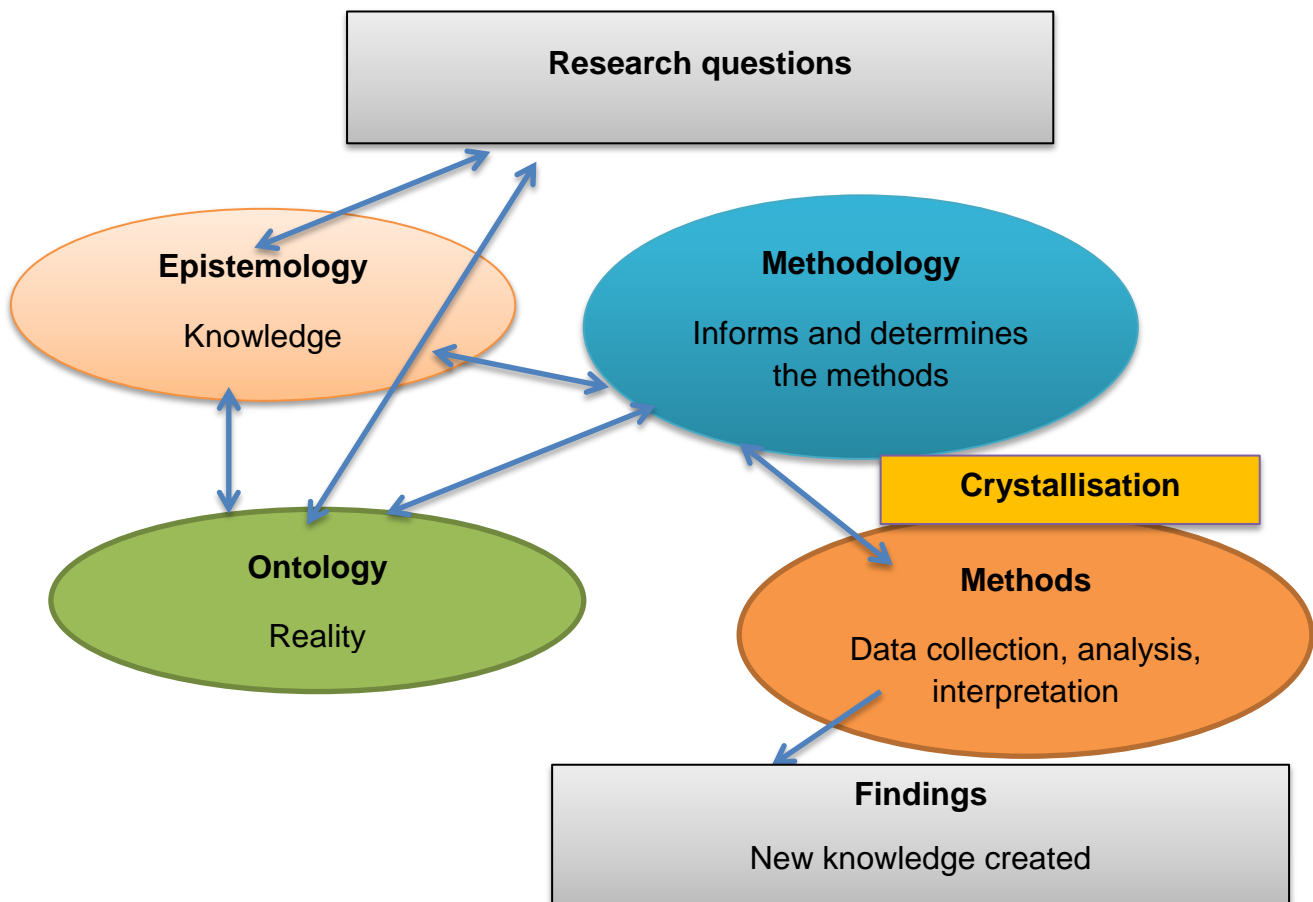


Figure 3.1: The link between the paradigmatic dimensions and research methodology and methods (adapted from Carter & Little, 2007:1320)

3.3 Research design

Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991:10) define research as a “systematic approach to finding answers to questions” and part thereof is “having a well-planned research design”. It is a “process of steps used to collect and analyse information in order to increase our understanding of a topic” (Creswell, 2005:3), a carefully organised and specific way of conducting research investigation (Mouton & Marais, 1990:156).

In this study, research is acknowledged not only for generating answers to the research questions, but for adding value to the field of education and stimulating debate on the subject of curriculum implementation in the classroom. Creswell (2005:3–7) emphasises the role of research because it adds and generates knowledge, it improves practice, it informs policy and it develops student research skills.

A research design, in my opinion, is a detailed plan and point of departure, intentionally and purposefully drawn by the researcher as a path to be followed in the quest to arrive at valid answers to the research questions. The planning provides structure and “indicates the type of study undertaken” (De Jager, 2012:59). It is the “complete strategy of attack on the central research problem” and it “provides the overall structure for procedures that the researcher follows, the data that the researcher collects, and the data analyses that the researcher conducts” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:91). The design “then becomes important to connect a methodology and an appropriate set of research methods in order to address research questions and or hypotheses that are established” (Wahyuni, 2012:72).

Figure 3.2 illustrates the fundamental framework of the study design. It depicts the convergent parallel mixed method design, which combines both the qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Creswell, 2012:540).

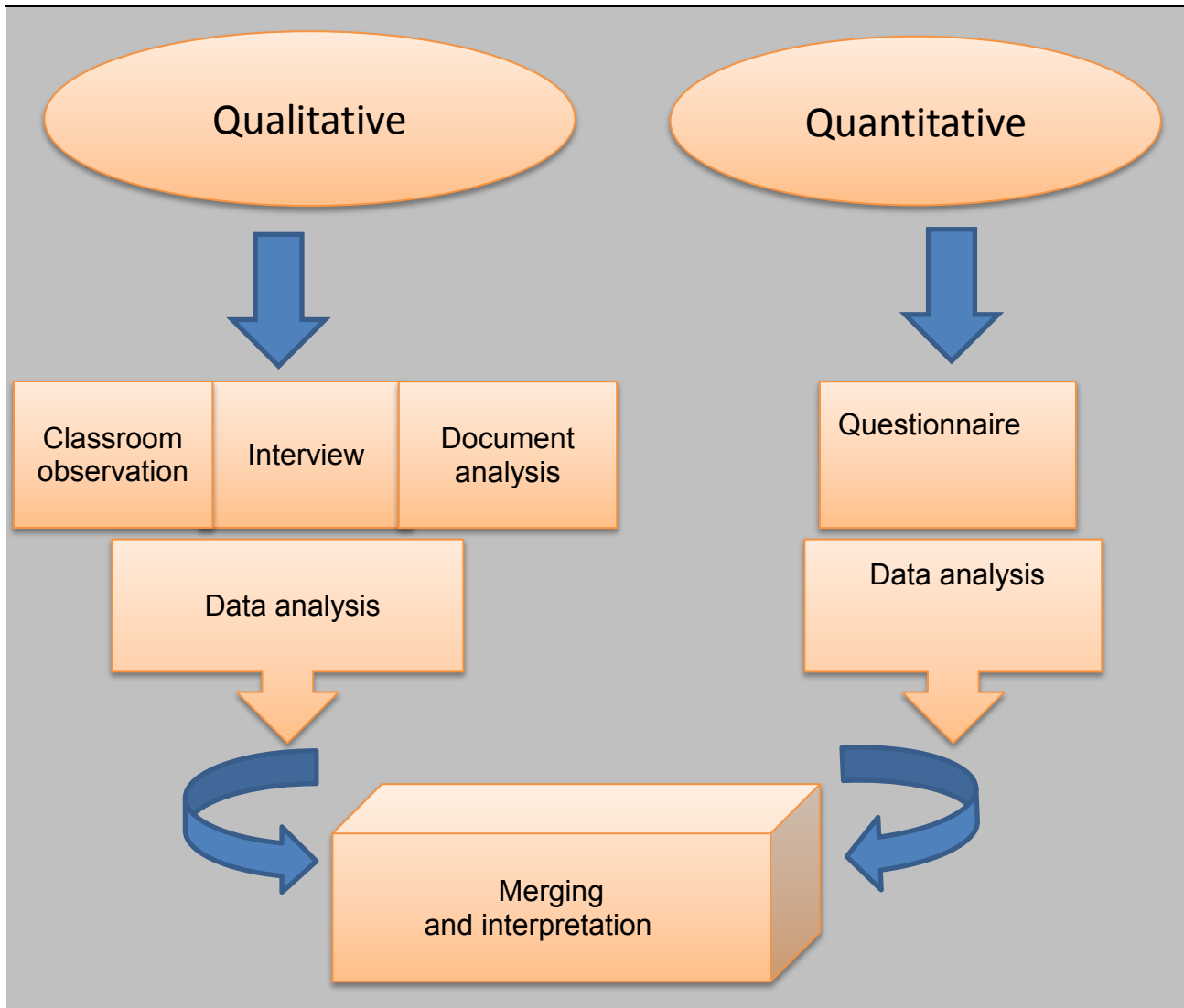


Figure 3.2: Design of the study

The convergent parallel mixed method research design illustrated in figure 3.2 represents the structure, methodologies and methods of data collection which are discussed as separate entities in the subsequent sections.

3.3.1 The mixed method design

I consider it prudent to present briefly my motivation for choosing the mixed method design for my study. The University of Pretoria constantly organizes insightful support sessions for postgraduate students. At one of these sessions, a team from Nebraska University presented an introduction to the three types of mixed methods designs: the

convergent parallel, the explanatory sequential and exploratory sequential. However, it should be noted that Creswell (2012:541), presents six mixed method designs used in educational research. Three more types, the embedded, the transformative and the multiphase are added to the aforementioned designs.

I considered the presentation as a workshop, because we actually had a number of practical tasks and we were shown different mixed methods research models. During practice and discussion sessions I realized that I could use the mixed method design for my study. I drew up little sketches of my ideas and plans and shared these with four of my colleagues during a discussion forum. One of them was sceptical, saying that it would be difficult and confusing, but the rest of us saw it in a positive light. Both feedbacks braved me to face up to the challenge. I felt confident that the mixed method design would be suitable and workable for my study. The reason was that the data-collection strategies employed would help me gather substantial information and evidence to answer the research questions and to broaden my knowledge and insight of the core research methodologies, namely, the quantitative and qualitative. As a result, I chose the convergent parallel design.

In the convergent parallel mixed method design qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously and the results merged and used to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2012:540). Mixed method is described as a “third movement” and it is “seen as the prevailing way most educators will be approaching research” (Creswell & Garrett, 2008:322). In the mixed method approach, “researchers incorporate methods of collecting or analyzing data from the quantitative and qualitative research approaches in a single study” (Williams, 2007:70), and finally “integrating conclusions from those data into a cohesive whole” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014:268).

I employed the convergent parallel design by collecting both qualitative and quantitative data because I considered this study an opportunity to learn more about the methods used in two core methodologies in research. Creswell (2012:536) encouragingly confirms that “[g]raduate students use mixed methods research in order to learn and experience this form of research design so that they are well-informed about the latest research approaches”.

Expressing a similar view, Brannen (n.d.:5–6) adds that mixed method opens opportunities for “skills enhancement”, “lifelong learning”, and the notion of “thinking ‘outside the box’ ”. I find these opportunities congruent to the South African context, as Brannen (n.d.) further explains that mixed method “fits with the political currency accorded to ‘practical enquiry’ that speaks to policy and policymakers and that informs practice” (Brannen, n.d.:6). I consider this aspect consistent because, historically, South African curricula have been designed to suit the political setting. For example, Bantu Education was meant to achieve political ideologies of the old regime and subsequently, the new dispensation emerged with a transformational curriculum that sought to redress the results of past social and racial imbalances (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996:14; Moodley, 2013:5; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2008:5; Setati, 2008:104). Van Wyk and Higgs (2011:174) report on perceptions that regard curricula as social reproductions, thereby confirming the purpose of curricula in the two South African contexts.

In a mixed method research design, researchers collect and analyse data by mixing both qualitative and quantitative methods “in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem” (Creswell, 2012:535), learning more about the world as opposed to being limited to each of the approaches (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:101). The combination of the two research methodologies brings out their strengths (Schulze, 2003:12) and opens opportunities to align a research study within the selected philosophical paradigm.

Research reports indicate that mixed methods are increasingly becoming popular in different disciplines including education, for playing “a pivotal role in providing both the visibility and credibility of mixed methods as a third methodological movement”, thereby opening chances for a solid researcher-participant relationship (Bryman, 2006:97; Bryman, 2007:8; Cameron & Molina-Azorin, 2010:2; Harrits, 2011:1; Molina-Azorin & Cameron, 2010:95; Molina-Azorin, 2012:33; Ponterotto, et al., 2013:42; Srnka & Koeszegi, 2007:30). By popularity it is meant that mixed methods research has gained tremendous momentum by being utilized invariably by academics and researchers across a variety of disciplines, and it is bound to be successful as “more investigators

study and help advance its concepts and as they regularly practice it” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:14). Hussein (2009:2) confirms that mixed method has drawn significant attention in research and some researchers refer to it as the “third research method in addition to qualitative and quantitative research methods”. Schulze (2003:12) advises that “educational researchers need both modes of inquiry to advance their understanding of teaching, learning and other human phenomena”.

Understanding the mixed methods – also called multi-methods, multi-strategy, mixed methodology (Bryman, 2006:98) – is a form of advancement in social research that offers advanced skills “needed to study the increasingly complex problems facing educators and social scientists” (Creswell & Garrett, 2008:321). In the mixed approach, the strengths of both methods are combined and integrated, leading to a better and unified understanding of the problem (Creswell & Garrett, 2008:322), thereby providing chances for more cohesive evidence that leads to more rigorous analysis, interpretation and relatively valid conclusions.

Tashakkori and Creswell (2007:208) provide guidance on three modes in which questions for a mixed method approach can be formulated. This study follows the explanation they provide for writing separate qualitative and quantitative questions which are then converged during interpretation. In this manner, the questions include “clearly interconnected qualitative and quantitative components” (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007:207) as shown in figure 3.2 above.

Following the mixed method synopsis given above, in the following sections I elaborate on the qualitative and quantitative components as independent strands as well as the data collection procedures under each strand, which were merged for the purpose of this study.

3.4 Research methodologies

As indicated in the previous section, the mixed method design comprises a combination of the two primary methodologies, the qualitative and quantitative. I elaborate on these two to elucidate what they entail and how they are used, as separate entities, to

generate knowledge in social research. The expatiation also provides more clarity on the reasons I chose to employ the combined version of the two methodologies.

3.4.1 Qualitative methodology

The qualitative design is defined as a “process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting” (Creswell, 1994:2). In this study the “natural setting” is public schools. Fundamentally, the qualitative methodology is “used to answer questions about the complex nature of phenomena, often with a purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participant’s point of view” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:101). Qualitative research is viewed as “a field of inquiry in its own right, crosscutting disciplines, fields, and subject matters” and it is linked to “a complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts, and assumptions ... and many qualitative research perspectives, and/or methods, connected to cultural and interpretive studies” (Williamson, 2006:84).

The qualitative approach is understood as a methodological approach that relies on non-quantitative data processing methods “in search for understanding that is based on social construction of knowledge” (Corrigan, 2014:52), with the aim of promoting “better self-understanding” and increased insight into human behaviour and experience (Van der Merwe, 1996:283). This methodology is aligned to inductive reasoning, whereby theory is generated from data collected by the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997:502; 534). De Vos (1998:45) asserts that “qualitative researchers interact with those they study, whether this interaction assumes the form of living with or observing informants over a protracted period of time, or actual collaboration”.

Qualitative researchers study things “in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of meaning people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003:3; Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:147), in their quest to “understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they live” (Myers, 1997:2). The naturalistic setting predominates the research, where people are studied in real-life situations and observation is considered the major method of data collection (Ellis, 1994:475).

In qualitative research, the researchers are considered instruments in themselves because they become personally involved in the data collection activity, thereby becoming a full-fledged part of the entire natural experience (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:102). This study is based on the principle of naturalism as it was “undertaken within the habitat of the actors”, its natural setting (Schurink, 1998a:240).

The qualitative methodology is found suitable for this study because the data collection methods discussed below are geared towards understanding the implementation of the text-based approach in a natural setting, that is, in a classroom situation. In this study, I collected data by interacting with purposefully selected participants in their natural, everyday setting. McMillan and Schumacher (1997:450) confirm that in qualitative data collection methods, the researcher “collects data by interacting with selected persons in their setting and by obtaining relevant documents”.

Maxwell (2008) lists five useful “intellectual goals” of the qualitative approach I find relevant and congruent to this study in terms of context, and as justification for choosing the mixed method research design. Among the five goals I selected the three listed below that I consider most relevant to this study, based on the data collection strategy I employed and its purpose.

1. Understanding the meaning, for participants in the study, of events, situations, and actions they are involved with, and of the accounts that they give of their lives and experiences.
2. Understanding the particular context within which the participants act and the influences this context has on their actions. Qualitative researchers typically study a relatively small number of individuals or situations and preserve the individuality of each of these in their analyses, rather than collecting data from large samples and aggregating the data across individuals or situations.
3. Understanding the processes by which events and actions take place (Maxwell, 2008:221).

In addition, I contend that it is better and easier to gain insight into the phenomenon under study from the participant’s point of view, a contention Bryman, Bresnen,

Beardsworth and Keil (1988:16) declare as “a commitment to seeing the world from the point of view of the actor”.

As a method in the qualitative approach, I chose classroom observation as the main means of data collection. Creswell (2005:48) states that in qualitative research “you seek to learn from the participants in the study, and develop forms, called protocols, for recording data as the study proceeds”. Classroom observation demands the researcher’s ability to make meaning and to interpret what is seen and experienced as “critical for understanding any social phenomenon” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:147). Secondary to classroom observation, I included a semi-structured interview protocol comprising questions relating to the implementation of the text-based approach in English education. Document analysis was used as an extra dimension to provide evidence of how daily written tasks contribute to the development of communicative competence.

3.4.2 Quantitative methodology

The quantitative methodology is considered “extensive research” based on the emphasis on quantification of data collection and analysis (Bahari, 2010:18–19). Deductive reasoning is used predominantly; and research methods and theories are formulated in alignment with the deductive approach (Bahari, 2010:21). By virtue of the emphasis on numeric and statistical data, quantitative research is described as the “mainstream search for explanation based on statistical methods of processing data” Corrigan (2014:52).

Quantitative research is geared towards “documenting subject attributes expressed in quantity, extent, or strength, as well as guaranteeing – among other things – objectivity, accuracy, validity and reliability” (Sarantakos, 2005:50). Sarantakos (2005:50) confirms that “[i]n many instances, quantitative researchers employ qualitative methods in their studies, adjusted to meet the criteria of quantitative research”. The quantitative approach helps the researcher to be more objective and to conduct the observations in a more systematic and standardised manner (Schurink, 1998a:242–243).

Creswell (2005:39) defines quantitative research as

a type of educational research in which the researcher decides what to study, asks specific, narrow questions, collects numeric (numbered) data from participants, analyses these numbers using statistics, and conducts the inquiry in an unbiased, objective manner.

Bahari (2010:25) holds a similar opinion in underlining that “quantitative research is related to the views of objectivity of the social world and the idea of causation in social processes”. Therefore, in taking the objective stance, the quantitative researcher is at liberty to limit the items to the most relevant in terms of answering specific research questions.

In this study the questionnaire protocol was utilised as a quantitative data collection method with the intention to corroborate and to strengthen the qualitative data.

3.5 Sampling

Sampling is explained as “procedures which involve some form of random selection of elements from a target population” (Mouton, 2009:132). Sampling is divided into two major types: non-probability and probability sampling (Babbie, 2010:191–192; Mouton, 2009:36). In non-probability sampling the researchers choose to focus on a smaller sample that is representative of the larger population about which they wish to make conclusions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:106). By representative I mean selecting “individuals from a sample of a population such that the individuals selected are typical of the population under study” (Creswell, 2012:141). The population for this study comprises Grade 4 English FAL teachers who practice the text-based approach according to CAPS requirements in public schools.

Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling relevant to this study based on the researcher’s knowledge of the target population. In selecting purposive sampling to access information-rich locations, researchers “intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon” (Creswell, 2012:206: 626). This form of sampling is noted as logical and powerful for selecting information-rich cases for in-

depth studying of cases “from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of research; thus the term purposeful sampling” (Patton, 1990:169).

In this study I opted for purposive sampling owing to my extensive knowledge of the target population, as well as for convenience and relevance regarding the provision of information in my quest to find answers to the research questions.

3.5.1 Selection criteria

The unit of analysis involves non-probability purposive sampling based on the researcher’s knowledge of the target population. This technique makes the selection of a sample “on the basis of knowledge of a population, its elements, and the purpose of the study” (Babbie, 2010:193).

The sample represents a homogenous group of Grade 4 teachers from three primary schools in the Tshwane North district. The schools were selected on the basis of accessibility to the researcher and on grounds that they implemented the text-based approach in English First Additional Language teaching. The teachers were selected on grounds that they were available and they were authentically in a position to “provide useful information for answering the questions” (Creswell, 2012:146).

For the purposes of this study, three primary schools were selected in the Tshwane North district, Gauteng Province. Only one Grade 4 teacher per school formed part of the study. Many of the schools in the Tshwane North district are public schools located in disadvantaged areas (cf. addendum L). They were thus chosen for convenience and based on my “knowledge of the population, its elements” and the potential to fulfil “the purpose of the study” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:166).

3.5.2 Selecting sites and participants

As stated in section 3.5.1, the study participants were selected on the grounds of availability, and as teachers of English in the relevant grade. Significantly, I made a request that the teachers to be selected should be implementing the text-based

approach in English education according to CAPS requirements. Addendum J outlines the profile of the sites and biographical details of the participants.

3.6 Data collection methods

Research data are collected through the use of measuring instruments used in research to gather valid and reliable information in order to understand the problem and to answer the research questions. Mouton (2001:100) highlights that researchers may either use existing instrumentation or use self-designed instruments. Using self-designed protocols to gather information, I employed classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and document analysis with the intention of gaining in-depth understanding of the subject under study. Table 3.2 indicates how each data collection method was used to answer the research questions.

Table 3.2: Data collection methods and research questions answered

Data collection method	Related research question
Classroom observation	How is the text-based approach to teaching English implemented in Grade 4 to ensure communicative competence? How are learners exposed to various types of texts in the Grade 4 classroom?
Semi-structured interviews	What is the teachers' understanding of the text-based approach?
Questionnaires	What is the teachers' knowledge of the curriculum stipulations as far as English FAL is concerned?
Document analysis	How are learners exposed to various types of texts in the Grade 4 classroom?

3.6.1 Classroom observation

Observation is a form of collecting data “by observing people and places at a research site” (Creswell, 2005:211). In non-participant observation the researcher observes without taking part in the proceedings. The observer “sits at a site and records notes without becoming involved in the activities of the participants” (Creswell, 2005:212). In this study, I conducted classroom observation using a purposefully designed checklist specifying items to be observed (cf. Addendum H). I chose classroom observation to understand what happens in the classroom, thereby trying to attach meaning to the activities as conducted by the participants themselves (Allwright & Bailey, 1991:5).

During the observation process, I wrote detailed field notes on the observation checklist, which specifies what needed to be observed. In addition, I recorded the proceedings on videotape so that I could view and reflect on the activities to fill in any gaps that might appear at a later stage. Field notes are written records taken during an observation and they are classified as “descriptive” and “reflective” (Creswell, 2012:217). During the observation I wrote descriptive observation notes to record what happened and I made provision for reflective notes in a column for reflection to document my personal thoughts regarding what I had observed.

Prior to embarking on the data collection activity, I had to engage in a preparatory practice exercise for readiness and full understanding of what classroom observation requires, including potential pitfalls I could possibly encounter. I engaged in the preparatory exercise to overcome the potential for bias I could possibly present. As an experienced teacher trainer and mentor, I have conducted extensive classroom observation in schools and conducted research in the classroom for different purposes. Although that was done at a different level and context, I feared the experience would influence the way I carried out the observation in this study. However, I succeeded in conditioning myself into presuming a state of a newcomer in the field of research. I ventured, consciously so, into a thinking-and-talking-to-myself act, convincing myself that I am a researcher looking for altogether new information for my research study, thereby overcoming the potential for bias.

Classroom observation calls for absolute professionalism, objectivity, time management and effective note-taking on the part of the researcher. It requires factors such as “good listening skills and careful attention to visual detail ... management of issues such as potential deception by people being observed” (Creswell, 2005:211). The potential for deception denotes the “observer’s paradox” which states that “the mere presence of an observer will force the subjects to attend to what they say in a way different than if the observer were not present” (Allwright & Bailey, 1991:71; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991:17). The observer’s paradox was overcome by creating a professional rapport with the participants and by creating a friendly, passive and respectful relationship, thereby remaining unobtrusive (Creswell, 2012:217).

The items on the classroom observation sheet included text type, conformity to the CAPS curriculum, teaching methodology and content, teacher’s communicative competence, learner engagement and involvement and general classroom environment. The text type was expected to be in line with the one prescribed in the CAPS guidelines for the particular term and week. This would indicate that the teachers followed curriculum stipulations. The methodology used would show how the teacher mediates and scaffolds teaching according to Vygotsky’s ZPD, their command of language would be linked to Krashen’s comprehensible input, and content knowledge and instructional language would correspond with PCK (cf. chapter 2). The manner in which they involved and engaged learners would shed light on the development of language for communicative competence and the classroom environment would indicate the extent to which the Conditions of Learning were considered in a practical classroom situation.

As indicated earlier on, I was permitted to videotape the entire classroom observation activity to capture the proceedings. I had initially planned to employ the services of an assistant (cf. addendum F). However, due to the circumstances of my relocation to Gauteng, I did not have anyone readily available to assist. I have to thank my supervisor for advising me on how to handle the situation. The advice helped me acquire a video camera and learn to manipulate it, using a tripod provided by my supervisor. The video recording was useful in providing extra evidence of what expired that might have slipped or gone unnoticed, for instance, non-verbal behaviour. The recordings focused only on

the teachers' activities because the study sought to establish how the teachers implemented the text-based approach in Grade 4.

3.6.2 Semi-structured interviews

De Vos (2002:298) states that interviews allow the researcher to “enter into the other person’s perspective” to elicit information. The interview is accepted as a “good way of accessing people’s perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality” (Punch, 2009:144). In ethnographic data collection, the interview is “a frequent choice, most commonly using open-ended or semi-structured questions” (Williamson, 2006:87). Moreover, interviews provide an opportunity to find out more about what participants know and what they think. A qualitative interview “occurs when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record their answers” (Creswell, 2005:214). Interviews are classified as structured, semi-structured and unstructured.

In this study I used semi-structured interviews which contained closed-ended and open-ended questions. In semi-structured (also called in-depth) interviews the goal is “to explore a topic more openly and to allow interviewees to express their opinions and ideas in their own words” (Esterberg, 2002:87), because it is often not possible to observe everything we need to know. Semi-structured interviews provide the opportunity to ask “some questions that are closed ended and some that are open ended” (Creswell, 2005:598). Closed-ended questions provide “preset response options for the participant” and they will be useful in protecting the participants in “sensitive questions because participants might feel more comfortable knowing the parameters of response options” (Creswell, 2005:363–364). Open-ended questions let “participants provide their own responses to questions” (Creswell, 2005:363). They are limitless and give the participants an opportunity to express themselves using their own words (Dreyer, 1997:227).

Throughout the process I kept on verifying the participants' responses by asking follow-up questions to ensure that what I had written was what the participant meant. I

audiotaped the interviews to keep record of the discussions, because I would need to listen to the conversations at a later stage when transcribing the information.

3.6.3 Questionnaires

Creswell (2012:382) describes the questionnaire as a form “used in a survey design that participants in a study complete and return to the researcher”. Questionnaires are defined as “a set of questions on a form which is completed by the respondent in respect of a research project”, considered the “most generally used instruments of all” (Fouche, 1998:152), and studies have shown that questionnaires are “the most frequently used instrument[s] in educational research” (Jekayinfa, 2007:2). Although there are some weaknesses, the advantages of questionnaires are that they are less expensive, they are easy to administer and “respondents do have greater confidence in their secrecy and anonymity, which the questioner provides” (Jekayinfa, 2007:6).

According to Babbie (2010:262), “[q]uestionnaires are used in connection with many modes of observation in social research”. He maintains that construction of questionnaires “can be an important practical skill for researchers” and cautions that improperly constructed questionnaires can “lead respondents to miss the questions, confuse them about the nature of data desired”. Therefore, questions should be simple, to the point, easy to understand (McLeod, 2014:2) and should be formulated “to generate data conducive to the goals of the research” (Bird, 2009:1310).

For the purposes of this educational study, the use of meaningfully constructed questionnaires was crucial for corroborating information gained through interviews and it also helped with objectivity in obtaining the desired information concerning the study.

The questionnaires requested biographical details of participants that I thought would afford more enlightenment when it came to data interpretation. I kept the details confidential according to the research ethics mediated with the participants (Allwright & Bailey, 1991:60).

The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine the participants’ pedagogical content knowledge (cf. addendum G). The questions comprised open-ended items

which focused on professional development, curriculum knowledge and implementation, instructional strategies and management of teaching and learning. Using a scoring rubric, the responses were quantified by subsequently being evaluated and converted into scores that were used to support the integrated interpretation of the findings. A scoring rubric is defined as a “set of scoring guidelines that describes the characteristics of the different levels of performance used in scoring or judging a performance” (Clement, Chauvot, Philipp & Ambrose, 2003:222). Scores were used because they “have a numerical meaning” and they “have an absolute meaning” (Abeyasekera, 2001:5) for ensuring reliability and validity of the outcomes. To eliminate bias, I employed the expertise of two external auditors, who worked independently, to review the scoring.

3.6.4 Document analysis

Having chosen document analysis as a form of data collection, I asked for permission to make copies of learners’ daily written work to gain further insight into the kinds of tasks that the learners were exposed to (cf. addendum K). Looking at these documents helped me analyse and make sense of the tasks in terms of the development of written communication skills using the text-based approach. As explained in chapter 2, communicative competence embraces both verbal and written modes of communication, hence the endeavour to analyse learners’ written work.

The purpose of document analysis befitting the nature of this study is outlined by Bowen (2009). Document analysis is defined as a systematic procedure for evaluating and examining documents “to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge”. Bowen (2009:27–30) states that document analysis is frequently used in mixed methods research, because documents have the potential of providing “valuable additions to a knowledge base” and can be used as a “means of tracking change and development”.

Esterberg (2002:121) points out that “[a]nother way you can study human behaviour unobtrusively is through written texts in the form of documents and records”. Documents provide valuable information in helping the researcher “understand central phenomena

in qualitative studies” (Creswell, 2012:223). For the purpose of this study, learners’ activity books qualify as authentic documents and records, and they serve as rich sources of information (Creswell, 2005:210, 219; Punch, 2009:158). Learners’ activity books were analysed to get an impression of the amount and quality of work, and how the text-based approach was implemented through written tasks to develop learners’ communicative competence.

The National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (2013:14) confirms that the quality of teaching and learning is best measured through the direct outcomes of learning ... For example, lesson plans may not bear much relationship to the actual instructional practices which occur in any class, whereas the quantity and quality of learner writing provides more direct and objective evidence of the type of learning arising from those practices.

For this reason, the writing in learners’ books would provide invaluable information regarding the use of different texts for teaching and learning. Moreover, written activities would reveal whether teaching was systematic and progressive, and whether the tasks were in line with curriculum structure and guidelines. In justification, Silverman (2000:128) confirms that “small numbers of texts and documents may be analysed for a very different purpose ... more concerned with the processes through which texts depict ‘reality’ ...”

In the context of this study, learners’ work was not only documents to be analysed for the purpose of providing answers to the questions. Learners’ written work has the potential to reveal more information relating to the manner in which modelling and scaffolding are applied. For instance, learners’ written work should include differentiated writing activities such as shared, group as well as independent writing. Therefore, the construction, evaluation, analysis of texts, as befitting curriculum requirements, would be evident.

3.7 Data analysis in social research

Data analysis is described as a process of “breaking up” the data into manageable themes and patterns when all fieldwork has been completed (Mouton, 2001:108). When

analysing data, the researcher faces the challenge of organising and making sense of large amounts of data. This involves reducing volumes of information, identifying of patterns and constructing “a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal” (Patton, 1990:371).

Creswell (2005:10) explains this as follows:

Analysis consists of ‘taking the data apart’ to determine individual responses and then ‘putting it together’ to summarize it. Analysing and interpreting the data involves drawing conclusions about it; representing it in tables, figures, and pictures to summarize it; and explaining the conclusions in words to provide answers to your research questions.

Risimati (2007:109) agrees with Creswell in saying that “the process of data collection is not an end in itself ... After collecting the data, the researcher needs to organise the information that has been gathered”. He points out that the methods used by the researcher will “have an influence on data analysis and interpretation”. The researcher is then able to decide on suitable structures and graphical representations that best summarise the data. Therefore, by virtue of the combination into a mixed method design, both qualitative and quantitative data were analysed separately, then merged and interpreted to find answers to the research question and sub-questions raised in the study.

De Vos and Fouché (1998:203) confirm that to find answers “one must first analyse the data and then interpret the results of the analysis”. To ensure accuracy, I used theoretical triangulation to consolidate the analysed data. Theoretical triangulation is aligned to the use of multiple theories to support or refute findings and helps the researcher with “broader and deeper understanding of the research problem at hand” (Hussein, 2009:3). Allwright and Bailey (1991:73) explain that by using theoretical triangulation the researcher approaches “the data analysis with more than one perspective on possible interpretations”. The relevance of theoretical triangulation lies in the fact that in this study, I referred to various theories of learning and I opted for a variety of data collection methods. Yeasmin and Rahman (2012:159) state that

triangulation in itself provides “richer and more comprehensive information”, as well as minimizing “the inadequacies of single-source research”.

The qualitative data were classified into themes and descriptive narratives were used to explain how they provide answers to the research questions. Creswell (2005:590) explains that describing and developing themes from the data in qualitative research consists of answering the major research questions and developing an in-depth understanding of the central phenomenon. The distinctive themes were represented in tables in the form of patterns emerging from analysed data. For instance, in classroom observation the similarities on the observed sets of items, namely, methodology and content, language use, learner engagement, classroom environment and the prescribed text were analysed. The set of observable items was selected and categorized purposefully for revealing whether and how teachers executed the text-based approach as expected, or whether they used different individualistic and unrelated approaches.

The interviews were transcribed and the transcriptions were used to corroborate the written notes taken during the actual interview sessions. The notes were read and categorised into themes and the content analysed by means of descriptive narratives. Detailed narrative interpretations were used to draw conclusions geared to answering the research questions.

Data analysis is actually viewed as an activity that starts while data collection is underway (Rubin & Rubin, 1995:226). This is an instance where I was able to recognise emerging themes and patterns during observations and interviews, which I noted on the data collection forms. After collecting data, I embarked on editing and making noticeable entries that would help me recall what had expired, thereby alleviating the difficulty of analysing the data in subsequent steps.

3.7.1 Data analysis procedure

The data collection process, except for the video and audio recordings, was a business filled with writing of field notes and recording of my own reflections and thoughts that I personally attached to the activities as they unfolded. At the end of each data collection day, I perused the written notes, making sure that they made sense, and subsequently

watched the videos to verify that the written notes corresponded with the videotaped proceedings. DuFon (2002:44) recommends recordings as they provide permanence and allow the researcher to experience the proceedings repeatedly, thus providing the opportunity to refocus and to make necessary amendments and adaptations before drawing conclusions.

In the process I got involved in customized forms of coding and memoing of the data by using personalised labels, colour codes, ticks (√), crosses (×) and asterisks (*). Given (2008:186) advises that researchers should engage in memoing during and after data collection by taking “note of personal, conceptual, or theoretical ideas or reflections that come to mind as they collect and analyse the data” and these may include “researchers’ guesses about what is going on, questions raised by the data, or links to literature that may be useful in helping researchers to interpret the data”. The customized coding revealed crucial information and exposed patterns that helped me with the analysis of the data.

I learnt from the basic steps and engagement with data processing offered by Williams (2006:89) of transcribing, reading, categorizing, and developing emerging themes in preparation for analysing and writing up the findings. Creswell (2012:261) corroborates the basic steps, adding that the “steps are to identify text segments and to assign code labels to the segments based on the meaning the researcher sees in the text segments”. The teachings of Leedy and Ormrod’s data analysis spiral (2001:161), Mackenzie and Knipe’s (2006:202) diagram and Creswell’s (2012:237) procedure were valuable.

Figure 3.3 depicts Mackenzie and Knipe’s constructive diagram of the research process from steps 9 to 11.

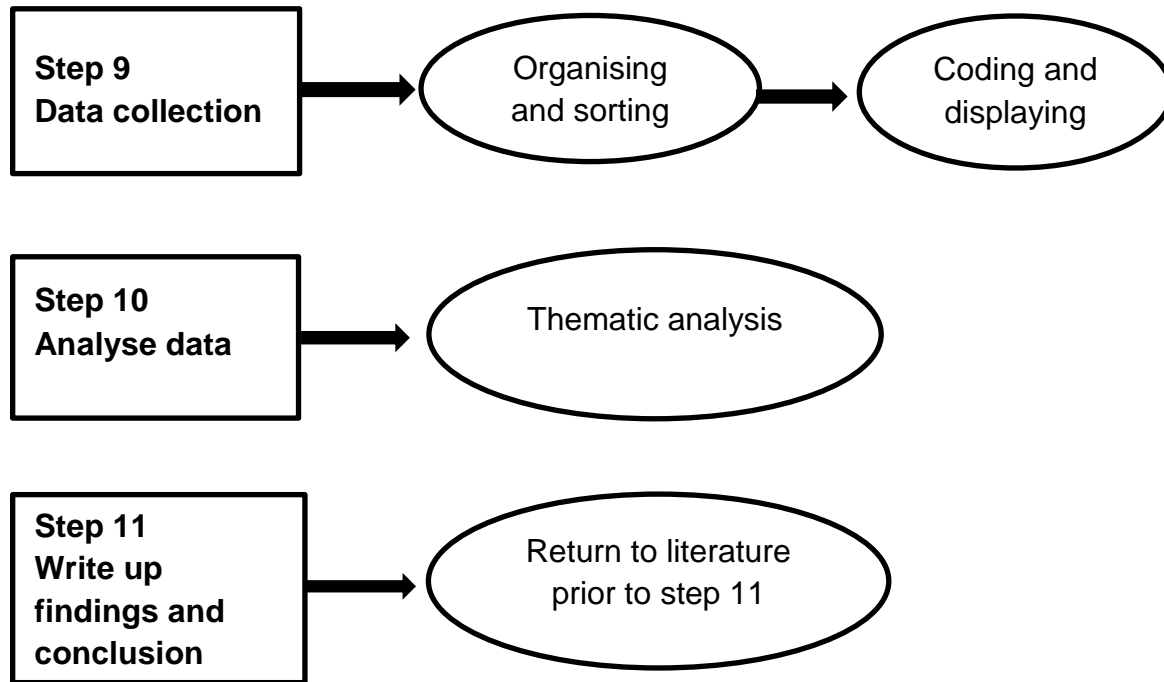


Figure 3.3: The three final steps of research (adapted for relevance to this study from Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006).

Another useful procedure that I followed was inspired by Leedy and Ormrod's (2001:161) and Creswell's data analysis spirals shown in figure 3.4. In the process of breaking up larger units into smaller, manageable ones, the researcher is encouraged to review and revisit what she has done each time she takes a leap into the next level of data analysis. This process ensures a systematic order that helps the researcher in making valid connections and reflections as the analysis proceeds, as well as assisting with focus from one point to the next.

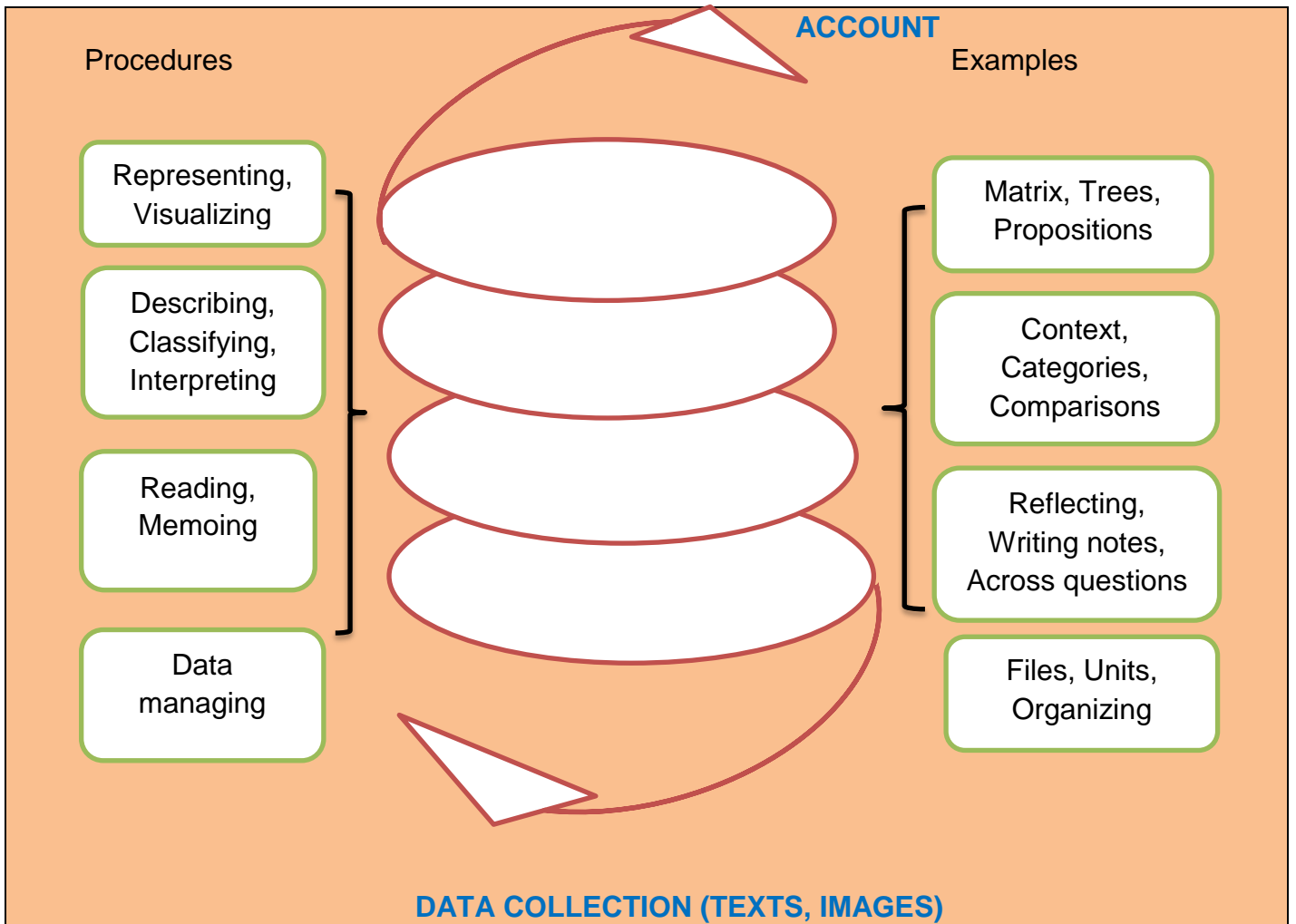


Figure 3.4 Data Analysis Spiral (Creswell, 2007:151)

By virtue of the mixed method research design, data were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively, then merged in the interpretation phase. The emerging patterns helped me to establish the similarities and differences regarding the execution of the text-based approach in the classroom and the teacher's pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). The adequate execution of the text-based approach and the teachers' knowledge were deemed crucial, because of my contention that teachers' PCK warranted the implementation of the approach according to curriculum requirements and objectives.

3.8 Reliability and validity

Reliability, validity and trustworthiness are essential criteria “with which to ensure quality” in research (Loh, 2013:4). To ensure quality in this study, the mixed method approach was used and it opened the opportunity to combine qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The combination made it possible for me to use multiple data collection strategies: classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and documents analysis, thereby building in a strong triangulation base. Punch (2009:296) explains that triangulation (also called crystallisation) is used to “obtain complementary quantitative and qualitative data on the same topic, bringing together the different strengths of the two methods”. Babbie and Mouton (2014:275) assert that triangulation “is generally considered to be one of the best ways to enhance validity and reliability in qualitative research”.

In this study I paid attention to meticulous writing of field notes, knowing that I would need the notes in formulating a detailed research report. “Extensive field notes are another important aspect of enhancing the validity and reliability of research done within the interpretive paradigm” (Babbie & Mouton, 2014:275), as was the case in this study. In addition, the video and audiotaping during data collection helped me maintain consistency which led to the formulation of “thick descriptions” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:106; Gerring & Thomas, 2011:13) when analysing the data.

An important aspect I considered was researcher-participant rapport. As an emergent researcher, I managed to establish and maintain a collegial relationship with the participants by assuring trust and confidentiality. In the process, I created an open-minded approach that helped close the researcher-participant distance; and a strong relationship of trust ensued, yielding meaningful and more focused deliberations. Josselson (2007:539) confirms that research relationships are built “in which personal memories and experiences may be recounted in full, rich, emotional detail and their significance elaborated”. I strongly believe that in ethnographic research, knowledge is co-produced by both parties within the created relationship. Karnieli-Miller, Strier and Pessach (2009:279) concur by stating that “research is often seen as a researcher-participant coproduction of in-depth and reliable knowledge”. In addition, I encouraged

the participants to understand that since the study is seeking to find answers regarding English education, we should try sticking to using English in all conversations and I explained that this would add to my understanding of the problem under study. It is important to make participants feel at ease and significantly involved “because of the examination of their personal experiences” (Karnieli-Miller, et al., 2009:279). The approach helped me use the data collection instruments in the same manner all the time and being able to do follow up verifications and validations with the participants (Karnieli-Miller, et al., 2009:283).

Trustworthiness is considered “the key criterion or principle of good qualitative research” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:276). Trustworthiness embraces issues of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Babbie & Mouton, 2014:277–278; Collier-Reed, Ingerman & Berglund, 2009:341). Shenton (2004) illustrates how these aspects are achieved in research:

In addressing credibility, investigators attempt to demonstrate that a true picture of the phenomenon under scrutiny is being presented. To allow transferability, they provide sufficient detail of the context of the fieldwork for a reader to be able to decide whether the prevailing environment is similar to another situation with which he or she is familiar and whether the findings can justifiably be applied to the other setting. The meeting of the dependability criterion is difficult in qualitative work, although researchers should at least strive to enable a future investigator to repeat the study. Finally, to achieve confirmability, researchers must take steps to demonstrate that findings emerge from the data and not their own predispositions (Shenton, 2004:63).

The aspects mentioned by Shenton (2004) were applied in this study (cf. chapter 4) and in general, trustworthiness was maintained by means of triangulation, peer debriefing, purposive sampling, thick descriptions, video and audiotaping, and external auditing (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:278–279).

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical matters refer to the beliefs and standards that guide the researcher throughout the study to honour professional, personal and behavioural conduct, as well as demonstrating protection and respect for participants (Karnieli-Miller, et al., 2009:287). These standards relate to “beliefs about what is right or wrong, proper or improper, good or bad” when conducting research (De Jager, 2012:91).

A number of ethical stages were followed prior to data collection to ensure compliance with ethical considerations of my institution, the noble education profession and general research principles. For one to conduct research in Gauteng schools, one has to direct an application to the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) for approval. I consider this step an added measure to protect both the participants and the researcher, and to encourage total commitment and professionalism on the researcher’s part. I was impressed and encouraged by the GDE’s commitment towards research as stated below and it is crucial for researchers to note that in essence, the Gauteng Department of Education is

committed to providing an environment that supports the research activities that will promote the vision and mission of [the] Gauteng Department of Education ... wishes to encourage all research institutions, employees who are conducting research as well as individual researchers to provide high quality, internationally competitive research and dissemination of groundbreaking knowledge in pursuit of excellence (Gauteng Department of Education, 2012:2).

I was granted approval to work in Tshwane North district. While I awaited institutional ethical clearance I visited the district office to do some groundwork, as I had just relocated to the province. I was greatly honoured and humbled by the level of professionalism and understanding I encountered at the Tshwane North district office. When presenting my case, I requested that for the purpose of the study, the four schools to be selected should be implementing the text-based approach for English FAL.

After being granted ethical clearance by the ethics committee of the University of Pretoria, I gained access to the selected schools by personally presenting official documents to the district office. These include the GDE letter of approval and letter of permission to work in the schools to the district director (cf. addenda A and B). The letter of permission provides detailed information about the study, its nature, participants, planned procedures and ethical considerations involved. In the letter I ensured commitment to conduct my study openly, protecting the rights of all participants and assured privacy, anonymity and confidentiality (Karnieli-Miller, et al., 2009:286). All matters concerning the study, as well as taking cognisance of teacher formation issues, were deliberated at the meeting with the district official.

Before I visited the schools I contacted the principals telephonically and set up appointments, explaining my mission for the visit. Subsequently, I visited the schools over two days to introduce myself, to discuss the entire study and to present all letters of consent for signatures. The information I disseminated clearly outlined “a brief description of the nature of the study, a description of what participation will involve, in terms of activities and duration, and a statement indicating that participation is voluntary and can be terminated at any time without penalty” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:108). More information, such as the use of video and audio tapes, and the researcher’s contact details were provided (cf. addenda B–F). The GDE and district letters were also attached for confirmation of approval to conduct research.

The researcher faced challenges relating to video and audiotaping during classroom observations. Therefore, participants had to be assured that the information would be used for the research only and that the tapes would be kept in safety. Another challenge was uncertainty whether parents and learners would give consent and return the consent forms in time. These were challenges I expected (because I have substantial experience working on projects in South African schools) and I was also cautioned about. I had to be emotionally prepared in case I encountered some of the challenges. It will be noted that the South African political and democratic education transformation was based on redressing the past, which was laden with quite a number of prominent issues in the newly formed teacher organizations. In addition, I was under pressure to

visit the schools within the GDE stipulated timeframes, to avoid disrupting the flow of provincial activities, for example the Annual National Assessment.

In the process, I experienced an unexpected challenge, which got the principal and I surprised, when I made a follow up visit at the first school. I consider the challenge peculiar because the involved participant, who had gladly and readily volunteered in the presence of the principal to participate, decided to decline. She first asked whether it were my personal project for a qualification. I confirmed that it was. She then indicated that she would withdraw because she had consulted with her friends who were officials employed by the Department of Basic Education and was advised not to participate. Being taken aback, the principal asked me to give them time to discuss the matter. After a lengthy span of time during which they also communicated with the district office, I was called in and the case changed to the participant not being at ease with the videotaping.

Acting professionally and calmly, I indicated that I respected the participant's decision and mentioned that she had the right to withdraw, as I explained verbally and as stated in the letters of permission. I thanked the principal for his intervention, retrieved and kept the parents' and learners' signed letters of consent. It was indeed a blessing that the other schools were extremely positive in all respects.

The experience taught me to be more cautious and to revisit the procedures with the participants at the other schools. I asked the participants to be open by making me aware in case they became uncomfortable with any of the activities. The videotaping and audio recording were operated discreetly, and I assured the participants that the tapes would be kept safely and be used only by me and my supervisors and, according to institutional standards, electronic copies would be password protected and kept in the archives for fifteen years after completion of the study.

3.10 Conclusion

Research design and methodology play a central role in this research study because it is where I endeavoured to explain the route I took, starting from planning the research process to the actual data collection. In this chapter I discussed the design of the study,

the philosophical paradigms, research methodology and methods of collecting data. In the planning process, I had to include time to locate the schools as I had just relocated to Gauteng, and this dimension helped me shape my thinking in terms of how to make optimal use of the selected protocols (cf. addendum L for the entire district. The participating schools are not identified.) The protocols were aligned to the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm and the theories of learning presented in chapter 2, representing my personal perception of the world and belief on how knowledge is constructed. In addition, I discussed each protocol in terms of its relevance to examine the subject under study, and the purpose for which it was intended in my quest to find answers to the research questions. The final section of the chapter deals with ethical matters involved in this study. The next chapter presents a detailed account of data analysis and interpretation thereof.

Chapter 4: Data presentation and interpretation

“Ultimately, all fieldwork culminates in the analysis and interpretation of some set of data ...”

(Mouton, 2001:108)

4.1 Introduction

In chapter 2, three theories of learning that form the foundation of this study were outlined. The theories are interlinked and solidified by the paradigmatic orientations articulated in chapter 3. Both the theories and paradigmatic orientation are fundamental to the analysis and interpretation of the data presented in this chapter, because of their significance and implications in providing direction towards an appropriate approach to the analysis.

The research protocols I used were developed within the parameters and understandings of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the Input Hypothesis (IH) and Conditions of Learning explained in chapter 2. In support of the conceptual framework, I selected the interpretivist-constructivist philosophical paradigm which helped me construct meaning from the data I collected, using the mixed method research design. I chose the specified philosophical paradigm intentionally as it relates to the conceptual framework, the interpretation and construction of meaning, and because it serves as a pivotal structure in finding suitable answers to my research questions.

In chapter 1 I presented the background to this study and the problem statement, which relates to the context of English education in South African public schools. I mentioned that strategies have to be put in place to change the status quo in one way or another, which the findings of this study will possibly contribute towards. I continued, in the literature review, to explore the text-based approach (TBA) in language teaching, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and communicative competence (CC) as key driving concepts that help solidify the arguments I present. Adding to the key concepts, I drew knowledge regarding best classroom practice from renowned language and literacy programmes, namely, the Balanced Language Programme (BLP) and the

Foundations for Learning Campaign (FLC). I considered all the concepts as essential sub-entities under the overarching umbrella of the Intermediate Phase CAPS for English First Additional Language (Department of Basic Education, 2011a). Put together, the concepts are interlinked and relevant entities for probing the questions asked in this study.

Figure 4.1 depicts the key concepts used in this study as interrelated and representing the purpose for which data were collected.

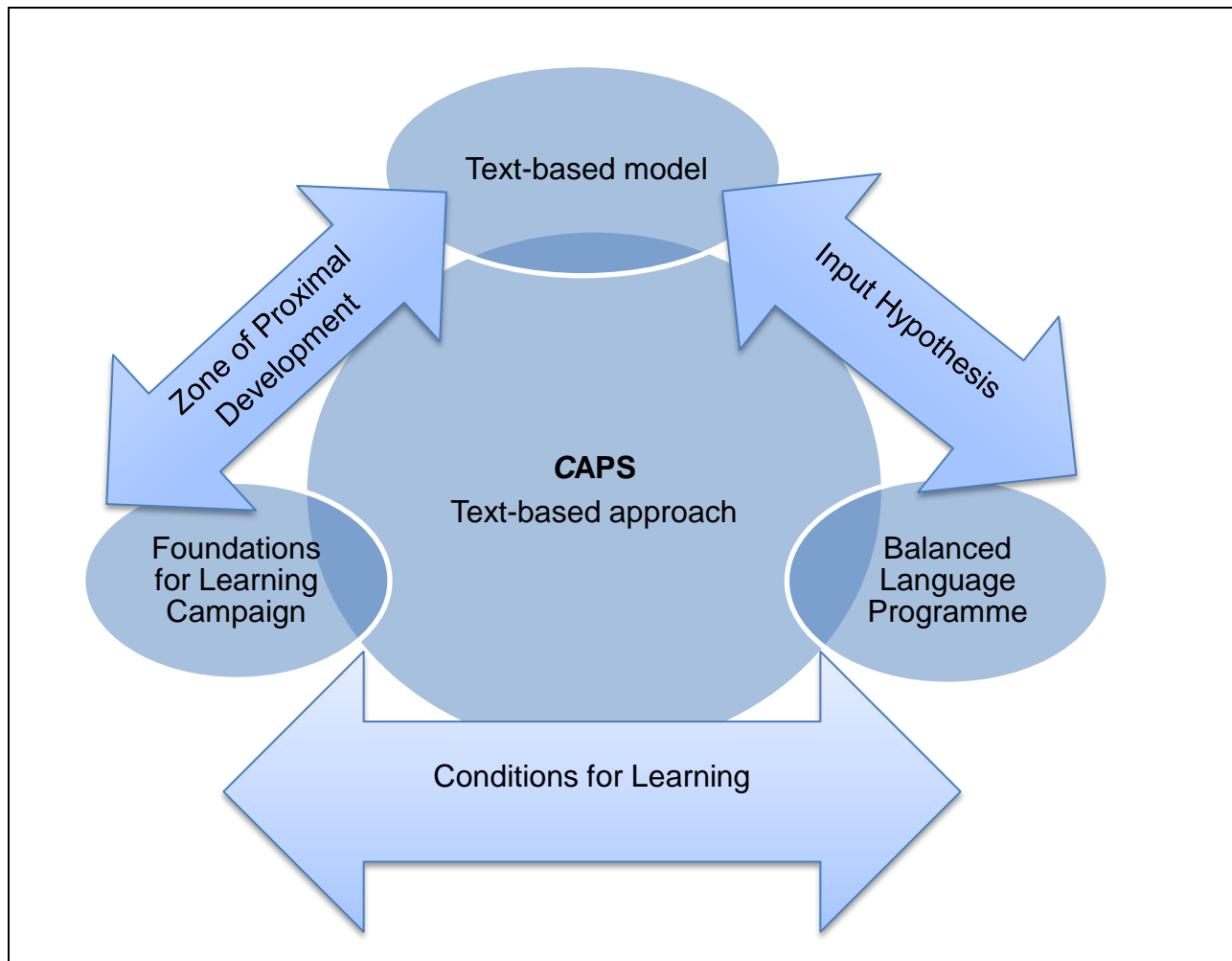


Figure 4.1: Key concepts representing the construction of data collection protocols

I opted to triangulate using different methods of data collection, with the purpose of gathering information to answer the main question and sub-questions reflected below.

The main research question:

How is the text-based approach to teaching English as FAL implemented in Grade 4 to ensure communicative competence?

Sub-questions:

- What is the teachers' knowledge of the curriculum stipulations as far as English FAL education is concerned?
- What is the teachers' understanding of the text-based approach?
- How are learners exposed to various types of texts in the Grade 4 classroom?

This chapter provides a presentation and analysis of data according to the order in which the data were collected. The final section draws an integrated summary of the findings as informed by the research question and sub-questions, the conceptual framework and literature review. The integrated summary comprises the merging and interpretation of the qualitative and quantitative data, thereby making connections and drawing valid conclusions from the findings. The consolidated interpretation was considered useful regarding the construction of meaning related to the implementation and contribution of the text-based approach in English education for communicative competence.

4.2 Data presentation

In chapter 3, I introduced the congruent parallel mixed method research design I used to achieve the aims of this study. I explained that data were collected both qualitatively and quantitatively, analysed independently and then merged for interpretation. To maintain congruency with my research design, I thus present the data separately, as per data collection method utilized for the intended purpose.

The paradigmatic stance of this study articulates the roles of ontology and epistemology, epitomizing the nature of reality and the essence of knowledge, respectively. The two concepts are pivotal and considered relevant in the construction of meaning and understanding through the analysis and interpretation deciphered from the entirety of available data.

In a particular order, I first present the biographical details of the participants. Thereafter I describe the qualitative data as per method of data collection, starting with classroom observation, which I referred to as the leading data collection method in the previous chapter. This is based on the reason that in research it is believed that classroom observation yields many valid and important results relating to educational practices and classroom instruction. Observation is needed for better understanding of what takes place in the classroom, including how learning and development takes place, both for teachers and learners (Hoadley, 2012:188; Stuhlman, Hamre, Downer & Pianta, n.d.:2; Zimmermann, 2014:2). It was, therefore, used in this study as the major research method to document how teachers implemented the text-based approach in English education and the development of communication skills.

4.2.1 Biographical information

Table 4.1 captures the participant's biographical data from which the characteristics of the participants are defined in terms of gender, age group, teaching experience, the number of years teaching English, other subjects they teach and qualifications.

Table 4.1: Participants' biographical information

N=3	PA	PB	PC
School	AA	BB	CC
Gender	Male	Female	Male
Age group	40 to 60	40 to 60	40 to 60
Teaching experience	25	20	27
Years teaching English	25	18	4
Other subjects	Social Sciences	Life Skills	Sepedi Social Sciences Mathematics Natural Sciences
Qualifications	PTD ACE	PTD ACE	PTD

Key: PA – Participant A

PTD – Primary Teachers’ Diploma

PB – Participant B

ACE – Advanced Certificate in Education

PC – Participant C

N – Number of participants

The biographical information was derived from the biographical details section of the questionnaire, which the participants completed in person. Biographical details were considered essential for providing evidence regarding authenticity of the participants in the teaching fraternity, as well as documenting the participants’ teaching history. Biographical data present critical, factual information relevant in education research and praxis, and I was confident that the data would be useful for the construction of knowledge and the understanding of phenomena related to answering the questions I posed and investigated in this study. Data of this nature have a function of making important background information available for analyses and supporting self-contained analyses (Frick, Groh-Samberg & Lohmann, 2008:2).

Of the three participants one was female and, coincidentally, they all were in the same age group. Irrespective of gender and age, it has been argued that subject-specific qualified, experienced and motivated teachers do well in offering quality education by bringing high levels of subject knowledge and instilling high level skills in learners (Makhila, 2008:28). It was evident that the participants had extensive teaching experience. One had taught English in all his years of teaching experience, while another had taught English in almost all her years of teaching experience. According to the biographical details, it can be seen that Participant C (PC) had the least experience teaching English as a subject. The participant explained that he was newly employed at the school and taught the subject because the subject teacher had left, and appropriate handover and induction were not administered. He, therefore, was not well versed with the Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) and did not have access to the teacher’s materials. Moreover, the participant articulated the proximity, in time, towards his retirement.

While two participants taught one subject other than English, the newly employed participant taught four additional subjects that included one language and three key

subjects. All participants held a Primary Teacher's Diploma (PTD) and two of them an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE). The ACE is an in-service professional development course for the upgrading of teachers' qualifications and the empowerment of teachers in the development of knowledge and skills needed to "contribute to improving the delivery of education across the school system" (Department of Basic Education, 2008a:2).

4.3 Classroom observation

Three separate one-shot lessons were observed on three consecutive days. The observations were done to fulfil the purpose of establishing how the text-based approach is implemented in the classroom to develop learners' communicative competence. I designed a classroom observation protocol on which I carefully and systematically documented the lesson proceedings, classroom interactions and environment in the form of field notes (cf. addendum H). I used the advantage not only to observe, but to listen and to make objective perceptions that I recorded as reflections on the observation form. When conducting an observation, it is vital for the researcher to make comprehensive notes of what happens, paying attention to most important aspects related to the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:294). The items selected for observation were linked to CAPS requirements, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the Input Hypothesis (IP) and classroom Conditions of Learning discussed in chapter 2.

When the lesson ended, I employed the iterative questioning strategy by asking the participants for more information regarding the lesson and resources, to verify that what I had observed and noted were valid and acceptable. During the same evening I watched the video recordings to corroborate the written notes and fill in missing information I thought was essential, particularly for the methodology and steps followed. The verification process and watching the videos to fill in gaps helped me internalize the activities through the use of an upward spiral of reflecting and reviewing each step before continuing to the next level (cf. figure 3.4).

Using the classroom observation protocol, I grouped data concepts and items that dealt with the same phenomenon. These were then classified into four identifiable, interrelated categories shown in figure 4.2, including observable phenomena discussed in the synopsis of the lessons.

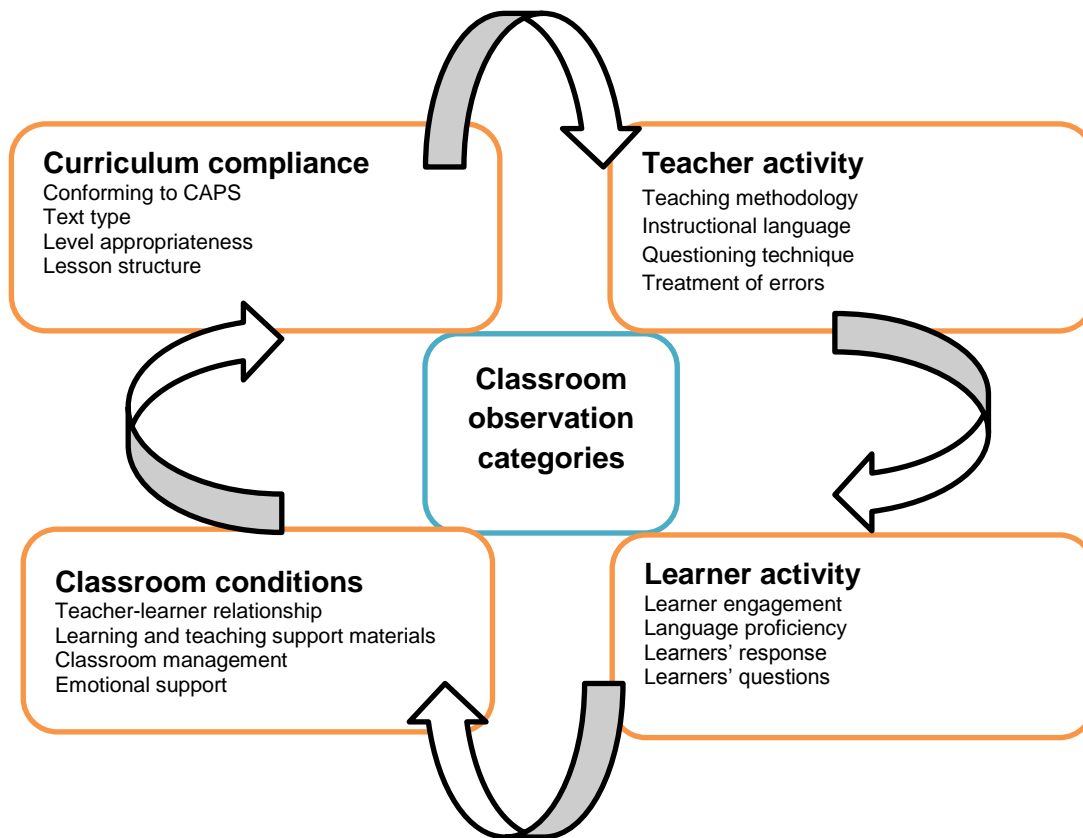


Figure 4.2: Classroom observation categories

4.3.1 Synopsis of observed lessons

In this section the three lessons are presented in succession, described according to the identified categories shown in figure 4.2. In the summary, each lesson is illustrated according to the observed data I comprehensively documented as field notes on the classroom observation protocol. I present the classroom observation in narrative form as observed, with the intention of drawing valuable information relevant to answering the main research question.

The synopsis of lessons is followed by a discussion of patterns that emerged from all three lessons as reflected in the narratives. In the discussion, I focus on aspects revealed during the lessons, for instance, the similarities and differences of the teachers' behavioural patterns and how these attributes impacted on the implementation of the text-based approach in the classroom.

Table 4.2 represents the visiting times and lesson duration, thereby providing accountability for instructional (teaching) as well as research (data collection) contact time.

Table 4.2: Visiting times and lesson duration

School	Lesson	Date	Observation time	Duration in minutes
AA	1	01 September 2014	09:30 to 10:30	60
BB	2	02 September 2014	08:30 to 09:30	60
CC	3	03 September 2014	08:30 to 09:20	50

It should be noted that according to the Intermediate Phase CAPS document, five hours per week are allocated for teaching the FAL. Teachers religiously followed prescribed departmental instructions, and worked within the stipulated time frames.

Lesson 1: School AA

Curriculum compliance

The school was part of the Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) for Grade 4 English First Additional Language. The GPLMS is a Gauteng Department of Education intervention programme aimed at increasing the English and Mathematics pass rates in primary schools. For the purpose of this study, I only deliberate on the language part of the intervention programme. In this programme,

teaching and learning materials provide lesson content and methodological guidelines for teachers. The teacher conducted the lesson according to the prescribed 2014 Term 3 Lesson Plan which served as the teacher's guide and lesson plan. Therefore, the texts in this lesson conformed to the Intermediate Phase CAPS curriculum. The texts were developed according to the prescribed summary of text types, the spread of texts and length of texts (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:27–37), consequently complying with curriculum requirements.

Teaching activity

For this lesson a poem and a traditional story were read. The lesson was structured in three sections: before reading, reading and after reading, which follows the process-based approach prescribed in the CAPS document (Department of Basic Education, 2011a). The lesson started with singing as a warm-up activity, followed by some minutes of silent reading. The teacher prepared the learners by mediating the lesson stages before introducing vocabulary cards and reading questions written on the chalkboard.

Thereafter, the teacher introduced the main lesson by reading the title of the story and learners repeating jointly after him. A discussion of pictures and illustrations – a picture walk – was done by way of answering short questions related to what was happening in the pictures. A few more questions were asked to establish learners' prior knowledge. The teacher then read the beginning part of the story and invited learners to start reading aloud, in unison. After reading the teacher asked the following questions, and had to assist in the formulation of meaningful answers:

Have you enjoyed the story?

What is your favourite part of the story?

What are two new words and their meanings?

If you could give the story a title, what would it be?

The teacher paid attention to learners' errors and they were instantly corrected. This was done by way of asking other learners to provide the correct or improved version of the answer. The teacher had a relative good command of English, but one could pick up

grammatical errors, for example, concord, tense or pronunciation. Code-switching was frequently used, apparently to enhance learners' understanding of the additional language.

Learning activity

Learners were actively involved by way of following the teacher's instructions. They sang a song as warm-up, followed by unison poem reading from the learner's book while the teacher wrote several questions on the board. The learners participated in reading a story aloud after the teacher and answering short questions posed intermittently, either to check for understanding or to provide a meaning of a word. A satisfactory answer was given, to which they simultaneously repeated and drilled in chorus. Except for the four after-reading questions, learners were exposed predominantly to short-answer questions. There were no questions asked by learners.

Classroom conditions

The learning conditions appeared conducive with regard to teacher-learner relationship and classroom management. The teacher mediated and prepared learners in respect of what they should expect in the lesson, and he requested them to be unperturbed in the presence of a visitor. The classroom was well managed and orderly, with minimal print materials and vocabulary words displayed on the wall. Learning materials comprised the GPLMS learners' books and multiple copies of level 3 reading books.

Lesson 2: School BB

Curriculum compliance

Texts used for this lesson conformed to the curriculum. They were derived from the GPLMS prescribed materials. As stated in lesson 1 above, the school also took part in the Gauteng intervention strategy for the improvement of Literacy and Mathematics in primary schools. Both texts, a poster and a newspaper article, were of appropriate level in terms of length and content, by virtue of text prescription and approval by the Department of Basic Education. The CAPS curriculum for Grade 4 prescribes longer listening comprehension texts and intensive reading texts are of 100 to 150 words, with

a time span of 5 minutes, and shorter listening comprehension texts of 40 to 60 words (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:35).

The GPLMS teacher's guide, referred to as 'Term 3 Lesson Plans', was used. Each lesson was structured and designed with pre-defined steps to follow. Therefore, the lesson complied with CAPS requirements.

Teacher activity

The teacher reflected qualities similar to those of Mrs Oublier in Cohen's study, which probed "the relationship between instructional policy and teaching practice" (Cohen, 1990:311). Like Mrs Oublier, the teacher was "considerate of her students, eager for them to learn, energetic, and attractive" (Cohen, 1990:311). Enthusiastically, she introduced the lesson, displayed a poster on the chalkboard and led the discussion by asking learners to pay attention to the illustrations. The question-and-answer method was used to discuss the poster. When an answer was given, the teacher articulated it and requested learners to repeat it, in chorus. A somewhat lengthy revision of the previous lesson was done through questions and answers.

The next step was a deviation from the main lesson, because this time the teacher introduced homework for the day. Instructions on how to embark on the homework were mediated and learners were requested to give examples to ensure that they would do what was expected of them. The new lesson was ushered in with the presentation of approximately ten vocabulary words. The teacher used flashcards to introduce new vocabulary. Learners were asked to explain meanings of words and to use the words in sentences. The vocabulary introduction took time as it involved teaching of new story words.

Thereafter, the teacher displayed a chart showing the reading process for the lesson. Figure 4.3 represents the chart and reading instructions followed during the lesson.

- | |
|---|
| <p>A: Read the title of the story.</p> <p>B: Look at the pictures. What can you see?</p> <p>C: Read any headings in the story.</p> <p>D: Find two new words in the story.</p> |
|---|

Figure 4.3: The reading chart

Code-switching was frequently observed. Errors were corrected instantly, and the teacher ensured that all learners repeated the corrected version in chorus. The teacher had a good command of instructional language which learners were able to understand and follow. A few grammatical errors were evident, for instance tense, concord and pronunciation in some isolated cases.

Learner activity

In the main lesson the teacher provided guidance and learners read the story following the steps displayed on the chart. They read the title of the story, talked about the pictures and read the bold printed headings. With partners, learners read sentence by sentence with the aim of finding two new words. This prompted some conversation between two learners trying to find two new words. The teacher moved around showing them how to do the reading. After the reading, learners gave the new words which were written on the board.

Most of the time, learners answered surface questions (derived from the teacher's handbook) posed by the teacher. The "who, where, what" questions are classified as surface questions or lower cognitive questions as they do not require deeper cognitive thinking. Learners were, thus, not exposed to thought-provoking and critical-thinking questions. Individual learners answered questions posed by the teacher and they all repeated the answer in unison, frequently in the manner of drilling the answer using full sentences. Learners were not given the opportunity to ask questions.

Classroom conditions

The teacher was in control but created a warm relationship with the learners. The teacher managed to establish a conducive classroom atmosphere and learners were time and again called to focus and to pay attention. The teacher used praise for and recognition of valued efforts, thereby instilling confidence in the learners. There were insufficient materials available in the classroom. The EFAL Grade 4 terms 3 to 4 workbooks for each learner, as well as *Sunshine*, *Alpha Kids* and *Vivlia* group readers were provided for the GPLMS. The classroom was very neat and well organized. A number of posters and the word wall, which consisted of vocabulary words on flashcards, were displayed. There was, however, no learners' work visible except for the learners' exercise books in neat piles on the table.

Lesson 3: School CC

Curriculum compliance

The text type for this lesson, a poem from the GPLMS learner's workbook, conformed to CAPS requirements. As mentioned in the other lessons, all activities, including homework, were pre-planned. Teachers followed the steps and instructions specified in their guides, as well as asking questions in the same manner they were formulated and sequenced in the guides. To facilitate this lesson the teacher used the learners' workbook. For reasons provided in section 4.2.1, the teacher did not have access to the teacher's lesson plan.

Teacher activity

The teacher read instructions and a poem from the learners' workbook and after each reading, the whole class repeated after him. Time and again he stopped to ask closed questions, for example, 'which' and 'what' questions based on the reading. He asked learners to point to something on the picture, and asked acknowledgement questions, to which learners answered in choral unison. Single key words were written on the board after the learners had given correct answers. Thereafter, learners were instructed to do a written activity in the workbook. The activity took some time and when finished, the

teacher asked questions and wrote answers on the board. The teacher gave marking instructions and asked learners to stand according to the marks they had obtained out of eight, offering praise for good performance. Corrections were written out for learners to make own corrections in their books.

Single-word-answer questions were asked throughout the lesson and errors were corrected instantly. The teacher's instructional language was good and comprehensible to the learners, with very limited grammatical mistakes, for example subject-verb agreement, pronunciation and tense. Code-switching was used frequently.

Learner activity

Learners read a poem after the teacher, once only, including all instructions for the lesson in the learners' workbook. They answered short questions, for example, "Which animal meows?" They answered in unison: "Cat!" They then wrote a short activity which, in actual fact, took some time. A marking session ensued, and learners marked each other's work using red pens after the teacher had written one word answers on the board. The marks were added up and written in the margin. The teacher called out the marks out of eight and learners stood up according to their performance, delighted at the teacher's praise and encouragement. Thereafter, some did silent reading while the rest made corrections, the teacher moving around to offer assistance.

Classroom conditions

The teacher was extremely patient and polite with the learners. Although the classroom was neat and well organized, it was neither appealing nor stimulating due to a lack of meaningful print and learning materials. The walls were bare and only one poster was visible, placed above the chalkboard above learners' viewing range. There were no readers or books available except for the learners' own workbooks used for this lesson.

The three lessons can be compared from the summarized classroom observation in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Summary of lessons			
Categories	PA	PB	PC
Curriculum compliance	<p>The texts used complied with CAPS requirements.</p> <p>The school implemented the GPLMS.</p>	<p>Texts conformed to curriculum stipulations.</p> <p>The school implemented the GPLMS.</p>	<p>Texts conformed to curriculum stipulations.</p> <p>The school implemented the GPLMS.</p>
Teacher activity	<p>The lesson was structured into before reading, reading and after reading.</p> <p>The teacher mediated the stages of the lesson, introduced vocabulary and read questions written on the board.</p> <p>He read the story, and learners repeated after him in unison.</p> <p>Errors were corrected immediately.</p> <p>Code-switching was used frequently.</p>	<p>The lesson was enthusiastically introduced.</p> <p>The teacher displayed and discussed a poster using the question-and-answer method. Homework was introduced and flash cards used to introduce new vocabulary.</p> <p>A reading poster was displayed for reading in pairs.</p> <p>Errors were corrected immediately.</p> <p>Code-switching was used frequently.</p>	<p>The teacher read instructions and a poem from a learner's workbook.</p> <p>Short questions were frequently asked and key words written on the board.</p> <p>He gave learners a task, when completed he wrote activity answers on the board and instructed learners to rise according to the marks they had achieved.</p> <p>Errors were corrected immediately.</p> <p>Code-switching was used frequently.</p>

Learner activity	<p>Learners were mainly involved in following the teacher's instructions. They sang a warm-up song, read a poem silently, then read aloud in unison after the teacher. They answered short, lower-order questions orally.</p>	<p>Interaction was mainly in the form of taking instructions and answering oral questions. Learners read the title and bold print after the teacher, followed by reading in pairs using a reading chart. They were given the opportunity to talk about finding new words in the text. Learners answered short, low-order questions.</p>	<p>Learners followed lesson instructions and answered questions posed by the teacher. Learners read aloud after the teacher, followed by a written task. They marked and embarked on silent reading. They answered short, low-order questions.</p>
Classroom conditions	<p>Drill and repetition in choral unison was predominant. The teacher was in control and caring. Classroom was well managed but print was minimal. Learners' workbooks and multiple copies of reading books were available. Prescribed texts and additional materials were not available.</p>	<p>Drill and repetition in choral unison was predominant. The teacher created a warm and conducive learning atmosphere. Classroom was well managed and appealing. Each learner had a workbook and group readers were available. Prescribed texts and additional materials were not available.</p>	<p>Drill and repetition in choral unison was predominant. The teacher was relaxed and in control. Classroom was neat and well organized, yet unappealing. Each learner had a workbook. Prescribed texts and GPLMS resources were not available.</p>

4.4 From the eyeglass to the magnifying glass



Having taken a closer look at what had transpired in the classroom, conspicuous themes regarding the implementation of the text-based approach and the exposure of learners to various text types became apparent. These themes relate to patterns that emerged during all three lesson presentations and they were relevant to answering two research questions. Firstly, the main research question: How is the text-based approach to teaching English as FAL implemented in the classroom to ensure communicative competence? Secondly, the sub-question: How are learners exposed to various types of texts in the Grade 4 classroom?

Drawing from the interpretivist-constructivist philosophical paradigm, I used a technique befitting the paradigm. The themes were interpreted to make comparisons, to explain and describe the different situations as they were observed (Ryan & Bernard, 2003:86). The themes manifested themselves as patterns that emerged within each set of observed data, and I noted these in threefold, namely, conditions and recurring regularities, communicative practices and behavioural practices (Ryan & Bernard, 2003:89–90) and the management of resources and time. The themes are presented in table 4.4.



Table 4.4: Themes and patterns emerging from classroom observation

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3
Conditions of subject teaching and recurring regularities	Communicative practices and behavioural practices	Management of resources and time
Teachers' goals and orientation	Communicative systems	Classroom climate and emotional support
Compliance with departmental instructions	Repetition, drill and memorization	Availability of learning and teaching support materials (LTSM)
Delivery of content within given timeframes	Reading fluency vis-à-vis word decoding	Teacher-learner relationship
Teacher talk and classroom communication	Communicative opportunities	Motivation and encouragement

4.4.1 Conditions of subject teaching and recurring practices

In this section I present the conditions of subject teaching as a theme to be explored. These conditions are geared to addressing the problem stated in this study, as they are directly linked to the theories of learning supporting this study, and they draw from the literature review discussed in chapter 2. The conditions are presented as similarities and differences of the lessons under separate sub-sections in an attempt to interpret, and construct specific meaning of the total outcomes, and to unearth underlying factors embedded in the lessons. I opted to discuss the similarities and differences because these presented themselves strikingly in all the lessons observed.

Similarities

From the classroom observation summary it is clear that all three participants made concerted efforts to follow the teaching instructions as prescribed by the Department of Basic Education. The instructions were laid out in the teacher's guide, *Grade 4 FAL English Lesson Plans*. The lessons in this guide were planned for step-by-step



implementation by the teachers. The lesson plans were used in conjunction with learners' workbooks, prepared by experts in curriculum delivery and material development, in line with the CAPS document.

The goal-oriented teachers followed the instructions to the letter in order to fulfil their daily lesson requirements as prescribed. In a conscious manner, teachers were content when they had achieved or completed the activities meant for the day. One of the participants literally made a declaration that the day's activities were to be completed to avoid getting into trouble with curriculum officials from the Department of Basic Education.

Four aspects became apparent in the goal-oriented situation. Firstly, in focusing on completing the prescribed work in the manner prescribed, teachers did not focus on learner development and learners achieving a high proficiency in the additional language as envisaged by the curriculum (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:13). Secondly, teachers seemed to focus on delivery and not on active learner engagement and participation, with only a few stronger learners being able to cope. Thirdly, the available time in which to achieve the day's prescribed goals was well managed. Fourthly, teacher talk which comprised of instructions and closed-ended questions dominated classroom communication. To a large extent learners' talking opportunities were greatly suppressed.

The four aspects listed above clearly indicate that learners were afforded few opportunities to express their thoughts through verbal communication. It was a somewhat rigid situation guided by instruction and protocol, the teacher presiding as the main player. The domination of teacher talk has been documented in research studies. Mohr and Mohr (2007) confirm that research "has indicated that teacher talk dominates classroom communication ... Other studies of teacher discourse in primary grades indicated that teacher talk is often managerial rather than conversational in nature" and "primarily displays questions which expect students to recall information" (Mohr & Mohr, 2007:441).

Research has shown that communication skills develop when learners are interested and more engaged rather than simply being there, responding to the teacher's instructions (Väyrynen 2003:10). Learners showed interest in reading the texts



collectively and answering questions in unison. However, it was apparent that many learners could merely decode the words, without fluency and independent understanding of the text.

Despite the teachers' enthusiasm and commitment, their situation was predominantly motivated by fear of the powers that be and not by providing best teaching demanded by the learning situation. The fact is that officials or advisers monitor the implementation of a strategy, not its impact on learning or the extent to which learners' language proficiency levels develop. In some cases officials may not have adequate skills to assist the teachers when conducting school visits. Reports have shown that the advisors themselves might not be qualified in the subject they are supposed to support teachers (National Education Evaluation and Development Unit, 2012:29).

Differences

From the biographical details it was apparent that one participant had less FAL teaching experience than the other two and he explained his situation (cf. 4.5.1). This issue has presented several implementation shortcomings that, besides the teacher's professional presence, little was done in this lesson to take any of the learners to a level higher than they were, in whatever respect. Although the teacher managed to maintain order through instruction and orders, the lesson was dominated by single-word answers given in unison and indication of the marks that the learners had achieved in the written activity.

Such events depict unfortunate situations, particularly for learners, because as much as the system employs and places teachers in schools, it cannot be warranted that the purpose for which they are employed would be realized. It was evident that in the placement or subject allocation for teacher PC the teacher's field of expertise and specialization were not taken into consideration. My observation is that specialization in duty and subject allocation is normally overlooked in many South African schools. Van Deventer's (2009:141) Life Orientation study confirms that a major problem was that teachers were "not qualified to teach all learning outcomes" of the subject. They were thus not specialists in the subject. The school should be responsible for assisting new employees by showing them teaching practices adopted by the school. This exercise would ensure management and delivery of the curriculum for effective



teaching and learning. In situations like this, where the school was on a departmental intervention strategy to improve language and literacy skills, capacitating the teacher should have been prioritized to benefit the learners.

4.4.2 Learning assimilation and throughput

In all three lessons, learners participated by way of answering short questions and by repeating sentences in unison. Teacher talk dominated the lessons, thereby affording learners less opportunities to communicate in the additional language. I acknowledge that repetition plays a positive role in learning, but when repetition in chorus and chant is frequent, learners subconsciously get used to the mode of learning, leading to the encouragement of habitual drill and rote learning.

In reality, it seems to be a custom to view drill, repetition and reproduction as indicators of effective learning. However, I contend that this line of thinking is flawed because abundant rote learning does not provide learners with opportunities for critical thinking, formulation of own ideas and self-expression. Critical thinking has been mentioned frequently as an essential learning outcome. The critical thinking I believe could be developed even at this level is described as a set of “cognitive skills and strategies that increase the likelihood of a desired outcome ... thinking that is purposeful, reasoned, and goal-directed – the kind of thinking involved in solving problems, formulate inferences, calculating likelihoods, and making decisions” (Lombard & Grosser, 2008:563). I strongly believe that the incorporation of critical thinking in all learning would lead to improved learner communicative output. If practiced daily, learners’ communicative competence would gradually improve.

Based on the observed learner activity and participation, some learners seemed to be able to follow and understand the stories and could answer questions correctly. However, as mentioned in the synopsis, most of the questions were lower-order questions that required reproduction of information from the text. Lower-order questions merely require learners to reproduce previously taught information verbatim. These are referred to in the literature and include factual, closed, direct, recall and knowledge questions, often requiring short responses (Sardareh & Saad, 2013:1). Lower-order questions naturally limit learners’ thinking abilities to move to a level of addressing and exploring more challenging and thought-provoking questions. More higher-order questions, referred to as “referential, interpretive, evaluative and



open-ended questions”, for example probing questions such as “how”, “what if” and “why” would encourage learners to formulate their own answers and would help “promote higher-order thinking skills” (Sardareh & Saad, 2013:1), including language expression. Gradually, in the process of daily practice, improved learner communicative output would be guaranteed. They could also be required to answer more reflective questions, for example “What do we learn from the story?” Alternatively, teachers could follow up the “yes/no” questions with more probing questions that would allow learners to elaborate, thereby practicing to communicate their ideas. Essentially, teachers should maximize effective communicative interactions and create such opportunities in the daily lessons.

It was evident in all three lessons that learners were not given the opportunity to ask questions; and my observation was that this is an area that could add more value to language teaching and communicative output. Ideally, learners should learn to ask questions (Teaching and Learning Research Programme, 2007:5) and these questions could be incorporated in teaching practice to encourage originality, self-expression and verbal communication among learners. In disadvantaged scenarios, this element could be incorporated in a gradual manner with the teacher encouraging learners to ask simple deeper-level questions. Empirical evidence has shown that questions can motivate learners to engage and participate meaningfully, and questions are considered “one of the most powerful tools for building learning environments and promoting successful performance” (Thalheimer, 2003:4). Thalheimer (2003:8) also confirms that questions motivate and assure learners of their ability to recall information, which in turn motivates them to “engage in additional learning”, probably learning and practicing to communicate effectively.

In the process I felt that I needed to take an additional step to verify and establish the learners’ communicative skills. At the end of the first two lessons I asked learners to tell me in English what they were reading about. Not one of the learners was able to tell what they were reading about. Retelling is a kind of question that requires learners to divulge their knowledge through language expression. It was evident that they were unaccustomed to the kind of question. Whereas they knew the story, they were unable to use language to express what they knew about the story. Schlebusch and Motsamai (2004:36) affirm that learners “battle with communication related activities because they are not proficient” in the language. The lack of practice and

use, and other Conditions of Learning in the English classroom will undoubtedly hinder learners' communicative abilities.

4.4.3 Management of resources and time

Figure 4.4 illustrates my personal view regarding the importance of a conducive learning climate, where the four key elements are encompassed, prioritized and interrelated. The classroom becomes the space where the Conditions of Learning (cf. chapter 2) should be upheld, equally. Therefore, the management of resources and time is considered as key for successful teaching and learning.

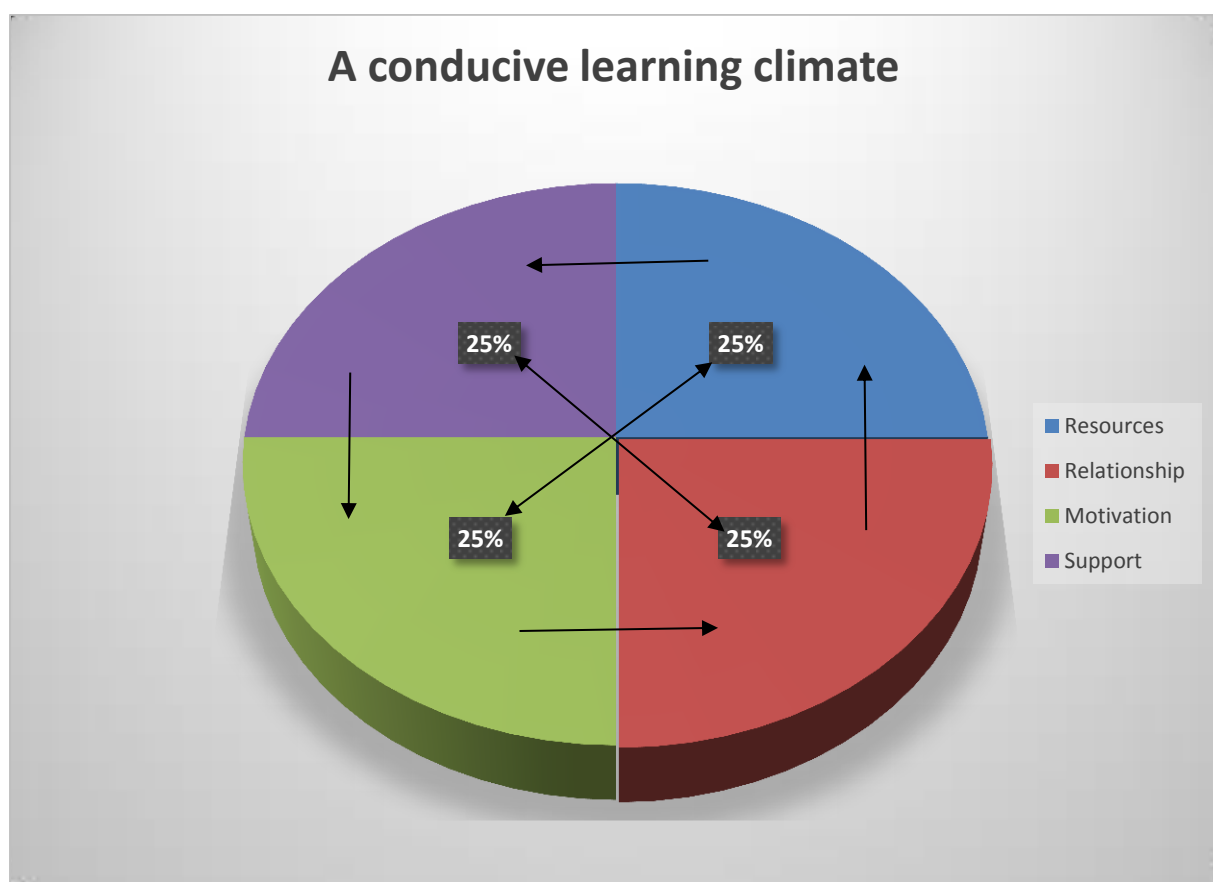


Figure 4.4: My personal representation of a conducive teaching and learning atmosphere

Research has shown that South African teachers face numerous challenges in and outside the classroom (Nel & Theron, 2008:204; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2008:59; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009:261). Some of the challenges, including curriculum matters, often lead to confusion and frustration (Moodley, 2013:90) that might, in some way, contribute to inadequate classroom



management (Salem al-amarat, 2011:38), thereby affecting key factors related to curriculum delivery and acceptable Conditions of Learning.

Classroom management includes relationships, support, motivation and coordination of resources and promotion of a conducive learning climate, and it is considered “critically important in the middle years when students are more likely to experience declines in academic motivation and self-esteem” (Beaty-O’Ferrall, Green & Hanna, 2010:4). Management of resources and the proper use of classroom space can either enhance or deter the intentions to achieve desired educational goals.

It was evident that the three teachers had good classroom management in terms of neatness, orderliness and the creation of a positive and warm atmosphere. Learners’ behaviour was well managed and learners were addressed with sensitivity and respect. Clear instructions were given, thus promoting and inculcating orderliness and respect, not only for the teacher, but respect among learners themselves. While the teachers were in control, they managed to exude an enviable congenial teacher-learner relationship and, several times learners were motivated and praised for their answers, and thanked for doing a simple task. Learners’ inputs were valued and acknowledged. Teachers respected time and were conscious to utilize every minute maximally to deliver the content planned for the day.

Very few books were available in two of the classrooms. One of the two teachers had created a reading corner where the GPLMS core readers were displayed. According to Cambourne (1995:185), immersion is one of the Conditions of Learning (cf. chapter 2). This condition requires classrooms where learners have access to a variety of reading materials including environmental print so that they get sufficient exposure in the target language. In the participants’ classrooms, learners were only exposed to limited sets of materials made available for the implementation of the strategy.

4.4.4 Classroom observation exposé

Classroom observation revealed extremely pertinent and worrisome issues. It was clear that the purpose for which the departmental intervention strategy (GPLMS) was intended was not adequately mediated and was, thus, misunderstood. It is well documented and acknowledged that the strategy was curriculum compliant and



founded on both the text-based and communicative approaches, focusing on the improvement of learners' language proficiency (for relevance to this study I exclude the mathematics part of the strategy). However, it was evident that the implementation was merely translated into daily practice which lacked quality learning and teaching flexibility and creativity due to the focus on the completion of tasks according to departmental specifications.

Furthermore, learners' communication abilities were repressed because of the predominant collective repetition and chorus chanting after the teacher. It seemed that the learners were used to the mode of learning as it was apparently habitual practice. In my reflection, I noted that as children, they would grow up believing that that was the way learning takes place, and this would become their mode of thinking at whatever level of education. It is not surprising that we find students in higher education – particularly those from disadvantaged schools – without the requisite communication competence, academic proficiency in English (cf. section 1.2) and the will to participate actively in class.

Language teaching is an interactive activity and should be directed at achieving language proficiency and communication outcomes as envisaged by the current curriculum. These outcomes should be the main focus of every lesson and teachers need to be equipped with skills to combine and balance the achievement of factual knowledge, linguistic knowledge and communication skills. In chapter 2 I presented a text-based teaching model and other models, including concepts such as “scaffolding” and the use of “comprehensible input” that teachers could incorporate in the facilitation of learning. Certainly, the predominant focus on factual knowledge and reproduction thereof, as revealed in the observations, will hinder both linguistic and communication skills. The development of communicative competence – the combination of both linguistic and communicative skills to use language effectively in any given situation – will undoubtedly remain a challenge for many learners.

The observation showed that the notion of learner-centred teaching was not properly understood considering that it was not employed. Learner-centred teaching requires a complete shift of mind on the teacher's part. It entails teaching that embraces and recognizes the learner's knowledge and contribution in the teaching and learning process. Learner-centred teaching is a “global shift in the role of teacher from a mere



disseminator to a facilitator” of learning (Massouleh, 2012:50); a move that focuses on the learner and what they learn (Chiphiko & Shawa, 2014:968).

Classroom observation revealed issues that I have pointed out as detrimental to teaching and learning. For example, teaching focused on completion of each day’s lesson as prescribed. The mode of questioning and the traditional way of teaching did not yield any meaningful outcomes. The consequences, as mentioned elsewhere in this section, are that learners grow up thinking that this is the way to learn. The major concern is that in the interim, while teaching occurs in this manner, learners’ physical growth and maturity become incongruent with their intellectual development.

Generally, classroom observation presented a variation of features presented in this section of data analysis. The variation could be attributed to the nature and qualities of the participants as depicted in the biographical details and discussion thereof. This variation is captured in figure 4.5, showing the degree and level at which the text-based approach is implemented and the probability of learners developing communicative competence by virtue of their classroom circumstances. It is a well-known fact that different circumstances and situations will always yield different results and behaviour in life. It is, therefore, understandable that teachers would have different approaches and would handle matters differently, depending on their distinct circumstances, for example, educational and professional challenges, motivations, beliefs, knowledge, understanding and commitment, to mention a few factors.

Figure 4.5 depicts the quality of teaching in each class. This depiction provides my personal evaluation and approximation, expressed in percentages, of the probability of learners’ development of communicative competence.

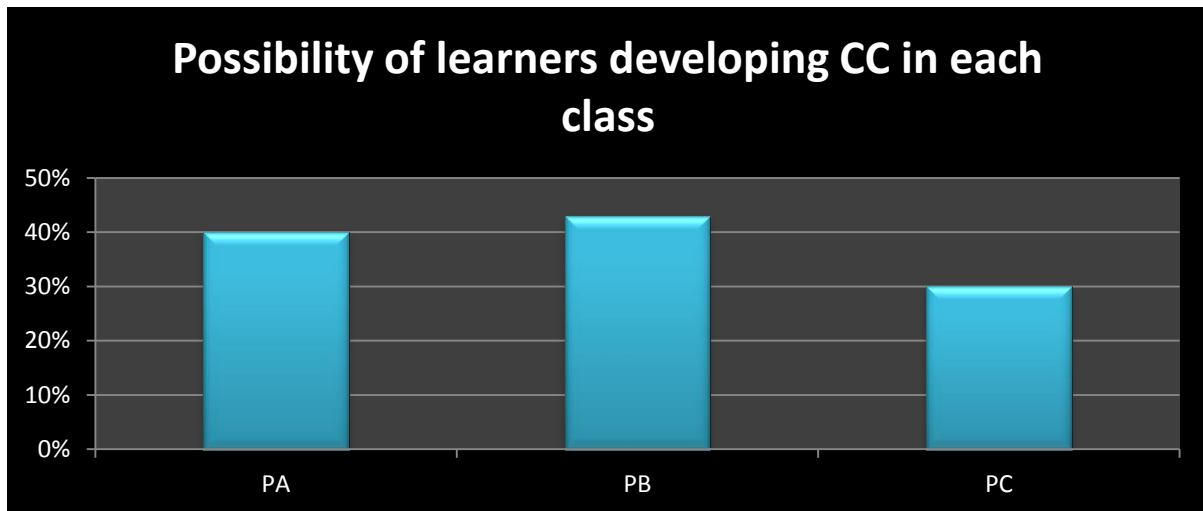


Figure 4.5: Probability of learners' development of communicative competence in the three schools

Key: PA – Participant A (40%)

PB – Participant B (43%)

PC – Participant C (30%)

As seen in the figure 4.5, the learners' development of communicative competence would be varied, owing to the differentiated levels and quality of teaching, based on the findings of this study.

4.5 Interviews

The interviews were conducted immediately after the classroom observations. During the interviews I confirmed with the participants that I had captured the information from the observations adequately. While audiotaping, the interview session was introduced and the purpose for which it was intended explained. Participants were requested to be as candid as they could, so that their responses would assist in finding additional factual information related to the research topic. The overriding purpose of the interviews was to elicit information regarding classroom implementation and the teachers' views concerning the text-based approach in English education.

Interview questions were purposely formulated to establish and to address the following aspects which were crucial for answering the research questions, thereby providing an added dimension to the researcher's understanding of phenomena



related to classroom observation. Table 4.5 indicates the link between the interview aspects and the research sub-questions.

Table 4.5: Relationship between interview aspects and sub-questions

Aspect	Sub-question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers' knowledge and awareness of the text-based approach. 	<p>SQ 1: What is the teachers' knowledge of the curriculum stipulations as far as English FAL is concerned?</p> <p>SQ 2: What is the teachers' understanding of the text-based approach?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their understanding and cognizance of how they implement the approach. 	<p>SQ 1: What is the teachers' knowledge of the curriculum stipulations as far as English FAL is concerned?</p> <p>SQ 2: What is the teachers' understanding of the text-based approach?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their own rating of the learners' level of proficiency in English. 	<p>SQ 3: How are learners exposed to various types of texts in the Grade 4 classroom?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their views regarding the text-based approach. 	<p>SQ 1: What is the teachers' knowledge of the curriculum stipulations as far as English FAL is concerned?</p> <p>SQ 3: How are learners exposed to various types of texts in the Grade 4 classroom?</p>



4.5.1 Presenting data from the interviews

Section 4.5.1 presents the interview questions and responses, followed by an integrated comprehensive analysis of the responses in section 4.5.2. The participants' responses are presented verbatim and no changes were effected when the data were transcribed.

1. The text-based approach is one of the approaches recommended by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. What is your understanding of the text-based approach?

PA: Text-based approach? ... Please explain. (Researcher clarifies). My understanding is that it is not abstract. It is based on a text. The text is used as the foundation.

PB: (Uncertain). It is when learners are actively involved and taking part in the lesson, expressing themselves freely during the lesson. They are then able to understand things in context.

PC: Ehem ... Text-based approach ... My understanding ... I have to read the text and thereafter explain the words so that they can understand the words and spelling. You must always make them aware of punctuation marks.

2. How do you make sure that you implement the approach in FAL education?

PA: First, I read and understand the story. Then I prepare well and impart the knowledge to the learners.

PB: I make use of practical language. When I teach I use pictures and real objects and I encourage learners to use full sentences in their daily activities. I give them lots of examples, trying to explain in the first additional language.

PC: I try by putting it in my words, in my language first. Thereafter I put it in the other language, which is Zulu or Tsonga and thereafter I make it a point that the learners listen to the words and say the words and later they have to write it. (Researcher: You start by using mother tongue?) Yes, let's say it is vocabulary. I'll explain in my language and then if I know it in Zulu then I give it in Zulu and then in Tsonga. But if I am having a problem with that language I ask the learners. At times they know.



3. How do you introduce a new text type to the learners?

PA: I introduce the text in different ways. For example, I can use pictures, introduce new words. I can also use actions to carry out the message and meaning.

PB: I start every lesson with a poster and a theme. Then we read. I teach language structure using the theme. Learners use their activity books. I teach spelling and everything, including language structure.

PC: I put them in a situation that will suit me and suit them and then thereafter we talk. (Researcher: What do you mean by 'put them in a situation'?) Let's say it's about animals. And then I'll ask them animals that they know.

4. During the lesson, how do you encourage learners to communicate their thoughts in English? You may use an example.

PA: I encourage them to answer in full sentences and I always explain words to make things easy.

PB: I ask questions and they answer in full sentences. When they make mistakes I encourage them to try again, sometimes I ask others to help. I praise them when they give good answers.

PC: You know ... that's a bit tricky. At least I let learners try to speak in English. Even though some won't be right. If they have a problem I will help them.

5. The curriculum states 'communication for social purposes'. What does that mean?

PA: It means that the language used in class must be ... can be used beyond the class. Say, when children play, when they are at home, when they are shopping.

PB: Learners should be able to communicate in their daily lives and also in other subjects. They must be able to communicate at home.

PC: I think it means when I have to get the background of the child starting from home. The family, the church, the friends and whoever is around him or her. How do they socialize? What lessons that they teaching him or her? Is he or she happy in the



family or friends around them? Does she learn something from that background or people that he meet around?

6. After reading a text, think of an oral activity you could use to help learners use language as in a real-life situation.

PA: Eh ... I can use 'Enemies' as example. They can talk about the moral of the story. They can play it out and they can also talk about their own problems.

PB: I ask learners to put themselves in a situation and talk about it. They can also change the ending of the story or give the title of a story.

PC: I think I can start by ... Let's say when they play. The games that they play. Let's say when they use their language, their lingo. People use their lingo... (Researcher: Which lingo is that?) Let's talk about us older people, when I talk with you, at times. My age group use tsotsitaal, a language that I understand.

7. After reading a text, which written activity could you use to promote good communication skills?

PA: To promote communication skills learners write comprehension test and they rewrite the story in their own words.

PB: The learners can make a drawing, they can answer comprehension questions. They also do creative writing using story frames, they fill in missing words and they can provide their own headings.

PC: (Uncertain). Written activity? ... I think I can make things like the fill in questions. (Researcher: It's called cloze procedure). Okay, cloze procedure.

8. What are the reasons for teaching English?

PA: It is a universal language. Learners must be able to use English because it is also a LoLT.

PB: English is an international language. Learners must know it so that they can compete with other learners. They must be able to use it at home to express themselves and solve problems. They must use it when they play, for example when they play with white children. It gives them a sense of belonging.



PC: The reasons for teaching English is to prepare a child for the adult world when he goes out to work, when he visits other places and people who don't know his or her language he can use the language and then also in the workplace and also in sports, they use English.

9. Is the text-based approach suitable for achieving the purpose? Please elaborate.

PA: Yes, the text is a foundation for teaching. It is easier to understand the text and to teach language structure and conventions, vocabulary and tense. It is very suitable for understanding.

PB: Yes. It covers the content in language and all the skills, example listening, speaking, reading and writing and language structure and conventions.

PC: Yeah, I think it puts a learner in a situation that he has to think, then after thinking he finds words that he is not familiar with. He has to learn new things every day. And the text also will teach him about something which he hasn't experienced before.

10. Do you code-switch when teaching English?

PA: At the beginning of the year I am forced to.

PB: Sometimes. I know I am cheating. The Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) discourages this.

PC: Yeah, at times I do that, ehe... because I think without that they won't understand.

11. Why?

PA: To make learners understand because it is their transition from Grade 3. In Foundation Phase things were different.

PB: It is wrong, but I am trying to make learners understand since English is their second language. I am forced to. These learners are only in Grade 4 and are not advanced with the language. They start English in Grade?? I'm not sure. I'll check.



PC: It's like one day I was speaking with the Chinese. We were talking in English then he talks with the Chinese language then I say you are rebuking me ... Because they would not understand certain concepts, at times.

12. In general, at what level can your learners speak English?

(Poor/Moderate/Good)

PA: To be honest, they are moderate. There are two areas they have problems in: writing and speaking.

PB: I can say it is moderate.

PC: I'd say they are moderate.

13. What could be the reason for that?

PA: They had a poor foundation. They only read at school and it is difficult to understand English, but the media helps.

PB: The learners are still young and Grade 4 is the 1st level of Intermediate Phase and they are not exposed to enough vocabulary.

PC: English is not their mother tongue. As such we teachers have to teach them. So is the language that they are not used to.

14. Can you think of advantages of the text-based approach?

PA: The advantage is that the learners can practice reading and they learn new vocabulary. They are able to relate the stories to their daily lives.

(Researcher: For the teacher?) It is easy to prepare and teach. I also learn a lot from the stories even at that level.

PB: It gives opportunities for learner involvement. It covers most language skills and learners improve a lot.

(Researcher: And for the teacher?) I grow in teaching, teaching the skills and I try to incorporate and integrate the skills.



PC: I think the advantages is that the children have to listen to the language and then they'll understand it, then speak the language, then read the language thereafter write the language.

(Researcher's follow up: For teachers?) Yeah, the teacher must understand the language, and when he understands the language then he has to impart knowledge to the children by speaking, and then the same also by reading and let learners write that language or even the teacher himself.

15. Any disadvantages?

PA: Learners rely much on the text; they copy from the text instead of thinking. Their thinking is only based on the text.

PB: Unless if you are a lazy teacher, if you don't plan and teach according to the set guidelines.

PC: Yeah, disadvantages I think ... if I do not know the language, if I do not understand the language and I try to teach the language, it's a disadvantage. (Researcher: The language, you mean English? Remember the text-based approach; except for knowledge, could there be any other disadvantage?) I have to relate what I am teaching to somewhere to bring together for the understanding of the person I am teaching, and relating sources to understand.

4.5.2 Analysing the interviews

In this section I present an analysis of the interviews, reflecting on key issues the responses divulged.

Evidently, the responses reflected lack of knowledge about the text-based approach. It was a concept the participants were supposed to be familiar with because the curriculum and the literacy strategy were based on the approach. Hence, due to the lack of knowledge regarding the text-based approach, the participants would not be able to articulate and to clarify how they implemented the text-based approach in FAL education. The varied, unconvincing responses indicated lack of common knowledge of the text-based approach and its implementation.



The responses indicated that new text types were not adequately introduced. Although using pictures, illustration, posters, new vocabulary and contextualizing the lesson was relevant, particularly for introducing a lesson, these were not adequate ways to introduce a new text type. Texts are presented differently in terms of structural features, and these features should be mediated to the learners. For example, learners should be introduced to narrative texts such as stories, media texts such as newspaper reports, visual texts such as posters, and the difference between fiction and non-fiction. For meaningful engagement with texts, learners should know how different text types are presented, including the purpose of each text type.

The only way to communicate thoughts was through answering questions posed by the teacher, based on the text dealt with at the particular time. The participants mentioned that they encouraged learners to answer questions in full sentences, and praise was used when learners tried. This reveals that the main mode of communication was through question and answer, as it was observed during classroom observations. Whereas the participants seemed to understand the notion of “communication for social purposes” and oral activities for using language in “real-life situations”, the learners were not given communicative practice activities in the classroom. Except for creative writing, comprehension and cloze procedure were considered activities that promote good written communication skills.

The participants echoed societal aspirations and reflected the curriculum as far as reasons for English teaching were concerned. The predominant reason provided was that English was a universal, international language. Therefore, learners should know it for communication in different places, including the workplace, and for providing a sense of belonging and identity. One participant mentioned a valid point: the importance of learning because it was used as the LoLT from Grade 4 onwards. The CAPS curriculum states that language “is a tool for thought and communication ... Learning to use language effectively enables learners to acquire knowledge, to express their identity, feelings and ideas, to interact with others and to manage their world” (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:11).

Code-switching was used at different times for specific reasons, particularly at the beginning of the year when learners were in their transition from the Foundation



Phase (FP) into the Intermediate Phase (IP). It should be noted that English was introduced either in Grade 3 or 4 in many public schools, and it would have been strange to many learners who would have not heard the language used in a classroom situation. One of the participants mentioned that code-switching (CS) was wrong as it was discouraged in the GPLMS. This raised concerns, because CS was referred to and encouraged, if necessary, in the curriculum document (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:77).

The participants indicated that their learners could speak English at a moderate level. Reasons given were that English was difficult for the young learners who did not have exposure to English because it was not their mother tongue, and that they did not receive a solid foundation in former grades. Interestingly, one participant mentioned a valid point that teachers must teach the learners, an indication of commitment and professional responsibility.

The text-based approach was considered suitable and advantageous in terms of achieving the purpose for teaching English, because the text provided foundation and context for teaching all language skills and for teaching learners new things they had not experienced before. In addition, learners were able to link stories they read to their daily lives, which increased their vocabulary. The approach gave teachers the opportunity to learn integrative teaching, learning from the stories and they felt it was easy to prepare and to teach. Regarding preparation, it was probably easy because teachers used and followed pre-planned GPLMS lesson plans.

Participants stated that the approach had disadvantages in cases where teachers did not plan properly and teach according to set standards. One mentioned that it was a disadvantage if teachers taught the language they did not have adequate knowledge of. A major disadvantage, which was evident during classroom observation, was the learners' overreliance on the text. As one participant put it, learners' "thinking is only based on the text" (PA) (cf. question 15). Learners were, thus, unable to use language beyond texts they had read, because they were accustomed to rote learning, drill and repetition.

On the whole, it was clear that the participants were uncertain when answering the questions. Time and again the researcher had to provide explanations of key concepts; and hedging was used a great deal before most of the answers could be



provided. In addition, the participants made educated guesses, obviously drawing mainly from their daily teaching practice as recommended in the GPLMS lesson plans and teaching experience. The informed guesses helped them give meaningful or somewhat meaningful responses. This was particularly evident with responses from the participants who were familiar with the intervention strategy.

4.6 Presenting data from the questionnaires

The purpose of the questionnaire was to establish the respondents' PCK (cf. section 3.6.4), in particular, their pedagogical understanding, thinking and reasoning and general knowledge of curriculum content. Due to its importance in facilitating successful implementation and delivery of the curriculum and the achievement of effective teaching and learning, PCK was discussed in the literature review as one of the significant components of this study.

Without any intention of testing the respondents, I opted to utilize professional judgement (Allal, 2013:20) to rate their responses using a holistic rating scale and award a score based on knowledge, clarity, accuracy and global quality of the responses. In education, professional judgement is equated to competent, ethical judgement (Dottin, 2009:84), while holistic rating has been considered as a reliable, "quick, impressionistic" measuring and assessment tool, also known as "General Impression Marking" (Charney, 1984:68; Carr, 2000:209). The rating of responses gave me the opportunity to convert written words to numbers; in this case the qualitative was changed into quantitative (Srnlka & Koeszegi, 2007:33).

In rating the responses, I employed the expertise of two professionals in the field of literacy development and English teaching methodology as external auditors to offer their opinion regarding the scores. External auditing is a process "in which a researcher hires or obtains the services of an individual outside the study to review different aspects of the research" (Creswell, 2012:260; Given, 2008:42; Cottrell & McKenzie: 2011:242). This measure was considered crucial in terms of ensuring objectivity, reliability and accuracy of the ratings. The scores ranged from 1 to 4, with reference to the criteria shown in the rubric in table 4.6.



Table 4.6: Rubric for scoring responses

Score	Criterion
1	Demonstrates slight knowledge and understanding/Poor
2	Demonstrates partial knowledge and understanding/Low
3	Demonstrates considerable knowledge and understanding/Average
4	Demonstrates complete knowledge and understanding/High

A number of studies have conducted measurement of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in different disciplines using various methods (Lenhart, 2010; Morrison & Luttenegger, 2015; Rowan, Schilling, Ball & Miller, 2001; Saeli, Perrenet, Jochems & Zwaneveld, 2012; Yusof, Zakaria & Maat, 2012). The measurement of PCK in this study was used to corroborate what I had observed during classroom observation and the participants' interview responses. In addition, I intended to establish if there was any correlation between actual classroom practice and the teachers' pedagogical content knowledge.

The questions were classified into four categories and statistically summarized in tabular form for a clearer depiction and understanding of the respondents' pedagogical content knowledge revealed by the questionnaires.

Classification of questions

- A. Questions 1 to 6: Professional development (PD)
- B. Questions 7 to 13: Curriculum and general knowledge (CGK)
- C. Questions 14 to 19: Pedagogical knowledge and instructional practice (PKIP)
- D. Questions 20 to 24: Teachers' perceptions (TP)

4.6.1 Questionnaire results

The results yielded by the questionnaires together with the scores allocated to each response follow below. The responses were recorded verbatim and the grammatical errors were not corrected in the transcription. The results are presented according to each category, followed by an analytical discussion of the category.



A: Professional development

Question 1: How often do you refer to the CAPS document?

	Seldom	Regularly	Not necessary	Sometimes	Score
PA		✓			4
PB		✓			4
PC				✓	2

Question 2: How do you rate your own knowledge of English as a subject?

	Very good	Good	Fair	Score
PA		✓		3
PB	✓			4
PC			✓	2

Question 3: Were you trained to teach English?

	Yes	No	Score
PA	✓		4
PB	✓		4
PC	✓		4

Question 4: Were you trained in CAPS implementation of FAL teaching?

	Yes	No	Score
PA	✓		4
PB	✓		4
PC	✓		4



Question 5: If yes, how would you rate the quality of training you received on a scale of 1 to 10? Consider 1=Poor; 10=Exceptional

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Score
PA					✓						2
PB										✓	4
PC						✓					3

Question 6: If you ranked 5 and above, explain how the training helped you understand the implementation of the text-based approach to FAL education.

	Response	Score
PA	The training helped to implement the text-based approach in reading lessons. In this regard I was taught how to help learners to scan the text, syllables i.e. breaking down difficult words to make it easier for learners to pronounce. The themes used in this approach familiarize learners with new words throughout different lessons.	2
PB	Learners' involvement; teaching in context all language skills; learner assessment; learner performance.	2
PC	The training helped me to prepare work on a daily basis. That means at the end of the week I should have taught many aspects to the learners i.e. for example listening, reading the knowledge of the language and thereafter writing the language.	2

Discussion

In question 1, two of the respondents indicated that they regularly consulted the curriculum document. Research has shown that in teaching practice, it is crucial for teachers to familiarize themselves with the main curriculum for proper planning, teaching content and general adherence to curriculum requirements (Mnguni, 2013:8). As mentioned in the classroom observation discussion, the teachers were already teaching within curriculum parameters by virtue of being part of the Department of Basic Education's literacy strategy. In a sense, using the daily pre-



planned lesson plans could have been their understanding of making reference to the CAPS document. The frequency of reference to the curriculum presupposes significant knowledge in terms of curriculum content and classroom pedagogy. The responses were scored 4, which is a high ranking on the rubric. One respondent indicated that he referred to the curriculum document sometimes. This could result in minimal knowledge and awareness of curriculum matters on the teacher's side, which could be detrimental to teaching practice. This response was awarded a low score of 2.

Recently, teaching standards have become more demanding and mandatory and in a developing country like South Africa the aspect of subject knowledge should be viewed as a cornerstone for meeting the required standards. Subject knowledge is an essential component of PCK as it relates to the in-depth knowledge of the content of the subject. It is described as a "knowledge base" which influences how teachers plan and execute their lessons (Auseon, 1995:56). Looking at the responses for question 2, it was evident that PB was the most confident in her knowledge of English as a subject. Teachers' knowledge of the subject presupposes their ability to offer quality and meaningful teaching for achievement of language learning outcomes. Subject knowledge is an essential tool for mediating the rudiments of the additional language and for providing appropriate models of language structures in the classroom. In addition, by virtue of their knowledge, teachers would be in a position to manipulate language to meet the learners' needs and interests and to help them shape and express their own ideas using adequate grammatical and communicative structures in any given situation.

Apart from their knowledge of English, question 3 was intended to establish whether the teachers had been trained to teach it as a subject. According to research, academic knowledge "of a discipline is different than the knowledge needed to teach it", thus translating it into practice (Auseon, 1995:56). The respondents indicated that they were trained to teach English. This provides an added dimension to their own knowledge of English as shown in question 2. The argument here, which becomes an issue, is that the extent to which English is known as a subject would determine the quality of its teaching. Some benefits of knowing the subject and its content are articulated in the previous question. Therefore, training to teach the subject should be based on solid and sound knowledge of the subject.



Quality education requires well-educated and trained teachers (Barett, Ali, Clegg, Hinostroza, Lowe, Nikel, Novelli, Oduro, Pillay, Tikly & Yu, 2007:3). It was encouraging to realize that the respondents were all trained on the implementation of CAPS in FAL teaching. A number of studies have shown the importance of professional development in different disciplines for the improvement of teaching standards and the quality of learners' experience and performance (Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009:475; Mizell, 2010:3). South Africa has a record of underperformance documented in various reports, for instance the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (Mullis, et al., 2012) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) (Greaney & Kellagan, 2008). It, therefore, becomes crucial for the Department of Basic Education to prioritize teacher training. Furthermore, it should be the individual teacher's responsibility to embrace and use the training to their best advantage, and to the benefit of learners. The value and impact of training should be evident in classroom teaching practice.

The scoring of the responses to question 5 was average, slightly above average and exceptional. Presumably, a number of factors could be attributed to the respondents' ratings for the quality of training they had received, for example, organization and support of the training sessions, whether the respondents were trained at the same time, personal background, individualistic preferences and perhaps attitude to the entire exercise, bearing in mind that the Department of Basic Education mainly provides cascaded models of professional development programmes. The responses might be indicative of the general perceptions regarding in-service training (INSET) which has been "widely perceived to have been ineffective" according to the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (2013:55). However, a number of studies indicate positive teachers' perceptions of professional development (Kriek & Grayson, 2009:185; Lessing & De Witt, 2007:53; Steyn, 2010:167; Walter & Briggs, 2012:3:7).

Despite the average and above average rating of the questions on the quality of training, the participants' responses did not depict convincing understanding of the implementation of the text-based approach. The responses should have distinctly shown how different types of texts are used and how lessons are structured using a



variety of methodologies to scaffold teaching grammatical and communicative language aspects (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:14; 18).

B: Curriculum and general knowledge

Question 7: Briefly, state what the text-based approach entails.

	Response	Score
PA	A text-based approach entails starting a series of lessons by reading or being a certain text. The lessons will be based on the text, questions and all will be derived from the text.	2
PB	It entails teaching language to enables learners to become competent, confident ad critical readers and speakers.	1
PC	It means reading the story to the learners and they will be listening and I will explain to them the story and explaining new words to them.	1

Question 8: Which of the following teaching methodologies are you familiar with?

	RA	SR	SW	GR	GW	Gu R	Gu W	IR	IW	Score
PA	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
PB	✓	✓	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	3
PC	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	2

Key: **RA** – Reading aloud

Gu R – Guided reading

SR – Shared reading

Gu W – Guided writing

SW – Shared writing

IR – Independent reading

GR – Group reading

IW – Independent writing

GW – Group writing



Question 9: Choose one and explain how you implement it in the classroom.

	Response	Score
PA	Shared reading. I start by asking learners to study the cover of the book. We then talk about pictures. I read the title of the book and ask learners what they think will happen in the story. We then do picture walk. Learners are asked to predict the end of the story and we read.	3
PB	Shared reading. I let my learners read in pairs. The first one reads the first sentence, the other continues to read the second sentence, they continue exchanging the reading of sentences until they finish the text.	1
PC	In reading aloud I make sure that when I read all the learners in the classroom are listening to me. After reading I must find out from their individual reading whether they were listening attentively, by at least saying the correct things.	2

Question 10: Which methodology/methodologies do you employ regularly?

	Response	Score
PA	Reading aloud, independent writing, shared reading, independent reading, guided writing.	3
PB	Read aloud, hared reading, guided reading and independent reading.	3
PC	Question and answer.	1

Question 11: Explain how this/these helps/help improve learners' communication skills.

	Response	Score
PA	Independent reading helps learners to read on their own beyond the classroom, e.g. newspapers. Group writing helps my learners	1



	to take part in group work in other learning areas.	
PB	Through all these methodology learners' communication skills improve, they can write creatively, read fluently and do comprehension activities with ease.	1
PC	Learners must listen to the questions and respond well by answering the question.	1

Question 12: Mention the three stages of the reading process.

	Response			Score
PA	Going through the cover of the book, talking about the title and pictures.	Doing a picture walk.	Explaining new words to the learners.	1
PB	Pre-reading: Reading of new vocabulary from the text.	Reading activity: Reading of the text.	Post-reading: Reflection of the story.	4
PC	Listening.	Reading.	Speaking.	1

Question 13: Mention the five stages of the writing process.

	Response					Score
PA	Explaining the topic of what they will write about.	Explaining the guiding questions to the learners.	Giving learners a mind map about the topic.	Learners write a draft and correct it.	With corrections made, they will write a final draft.	1
PB	Planning: using a mind map.	Drafting.	Writing.	Editing of work.	Writing the final draft.	4



PC	Listening.	Understand.	Speak.	Read.	Write.	1
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Discussion

The responses to question 7 were very significant in the sense that the essence of what the text-based approach entails was not confidently articulated. PA's response was considered partial knowledge because presumably, the respondent made an educated guess by taking cue from the daily tasks prescribed in the lesson plan. Explicit explanation should have included the use of different types of texts for the development of various skills such as the knowledge of text features and structures, the understanding of how texts are constructed and the production of texts for different purposes (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:18). Teachers should know that making meaning of texts, learners engaging with texts and exploring how texts work are key principles of the text-based approach. The Intermediate Phase FAL CAPS document (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:18) provides a somewhat scant explanation of the text-based approach, while more reference to the text-based approach is found in the Learning Programme Guidelines for Languages (Department of Basic Education, 2008:9; 11; 14; 28; 34).

The methodologies in question 8 are featured in the Balanced Language Programme (BLP) (cf. chapter two). Respondents PA and PB showed remarkable familiarity with the methodologies. However, familiarity would not necessarily be equated to knowledge and the ability to put the methodologies into practice. If that were the case, the teachers would have been in a good position to bring about variety that would make modelling and scaffolding possible in the daily lessons. The application of different methodologies would be beneficial in catering for learner differences and the learners' preferred learning styles (Ellis, 1994:472; 508; Rijamampianina, 2010:150) and to a greater extent, learners' multiple intelligences (Department of Basic Education, 2010:69; Väyrynen, 2003:12–13). As a matter of record, SR, IR GR and GW appear in the CAPS glossary (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:153; 154; 158) and RA and IR appear in the GPLMS lesson plan (Gauteng Department of Education, 2014:8 & 9) albeit without practical methodological explanations.



The teachers' explanations of shared reading showed a disparity in the understanding of how the methodology is implemented. PB clearly showed little knowledge of the shared reading methodology by explaining a kind of controversially unconventional paired reading (PR). PR procedure explained in the literature puts emphasis on simultaneous reading aloud by the pair followed by independent reading (Vally, 2012:619; Law & Kratochwill, 1993:120; Topping, 1987:609; Overette & Donald, 1998:348). The explanation of RA would not be considered a convincing demonstration of the standard procedural practice of the methodology.

In terms of regular employment of the methodologies, PC's response raised serious concerns regarding knowledge and familiarity with the methodologies. However, there was honesty in the response due to the fact that, as reported in classroom observation, the main mode of interaction and communication was in the form of question and answer. PB deserved the score because the methodologies were presented in an almost logical scaffolding sequence, thereby offering learners the necessary gradual support.

The responses on improvement of learners' communication skills failed to demonstrate clearly how the methodologies helped to improve communication skills. There was reference to reading, writing, listening and answering questions, without showing how these would translate into communication as a mode of speaking that promotes confident expression of ideas and thoughts. According to research, communication skills are "hugely important in their own right and central to children's intellectual, social and emotional development" (Lee, 2008:3). Research also indicates that the development of communication skills is an area often neglected due to the traditional teaching methods and teacher-centered practice (Alam & Uddin, 2013:18).

The reading process is presented in the CAPS and GPLMS documents (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:15; Gauteng Department of Education, 2014:9) respectively, and the writing process is discussed in CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:16) and in an unstructured manner in the GPLMS (Gauteng Department of Education, 2014:85; 107; 113) [among others]. The participants were supposed to be completely knowledgeable about the reading process as was demonstrated by PB. Teachers ought to be familiar with the processes because



reading and writing are essentially interrelated and they should be understood as processes that need on-going practice. Many learners and students in higher education in South Africa find it difficult to write (Ayliff, 2010:1). Therefore regular practice would enable them to communicate and present their thoughts in writing.

C: Pedagogical knowledge and practice

Question 14: What is your understanding of the concept ‘scaffolding’ in teaching?

	Response	Score
PA	This is a progressive start of the lesson, taking learners gradually from the simple part of the lesson towards the complex areas of the lesson. Starting from the known to the unknown.	2
PB	Slowing down of teaching to cater for learners with barriers.	1
PC	-	-

Question 15: Which of the following prescribed texts are available in your classroom?

	Big Books/ enlarged texts	Single copies of readers	Newspap ers	Magazines	Audio/visual aids	Score
PA	-	✓	-	-	-	2
PB	-	✓	-	-	-	2
PC	-	-	✓	✓	✓	1

Question 16: Give an example of an information text.

	Response	Score
PA	Animals that lay eggs.	1
PB	A newspaper report.	4
PC	It is a text that informs/tells learners about something.	1



Question 17: Give an example of a transitional text.

	Response	Score
PA	A friendly letter.	4
PB	Short story, dialogue.	1
PC	-	-

Question 18: Give an example of a narrative text.

	Response	Score
PA	Why hawk and hen cannot be friends.	4
PB	It is a story which we are told of occurred events.	4
PC	It is a story text.	4

Question 19: How can you use text to teach, say, vocabulary/tense/parts of speech/a simple subject verb object (SVO) sentence? Choose one or any you are comfortable with.

	Response	Score
PA	I can use the text to teach tense. I will take out sentences from the text and asked learners if this happens today, or yesterday or next week, how will the sentences be written. By so doing we will be treating different tenses.	4
PB	From the text I can teach new vocabulary using flashcards, read to the learner, while they repeat, explain the word using pictures, real objects, practical examples and also acting it if possible. I also use the new vocabulary in different sentences, also letting learners try giving their own examples.	4



PC	Tenses: When teaching a text, I will pick out words when teaching and base them on the present, past and future tenses for the learners to understand.	2
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Discussion

The respondents scored very low in terms of understanding the term “scaffolding”, showing little or no understanding of the concept. It raises concerns since the term “scaffolding” is mentioned once alongside the terms “modelling” and “support” in the CAPS document (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:18). The introduction of terminology and concepts without elaboration or provision of examples in the curriculum is problematic and disempowering, causing the inability to put the concepts into practice due to lack of knowledge.

Similarly, the responses show that, in spite of it being prescribed by the curriculum, minimal resources were available in the classrooms. Research studies support the availability of resources in classrooms because, regardless of poverty and other socio-economic situations, “access to books can contribute to fourth grade reading” (Krashen, Lee & McQuillan, 2012:29). The materials that PA and PB ticked were supplied specifically for the implementation of the literacy strategy. No other materials were available for general daily teaching practice. The prescribed texts on the questionnaire were taken from the CAPS list (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:20), yet they were not available to support teaching and learning. Regrettably, PC ticked off materials that were not available in the classroom during classroom observation.

Questions 16 to 18 were meant to address knowledge of the different text types to be taught. The CAPS document mentions the variety of texts and provides ample examples of the types of texts (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:22; 27; 155; 159). The fact that the respondents were not able to respond satisfactorily to questions 16 and 17 was an indication of a shortcoming in the area of professional development. In a text-based curriculum the mediation of a genre should be considered crucial for the understanding of content as well as for meaningful engagement with the text, that is, reading for meaning. Knowing the text types would



help teachers to introduce and mediate various text features, structures, parts or sections and relevant reading strategies to learners (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:22).

Two respondents were clear about how they could use text as a springboard to teaching language and grammar, thus teaching in context. The curriculum stipulates that language structures and conventions should be integrated within the teaching of the core language skills (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:19) and the grammatical items to be taught are listed. Furthermore, there is provision for guidelines such as using “tenses appropriate for the text type being studied” (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:25). Research has proven that integration of language skills is helpful in teaching learners “effective communication competence in English” (Vinod, 2013:391). Teaching language skills in isolation is fragmental and “disintegrates language from other aspects of human development while an integrated SL (second language) teaching aims at keeping these components of development together helping the learner to be proficient in the usage of that language” (Akram & Malik, 2010:234).

D: Teachers’ perceptions

Question 20: Why, do you think learners should get sufficient exposure to the English language?

	Response	Score
PA	English is a universal language. Learners must be exposed to it. English is a language of learning and teaching; by being exposed to it will help to make their schoolwork easier.	4
PB	Since English is an international language of communication, learners should be fully equipped with the language usage. This will also enables them to communicate in their everyday lives, e.g. in malls, parks and also at home with the television.	4
PC	English as a medium of instruction, will help the child/learner when he/she faces the outer world i.e. employment, visiting outer places, and also people who understand English only.	4



Question 21: How can we ensure that learners get sufficient exposure to English?

	Response	Score
PA	Communicate with them in English as much as we can. Providing them with material, encouraging them to speak English amongst themselves and encouraging them to listen to English media.	4
PB	We can encourage the learners to communicate in English at school with each other and also to the teachers.	2
PC	By letting them to speak the language; read books in English; Watching television, i.e. news in English; by speaking, reading and writing English.	3

Question 22: Do you think that the text-based approach is suitable for the development of learners' verbal and written communication skills? Please explain.

	Response	Score
PA	I think it is suitable to do that. The approach starts by giving learners a 'foot to stand on' through the lesson. Sometimes a text is relevant to the learners' experiences and this make it easier for learners to understand.	3
PB	It is suitable since it covers all the language skills. They listen, speak, read, write and do oral tasks.	2
PC	If a child is able to listen to the language, he will be able in future to write his own stories. He will be able to teach other learners or people. He will ultimately write the language.	1

Question 23: What do you think are the repercussions of promoting learners with poor FAL skills to higher grades?

	Response	Score



PA	There are detrimental repercussions about this in that learners progress to the next grade without FAL skills e.g. reading. The complexity of the content rises per grades, so a learner will also find difficulties in other learning areas.	4
PB	This disturbs their progress as they can not read instructions and understand them on their own making it difficult for them to perform better and compete with their peers.	2
PC	I think we will be doing injustice to the community or public. Learners with poor FAL skills to higher grades will not be delivering good qualities to the society. The nation will be deprived because of these poor FAL learners.	1

Question 24: Perhaps you would wish to voice your own opinion or comments regarding FAL teaching?

	Response	Score
PA	I think the teaching and learning of FAL should start as early as in grade R to lay a proper foundation. There should be special remedial teachers in every school to assist learners who are encountering challenges in FAL. Every school should have a library to expose learners to different reading material.	4
PB	I was thinking that maybe from the lower grade as soon as learners are introduced to FAL, letter's sounds should be strictly emphasized so that learners can be able to build and read words. Phonix [sic] should be taught very religiously followed by weekly spelling test to improve writing. Code-switching should be very minimum or avoided so that learners should be used to the language. Encourage reading of story book and reciting of poems.	3
PC	I think a learner to meet his passing requirements first and foremost he must know or understand his FAL. Leaders must be based on people who knows the FAL. Learners must be taught the importance of FAL.	2



Discussion

Questions 20 and 21 were asked with reference to curriculum stipulations regarding exposure to the additional language. The curriculum states, “[l]anguage is a tool for thought and communication” (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:11) and, “[a]t this stage the majority of children are learning through the medium of their First Additional Language, English, and should be getting more exposure to it” (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:12). The respondents demonstrated considerable thought regarding the issue of exposure to the additional language. The fact that English is a universal language cannot be disputed, and research has shown that from early democracy many parents in South Africa, for various reasons, have made English a preference and priority in their children’s education (De Jager, 2012:17; Evans & Cleghorn, 2014:11; Mawasha, 1996:23; Wessels, 2010:39). A critical issue is that, at this stage English is a LoLT. Therefore, exposure to English would foster effective communication skills to cope with the global demands.

Two respondents mentioned provision of reading materials as a way of ensuring enough exposure to the additional language. Provision of reading materials is in line with the concept of “immersion” in Cambourne’s (1995:185) Conditions of Learning (cf. chapter 2). Immersion encourages a learning situation where learners are surrounded by different kinds of texts, particularly good-quality, well-illustrated books with content they can relate to. Both fiction and non-fiction materials should be available. These types of texts are critical in activating learners’ interests in books, reading, writing and speaking. Learners should also be immersed in an environment that provides frequent opportunities to listen to and hear the spoken language, notwithstanding how minimal. Regrettably, the classrooms did not have a good supply of reading materials to ensure exposure to the additional language.

The respondents indicated the determination to encourage learners to communicate in English among themselves and by watching news on television. This measure is linked to other Conditions of Learning, “practice and use, or employment” and “approximations” (Cambourne, 1995:185–186; Rushton, et al., 2003:16). These conditions suggest that learners should be given opportunities to learn the language by speaking, and teachers giving room for mistakes as part of children’s learning experience.



In essence, the respondents were positive that the text-based approach was suitable for the development of verbal and communication skills on the grounds that all language skills were catered for, and that it provided context for teaching language aspects. However, full understanding of the text-based approach was not convincingly articulated in the responses. The purpose of the text-based approach is stated in the curriculum document as a platform to “enable learners to become competent, confident and critical readers, writers and viewers of texts” (cf. chapter 1). For adequate and purposeful implementation, teachers ought to be conversant with the philosophy driving the approach and how the learning outcomes will be achieved. In this instance, learners are expected to be critical readers, writers, viewers and producers of different kinds of texts. Therefore, teachers should be well-equipped with knowledge and skills for effective delivery and management of the curriculum.

Promoting of learners to higher grades without requisite language skills was an issue alluded to in chapter 1 of this study. From the responses it was evident that promoting learners with inadequate language proficiency had negative repercussions and was against educational principles enshrined in the constitution and the curriculum. To PC it was considered an injustice to the individual and society at large. The response brings to mind the principles on which the curriculum was founded. For example, one of the principles relating to human rights states: “infusing the principles and practices of social and environmental justice and human rights as defined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa” (Department Basic Education, 2011a:6). It, thus, becomes a social and educational injustice when learners progress without solid educational foundations. PB mentioned that learning becomes more complex at higher levels and learners would find it difficult to manage other subjects. Similarly, the point is aligned to one of the principles that states: “content and context of each grade shows progression from simple to complex” (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:6). With deeper thinking, the purpose of the curriculum was to equip all learners “irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability, with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment, and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country” (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:6).



The respondents voiced pertinent issues regarding the FAL teaching in schools. Firstly, they mentioned that English should be introduced and taught in lower grades to “lay proper foundation” according to PA. This view was apparently triggered by the fact that English was introduced either in Grade 3 or 4 in many public schools, yet learners were expected to manage using it as a LoLT from Grade 4. Secondly, they referred to the unavailability of school libraries in schools. Research has proven that libraries play a significant role in the promotion of quality education, yet a number of reports show that many learners in many South African public schools were deprived of access to school libraries (Paton-Ash & Wilmot, 2013:135; Department of Education, 2008:8b; Hart & Zinn, 2007:9). The situation continues despite the Minister’s declaration at the launch of the Department of Education Strategic Plan 2007–2011 that

a concerted effort will be made to improve the quality of schooling through a substantial increase in resource[s] ... more schools will be provided with libraries and science laboratories to improve on reading, writing and numeracy skills from Grade R to Grade 12, especially in township and rural areas (Maseko, 2008:3).

The issue of remedial teaching surfaced as a call for provision of specialised assistance to learners who encounter challenges in the FAL. Remedial education in public schools would indeed be beneficial to the learners in terms of the achievement of the requisite language and academic competencies. Research has shown that remedial education improves levels of performance and achievement, and that “[a] remedial teacher for the intermediate phase would be a strategy to assist with written language difficulties and enable the learners to achieve the foundation skills in reading and writing that they did not achieve in the foundation phase” (Navsaria, Pascoe & Kathard, 2011:17).

4.6.2 Summary of the questionnaire scores

Table 4.7 represents statistical outcomes of the questionnaire, showing the actual scores, the averages and percentages attained by each participant. The scores reveal significant information regarding the participants’ pedagogical content knowledge.



Table 4.7: Statistical outcomes of the questionnaire

Classification of questions	Questions	Scores					
		PA	PB	PC			
Professional development (PD)	1	4	4	2			
	2	3	4	2			
	3	4	4	4			
	4	4	4	4			
	5	2	4	3			
	6	2	(3,1)	2	(3,6)	2	(2,8)
Curriculum and general knowledge (CGK)	7	2	1	1			
	8	4	3	2			
	9	3	1	2			
	10	4	3	1			
	11	1	1	1			
	12	1	4	1			
	13	1	(2,2)	4	(2,4)	1	(1,2)
Pedagogical knowledge and instructional practice (PKIP)	14	2	1	-			
	15	2	2	1			
	16	1	4	1			
	17	4	1	-			
	18	4	4	4			
	19	3	(2,6)	4	(2,6)	2	(1,3)
Teachers' perceptions (TP)	20	4	3	3			
	21	4	2	3			
	22	3	2	1			
	23	4	3	2			
	24	4	(3,8)	3	(2,6)	2	(2,2)
	Total	70	68	45			
	Average	2,9	(72,5%)	2,8	(70,8%)	1,8	(46,8%)



The statistics above reveal the fact that the participants displayed limited knowledge and understanding of curriculum and pedagogical matters, as it was mentioned earlier. It was evident that, except for professional development (PD) scores for PA and PB and teachers' perceptions (TP) for PA, all other scores were in the average range and below average. Overall, the scores confirm the classroom observation and interview findings, revealing inadequate and discouraging levels of knowledge required for effective delivery of the curriculum.

Furthermore, the outcomes of the questionnaires reveal a major contradiction between participants' responses regarding professional development (PD) and their actual curriculum and instructional knowledge, and their actual classroom practice. Although the scores for PD were above average, the actual classroom practice, evident in the classroom observation findings, was significantly inconsistent with the scores.

4.6.3 Participants' PCK levels

Figure 4.6 depicts the discernible levels of participants' PCK and their opinions on English education. The figure presents statistics derived from table 4.7. As shown above, PC trailed behind the other two participants in all the classified areas of the questionnaire, as well as in the other instruments used in this study, including biographical details. This poses a grave concern since PCK levels are considered crucial for the delivery of quality education.

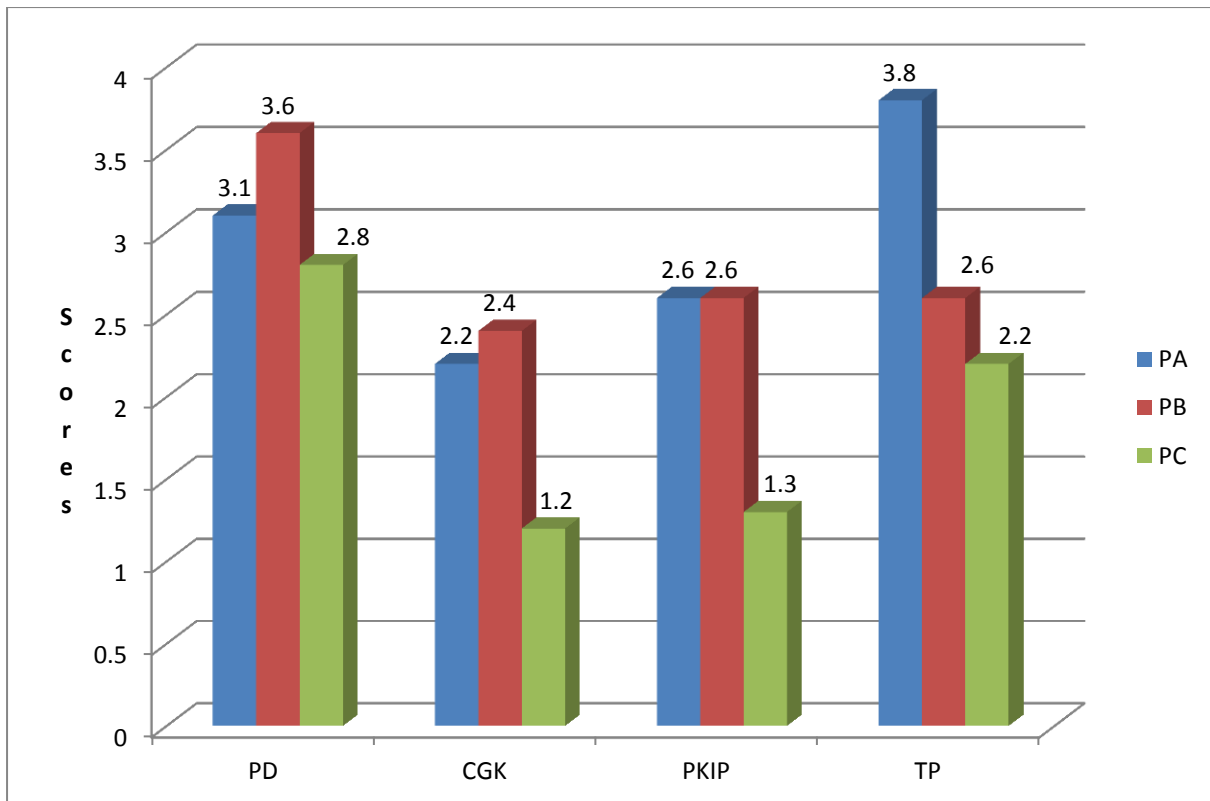


Figure 4.6 Participants' levels of PCK

Key: PD – Professional development

CGK – Curriculum and general knowledge

PKIP – Pedagogical knowledge and instructional practice

TP – Teachers' perceptions

Figure 4.6 correlates with the questionnaire findings depicted in table 4.7, through which participants' PCK levels in the different areas, namely, professional development (PD), curriculum and general knowledge (CGK), pedagogical knowledge and instructional practice (PKIP) and teachers' perceptions (TP), can be compared. Evidently, in PD participant A (PA) had the highest score of 3,6, participant B (PB) scored 3,1 while participant C (PC) scored 2,8. Again, in CGK, PD led with a score of 2,4, PA scored 2,2, and PC scored 1,2. In the area of PKIP both PA and PB were at the same level, 2,6, while PC was half-way their level, scoring 1,3. PA's perceptions were considered more valid and credible, scoring 3,8, while PB scored 2,6, which was slightly higher than PC at 2,2.



As shown above, PC trailed behind the other two participants in all the classified areas of the questionnaire, as well as in the other instruments used in this study, including biographical details. This poses a grave concern since PCK levels are considered crucial for the delivery of quality education. As indicated in section 4.6.2, the statistics presented inconsistencies. These inconsistencies will be dealt with in the interpretation section (cf. section 4.8).

4.7 Document analysis

Copies of learners' written work are presented in addendum K. These copies were made with permission from the district and with the assistance of the participating schools (cf. addenda B and C). I made a random selection of activities as samples, and the teachers opted to make contributions of choice, which I accepted. The images are presented as authentic copies taken from learners' original exercise books. The activities were records of work done over a period of time, evident from the dates appearing at the beginning of each written task. I examined and interpreted these copies in order to gain knowledge and understanding of how the activities were text-based related, and what potential they had in developing learners' communicative competence.

Based on texts, the work portrayed positive entrenchment of in-context language learning and writing. Because the tasks were linked to the texts the learners were familiar with, they would probably complete them with less difficulty, provided that modelling and support were in place.

Evidently, most of the activities required learners to fill in missing information, predominantly one word cloze procedures and comprehension practice. The respondents referred to these types of activities as major written tasks. The disadvantage was that very few activities extended learners' thinking beyond known texts, as mentioned by one of the respondents. In this way, it becomes habitual for learners to think about memorizing and reproducing facts so that they provide correct answers to questions asked by the teacher.

The curriculum provides guidelines for written activities. Examples are, "writes a description of characters from the story using a frame, writes about a



story, writes a factual recount, writes about a news event based on personal experience, writes a simple personal recount using a frame, writes about a procedure with support, writes an opinion on a story, writes paragraphs, designs a visual text” (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:39–81). Most of these activities were not evident in the learners’ written work. The written tasks were mainly of the fill-in-the-missing-word and the one-word answer type. Although mind maps were practiced, they could have been used as springboard to writing short paragraphs and simple creative, narrative or transactional tasks (cf. 2.3.3). The teachers could have used shared writing to scaffold and support learners’ writing practice. Gradually, the teacher could release the support and encourage learners to tackle independent writing.

Real-life communicative activities that prompted learners to express their thinking and ideas in continuous written prose were missing. Short descriptive paragraphs, recounts, procedures, dialogues or conversations fall under the category of real-life communicative activities. These would be helpful in developing learners’ sentence construction skills and use of appropriate vocabulary. Experts advise that written activities should be based on oral communication practice. Britton (1970) informs that “[r]eading and writing floats on a sea of talk” (Britton, 1970:164). It is my strong conviction that with appropriate support, encouragement and guidance, and taking Cambourne’s (1995:185) “approximations” into account, learners at any language proficiency level can communicate in writing. Where English is a LoLT, rigorous attempts to advance learners’ oral and written proficiencies should be the main priority in language teaching.

It should be borne in mind that in the text-based approach, learners are expected to know how texts work, how they are produced or constructed and how to produce texts themselves. Text production requires the ability to communicate thoughts and to carry out messages in written form. As was mentioned earlier, in order to support learners in creating texts, teachers must understand the concepts “modelling”, “scaffolding” and “support”. They would, thus, be able to provide demonstrations, to provide good written models and to give learners opportunities to practice on their own. Giving learners this opportunity falls within the ambit of the Conditions of Learning and the use of various teaching strategies (cf. chapter 2). Teaching writing



is a complex, but achievable process that needs adequate teaching skills and strategies, particularly at Grade 4 level. All things considered, meaningful and appropriate teacher training is an imperative.

4.8 Interpretation of the findings

This section provides the lessons I learnt while analysing the results and making sense of what the research protocols presented. As stated in the research design, the results were merged, interpreted and valid conclusions drawn in answering the research questions.

The interpretation starts by addressing issues that relate to the sub-questions, namely, participants' knowledge of curriculum stipulations, their understanding of the text-based approach and learners' exposure to various text types. Conclusions drawn from the sub-questions were collated to answer the main research question regarding the overall implementation of the text-based approach in the teaching of English to ensure the development of learners' communicative competence.

4.8.1 Knowledge of curriculum stipulations

For the purposes of this study, knowledge of curriculum stipulations refers to the in-depth knowledge and understanding of curriculum content and the integrated strategies for achieving desired curriculum goals and expectations. By implication, teachers need to have knowledge of what to teach (content), how to teach (methodology) and why (purpose). This knowledge is crucial because it would be useful and beneficial in the achievement of effective teaching and learning. This forms a knowledge base that is congruent to Aristotle's three-tiered framework of knowledge: "theory (know that), technique (know how to) and moral insight (know why)" (Solomons & Fataar, 2011:227).

Knowing curriculum stipulations include comprehensive understanding of concepts, for example, text-based approach, literacy, literacies, the reading and writing processes, different types of texts, and grammatical conventions. Furthermore, concepts such as modelling, scaffolding, shared reading and exposure to the additional language should be clearly understood for the purposes of effective teaching. Overall, the principles on which the curriculum was founded, and the purpose of the curriculum, ought to be fundamental to the knowledge of curriculum



stipulations. Killen (2015:1) supports this idea by acknowledging that “[t]o function effectively as a teacher in South Africa you need to be able to interpret and follow the guidelines given in the National Curriculum Statement Grades R–12”. Therefore, it was imperative for this study to probe the knowledge of curriculum stipulations to determine certainty of the implementation of the text-based approach in English education.

The results show that the teachers displayed inadequate knowledge of curriculum stipulations because the respondents lacked the requisite in-depth knowledge and understanding of curriculum concepts. As a result, the text-based approach would not be effectively practiced due to insufficient and limited knowledge of curriculum stipulations.

4.8.2 Understanding of the text-based approach

Chapter 2 presents an exploration of the text-based approach together with teaching models that support the approach in language teaching. Part of this study was to determine the teachers’ understanding of the text-based approach and awareness of its role in FAL teaching as is determined by the curriculum. To establish teachers’ knowledge and understanding, their PCK was interrogated in different ways, as captured in the protocols.

The responses clearly revealed that the respondents lacked knowledge of the text-based approach, hence the uncertainty and hedging when responding to questions related to the text-based approach and its application in the classroom. Although the respondents had indicated that they had received curriculum training, and they had scored above average for professional development, the lack of in-depth knowledge of the text-based approach was an indication that the professional development offered was short of the rigour and intensity required for in-service and pre-service teacher training.

It is essential for teachers to have a reasonable understanding of the text-based approach, so that their teaching and instructional practice is informed and grounded on sound knowledge of the approach and its implementation. Their knowledge would enable them to move beyond traditional teaching methods, such as rote learning and drill, to the facilitation of learning through meaningful engagement with texts. The art



of meaningful engagement includes, for example, the learners' ability to interact with different kinds of texts for comprehension, becoming aware of how texts are constructed and the ability to construct texts. The curriculum explicitly states that "[t]his approach will require a lot of modelling, support and scaffolding in the First Additional Language classroom" (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:18); yet this was not apparent from the responses.

All matters concerned, the text-based approach was considered suitable for achieving the purposes of teaching English. I took this view as a positive indication that, despite insufficient understanding of the text-based approach, the research opened the teachers' eyes and they were committed to using the research as an opportunity for professional growth and development.

4.8.3 Learners' exposure to various text types



One of the Conditions of Learning (cf. chapter 2), immersion, clearly articulates the benefits of a well-resourced classroom environment. The benefits are that learners have a variety of books and reading materials to engage with on a daily basis with the teacher, in small groups, pairs and as individuals. A number of studies have shown that a variety of good books and quality materials, at the appropriate level and slightly above, with meaningful illustrations and attractive pictures, stimulate learners' interests in books, a love of reading and it promotes literacy and academic achievement (Moodie, 2010:1; Plunkett, Aslanian & Hastings, 2005:14). Tella and Akande (2007:119) agree that learners "need access to a wide range of reading materials to help them acquire and maintain fluent reading skills, broaden horizons, and think independently and critically". The interpretivist-constructivist paradigmatic stance (cf. chapter 3) of this study and ZPD (cf. chapter 2) support the concept of immersion, because learners get immersed in a classroom culture that promotes construction of meaning by means of engagement with various kinds of appropriate levels of texts that, in turn, facilitates improved levels of learning.



The CAPS provides a list of teachers' and learners' resources that should be available in the classroom for the development of all language skills. The list includes Big Books or enlarged texts, a selection of readers, a variety of media materials and visual aids. The prescription of a wide range of texts clearly presupposes the intention to support the text-based approach to language teaching in order to achieve the overriding aims and objectives of the curriculum. However, the results revealed that the Grade 4 classrooms in this study were poorly resourced in terms of the availability of a variety of texts for learners to interact and engage with. Although the environment was positive and supportive, the classrooms lacked the prescribed resources and interesting materials to motivate learners and lure them into reading and communicating ideas through speaking and writing. The available materials were a minimal range of texts provisioned for the purposes of the successful application of the departmental literacy intervention strategy. This availability poses a problem and lets one wonder what resources the classrooms would have had if not for the intervention strategy.

Evidently, the Grade 4 classrooms in this study exposed learners to a limited selection of texts. As mentioned in the classroom observation, these texts were solely made available for the implementation of the GPLMS intervention programme. The concept of immersion could not be applied here and therefore the quality of learning was immensely compromised. Ultimately, the purpose of the text-based approach, as per curriculum intentions (cf. chapter 1), would be hard to achieve.

4.9 Consolidation of the findings

In sections 4.8.1 to 4.8.3 I presented the interpretation of findings related to the sub-questions of this study. I used the interpretation to feed in and to draw conclusions in answering the main research question: How is the text-based approach to teaching English as FAL implemented in Grade 4 to ensure communicative competence?

Before I make final conclusions regarding the main research question, I must acknowledge that in this study, some issues arose that impacted on the teaching of English in public schools. In the first place, the selected schools were all part of the provincial literacy strategy (GPLMS). Therefore, the strategy had influence on the implementation of the text-based approach because the teachers were compelled to deliver as required and prescribed on a daily basis by means of the teacher's pre-



planned lesson plans. My assumption is that matters would have been different if the schools implemented the text-based approach outside of the literacy intervention strategy.

Additional matters that posed critical challenges for the teaching of English as a FAL were raised by the participants. The main concern was that English was introduced as a subject in Grade 3, which meant that Grade 4 was in reality the learners' second year of English education. Furthermore, besides disadvantaged circumstances, learners came from diverse cultures and linguistic backgrounds and some were immigrants whose home languages were unknown to the teachers. The results of the study showed that teachers used code-switching for particular reasons (cf. 4.3.1; 4.5.2). However, some learners were still left behind due to the diverse linguistic backgrounds.

At this point, I revert to two key features that guided the understanding of the text-based approach and its implementation: the definition and the phases of implementation (cf. chapter 2). The two features are juxtaposed in table 4.8 for clarity and for showing their internal relationship (colour-coded), in a manner that builds towards the same objectives. In essence, this presentation represents my stance in terms of curriculum insight and delivery that should inform effective teaching practice. I present the key features to indicate how I arrived at the final conclusions regarding the research questions.



Table 4.8 Key features of the text-based approach

Definition of the text-based approach	Phases of implementation
<p>A text-based approach explores how texts work. The purpose of a text-based approach is to enable learners to become competent, confident and critical readers, writers and viewers of texts. It involves listening to, reading, viewing and analysing texts to understand how they are produced and what their effects are. Through this critical interaction, learners develop the ability to evaluate texts. The text-based approach also involves producing different kinds of texts for particular purposes and audiences. This approach is informed by an understanding of how texts are constructed. This approach will require quite a lot of modelling, support and scaffolding in the First Additional Language classroom. (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:18).</p>	<p><u>Phase 1: Building the context</u> Introduction to the social context, exploring text features and building knowledge of the topic.</p> <p><u>Phase 2: Modelling and deconstructing text</u> Investigating the structural pattern and language features, comparing the model with other examples of the same text type.</p> <p><u>Phase 3: Joint construction of the text</u> Learners begin to contribute to the construction of whole examples of the text type.</p> <p><u>Phase 4: Independent construction of the text</u> Learners work independently with text, listening and reading comprehension, speaking and oral presentations.</p> <p><u>Phase 5: Linking to related texts</u> Reflecting on texts learnt, comparing the use of texts types, and roleplaying.</p>

Overall, the result of this study show that, due to inadequate knowledge and awareness on the teachers' part, much of what the curriculum prescribes does not take place in the classroom. Modelling, scaffolding and support are not applied because teachers lack proper understanding of the methodologies mentioned and



briefly explained in the curriculum document. For instance, guided reading and writing are explained in the curriculum glossary, but proper practical demonstrations would take teachers to a higher level of teaching practice.

Furthermore, in their responses, the respondents contradicted themselves. While the respondents indicated that they were familiar with the methodologies, they were unable to demonstrate how the methodologies were applied. In addition, while they rated their professional training highly, they did not demonstrate the skills during classroom observation, interview sessions and questionnaire responses.

In spite of this, it must be mentioned that the lack of insightful knowledge and full understanding of curriculum matters in South Africa could not be blamed on teachers only. A number of studies have documented a list of curriculum challenges faced by teachers, among others, curriculum change and reform (Bennie & Newstead, 1999:1; Graven, 2002:2; Moodley, 2013:iv; Themane & Mamabolo, n.d.:9). Moreover, the cascading model of training by the department proved overly problematic “as the complexity of the curriculum was watered down with each level of training” (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2008:80).

Ultimately, it was evident that the text-based approach was implemented to some extent in the Grade 4 English FAL classrooms without the teachers’ conscious explicit knowledge and understanding of what the approach entails and how the approach is implemented (cf. table 4.8). As reported in the discussions, teaching was predominantly old-school teacher-centred, short of modelling, scaffolding and support. It is important to note that, although the study was not meant to investigate the GPLMS, it revealed that the implementation of the text-based approach was influenced to a great extent and geared towards fulfilling the expectations of the intervention strategy.

As mentioned in chapter 1, communicative competence is the major problem faced by learners and students in South African schools and institutions of higher learning (cf. chapters 1 and 2). In this study, communicative competence is considered to be an essential outcome of the text-based approach in language teaching and learning. Therefore, teachers need a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and they have to be conversant with the systematic teaching



methodologies and strategies. This comprehensive knowledge would minimize the ineffective teacher and learner practices, for instance, dominant teacher talk, unproductive mode of questioning, and the inability of learners to communicate and express themselves beyond or outside the texts they were familiar with. Due to the teachers' lack of a comprehensive knowledge, as was revealed in this study, the learners' communicative competence was found to be a critical shortcoming in the implementation of the text-based approach.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter systematically presented data and provided analyses by means of detailed discussions following the order in which the various protocols were used. The discussions were linked to the literature review and conceptual framework of the study and geared towards answering the research questions. As befitting and in line with the research design, the analysis was synchronized, consolidated and overall conclusions drawn.

As mentioned in the research design, classroom observation was the main data collection method. The subsequent data collection methods were used to corroborate the findings of the main data collection method. Admittedly, there were a number of inconsistencies in the responses which raised further questions. However, these were helpful in understanding the problem and drawing conclusions regarding the research questions. In general, the subsequent data collection protocols' findings and results were useful in supporting classroom observation. These were helpful in a number of instances, which led to the understanding of related phenomena, and in providing concrete evidence for drawing final conclusions.

The lessons observed during the classroom observations were discussed and the observations presented in a table to facilitate the analysis thereof. The overarching and striking finding was that the traditional approach to teaching was still maintained and that, although the text-based approach was practiced to some extent, teaching focused on achieving the requirements of the GPLMS. I indicated that the purpose of this study was not to probe the literacy strategy, but its effect and influence in teaching practice was unavoidable. As mentioned above, the responses in the subsequent data collection methods corroborated classroom observation and provided more insight into answering the research questions.



In the following chapter I present a comprehensive summary of the contribution of the text-based approach, the significance of this study and the importance of communicative competence in English education in the South African context. In closing, I tabulate the recommendations prompted by the results and proposals for further research.



Chapter 5: Synopsis and significance of the study

“Finally, investigators conclude their research by summarising the detailed results in general statements.”

(Creswell, 2012:203)

5.1 Introduction

The initial three chapters of this study introduced the background and problem statement, the literature review and theoretical framework on which the study was grounded, and the research design and paradigmatic philosophical perspectives, respectively. Data were presented and analysed in the fourth chapter, which ended with a consolidated interpretation of the findings. The interpretation was arranged and presented according to the planned structure of the research design and methodology. This chapter concludes the study by presenting a synopsis of the results, articulating the significance and inevitable implications, the limitations and recommendations for policy formulation and further research.

As an emerging ethical and professional researcher, I am obliged to declare my acknowledgement that owing to accessibility and convenience, the study was conducted on a minimal scale. The study had targeted four participants, but one withdrew. I explained the circumstances around the withdrawal of the one participant in chapter 3, and again in the personal reflection section (cf. section 5.3.3) where I express my views regarding the incident. In spite of the minimal scale, the study yielded valuable information since it provided space for rigorous analysis of data and interpretation which helped in answering the research questions. Furthermore, it afforded participants the opportunity to articulate critical matters regarding English FAL and it opened room for further research.

I used a variety of data collection methods for validation and corroboration. Subsequently, it was evident from the results that the purpose for using different methods was accomplished. The employment of these methods was advantageous in terms of strengthening the findings through cross checking of the information I had collected. This came out clearly because the interviews, questionnaires and learners' work confirmed what I had observed in the classroom.

I mentioned in the previous chapter that the study was not intended to investigate the departmental intervention strategy, the GPLMS. However, it is undeniable that the



programme greatly influenced normal daily teaching practice in the schools, as became clear during data collection.

5.2 Synopsis of the study

In the first chapter, I stated the lack of communicative competence across all levels of schooling, including higher education. I illustrated the importance of the development of communicative competence at an early stage to enable learners to cope with learning as they advanced to higher grades. I emphasised the need for teachers' familiarity with the text-based approach for their ability to handle texts systematically while guiding and supporting learners for meaningful engagement with different types of texts. Furthermore, I bemoaned the system for judging learning success at Grade 12 while much had not been achieved in the earlier schooling years.

The literature review in chapter 2 explored the text-based approach and presented the key pivotal components supporting the study (cf. figures 2.1 and 4.1). In this chapter, I included a section on successful language teaching which emphasises the need to consider the development of communicative competence as a primary goal of language teaching. Owing to the status of English as a LoLT in South African schools, it is imperative for teachers to understand and be skilful in using the text-based approach to bring "linguistic skills and communicative abilities into close association" (Moghadam & Adel, 2011:1643).

In chapter 3 I explored the importance of philosophical paradigms in research and presented the paradigm I deemed suitable for this study. The interpretivist-constructivist paradigmatic stance I opted for was helpful in the construction of the research design and methodology, as well as in the construction of knowledge and insight I required for the analysis and interpretation of data.

Chapter 4 of this study bears the gist of what this study was intended for as it presented the outcomes of the study in context of how it was originally conceptualised. Data were presented in the order of collection, followed by a detailed analysis of each section and finally, a consolidated interpretation of the total findings. All information and additional matters which surfaced were carefully deliberated and taken into consideration, because I believed that the additional matters would not



only add value in providing answers to the research questions, but that they would be helpful in formulating recommendations for practice and future research.

Their biographical details provided evidence of the participants' age, teaching experience, additional subjects taught other than English, and qualifications. The information helped me make inferences and understand certain issues as presented by participants in their individual capacity. For example, one participant was newly placed at the school, yet proper induction and handover processes were not put in place. Therefore, he was not well equipped with the knowledge and understanding of implementing the GPLMS.

In this study, classroom observation was used as the main research data collection method. The observable phenomena were classified into four categories; namely, curriculum compliance, teacher activity, learner activity and classroom conditions. These categories were linked to the literature and the theories of teaching and learning that underpin this study. The curriculum compliance category was linked to the text-based approach as prescribed in the CAPS, teacher and learner activities were linked to the ZPD, IH, BLP and scaffolding, while classroom conditions were related to Cambourne's (1995) Conditions of Learning (cf. chapter 2).

Classroom observation results showed that the lessons complied with the CAPS curriculum. I personally reflected that the implementation of the GPLMS influenced curriculum compliance considerably. The lessons were process-based and structured into three stages and were predominantly teacher-centred. Learner engagement and interaction was mainly by way of following the teacher's instructions, answering lower-order questions using drill and repetition in choral unison and it was evident that learners were only accustomed to this form of engagement. Learners' communicative opportunities were confined to answering questions based on the texts dealt with. Code-switching was frequently used for specific reasons. Classroom conditions were orderly and conducive to learning. Teachers were warm, caring and in control. However, despite the CAPS prescription of different types of texts, it was evident that except for the GPLMS materials, none were available in the classrooms. Basically, there was a severe shortage of materials for learners to engage with.



The interviews were purposely formulated to address aspects which were in direct relation to the research sub-questions. The aspects reflected on the teachers' knowledge of the text-based approach, its implementation, learners' language proficiency levels and their views regarding the approach. The interview results evidently revealed the respondents' lack of in-depth knowledge and clarity of the text-based approach and its implementation. I was confident that, being experienced in teaching, they used good reasoning and professional guessing in most cases. That being mentioned, the participants positively considered the text-based approach suitable for English FAL because it provided context for teaching all the language skills. However, the teachers' inadequate implementation of the text-based approach was a major shortcoming, which, according to my personal observation, created a situation where learners' thinking and language use were restricted to familiar texts that they had read. This disadvantage can be attributed to the teachers' limited knowledge of curriculum matters and the inadequate application of the text-based approach.

The statistical presentation of questionnaire results depicted varied levels of the participants' PCK and opinions concerning the text-based approach and English education. In this section, the participants were candidly expressive and raised pertinent issues as challenges in the teaching of English as FAL. Among these was the introduction of English at Grade 3 level while it was to be used as a LoLT in the immediately subsequent level, Grade 4. A major discrepancy for me as researcher and academic was that, whereas the participants indicated that they had received professional training in CAPS implementation of FAL, they were not conversant with curriculum concepts and its implementation. This was a drawback because I believe that for personnel in any organisation to perform according to expected standards, enabling capacity-building strategic plans should be put in place.

The learners' written work presented a variety of text-based written activities. However, in most cases these comprised filling in missing words, comprehension exercises and single-word answers. The activities were a confirmation of the learners' scope being confined to familiar texts they had read.

Of prime importance is that the main aspects under this study were addressed and the research questions were answered. The final verdict of this study was that, due



to the teachers' limited knowledge and understanding of the text-based approach and curriculum content, the text-based approach was not adequately implemented. This resulted in ineffective teaching practice that was irrelevant to the development of learners' communicative competence.

Figure 5.1 represents a synoptic version of answers to each research question.

MRQ – Main research question	SQ1 – Sub-question 1: What is the teachers’ knowledge of the curriculum stipulations as far as English FAL education is concerned?
How is the text-based approach to teaching English as FAL implemented in Grade 4 to ensure communicative competence?	SQ2 – Sub-question 2: What is the teachers’ understanding of the text-based approach?
	SQ3 – Sub-question 3: How are learners exposed to various types of texts in the Grade 4 classroom?

MRQ: The text-based approach was implemented through the execution of the GPLMS. Yet, teachers lacked in-depth knowledge and understanding required for successful application of the text-based approach. This inadequacy, thus, resulted in poor development of learners’ communicative competence in English FAL in Grade 4.

SQ1: The teachers demonstrated inadequate knowledge of curriculum stipulations and the key concepts presented in the CAPS.

SQ2: The teachers were not cognisant of the text-based approach. This was revealed by their uncertainty and hedging when answering questions.

SQ3: Grade 4 learners were exposed to limited resources provided for the implementation of the GPLMS. Prescribed texts were unavailable.

Figure 5.1: A synoptic representation of answers to the research questions



5.3 Significance and implications

The four aims of research were listed in the opening chapter. Creswell (2005:3–7) affirms that research adds to existing knowledge, improves practice, informs policy and builds research skills. Although this study was conducted on a small sample size, it substantially managed to address the four areas that describe the importance and aims of research. Primarily, the study added to the existing body of knowledge regarding English education by specifically concentrating on the execution of the text-based approach in FAL for the development of communicative competence.

Jansen (2011:145) presents three kinds of significance, namely, theoretical significance, practical significance and emotional significance. In this section I first discuss the theoretical significance of the study, looking at the text-based approach and communicative competence as separate entities. The four areas of research are presented next to represent the practical significance of the study. In the subsequent section, my reflections represent the emotional significance of the study.

5.3.1 Theoretical significance

Firstly, a mixed method design was used in a quest to understand how the text-based approach was implemented and how it contributed to the development of the learners' communicative competence. The study was conducted in a natural setting of public schools where learners from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds received formal schooling. It is a well-known fact that most of these schools face more socio-economic challenges than schools in more privileged areas. I am of the opinion that irrespective of the situation, there is a need for rigorous attempts to respect curriculum intentions to benefit all learners equally. Secondly, the study delved into the nuances of the curriculum and found that the envisaged curriculum outcomes were congruent to the phases encapsulated in the text-based approach teaching model (cf. table 4.8). Thirdly, without making generalisations, the participants' PCK was probed as a factor contributing to the successful implementation of the text-based approach.

In chapter 1 the problem of learners' communicative competence was stated as the major prompt to this study. It was stated that there is a need to factor in the development of effective communicative competence during learners' early stages of



schooling so that they are able to cope with the demand to use language competently as they progress to higher grades, or when they study in institutions of higher learning and while they are in the workplace. The development of communicative competence would greatly be dependent upon the contribution of the text-based approach in English education as prescribed by the CAPS. The text-based approach, communicative competence and a number of national and international studies on the text-based approach were explored in chapter 2.

While communicative competence might seem to be challenging to achieve in context of the schools, I am obligated to explain its importance to further illustrate the significance of this study. In the next paragraphs I present some remarkable studies conducted as indication that language learning was not only for knowledge of grammatical and linguistic conventions and the memorisation and reproduction of facts, but for meaningful communication in real-life situations. Communicative competence is considered important for successful progression throughout the learners' schooling and academic learning.

Strakšiennė and Baziukaitė (2009) conducted a study in which they endeavoured to address the issue of communicative competence by showing how the integration of information communication technologies (ICT), language and drama could help improve the development of communicative competence in the primary school. The authors intended “to show that learning a language is not only a process of learning grammar, but also a social one”. They further confirmed that “traditional methods [as reported in this study] do not provide sufficient opportunities to develop communicative competence of speaking” (Strakšiennė & Baziukaitė, 2009:282).

Zhan's (2010) study makes sense of aspects mentioned and discussed in this study. The importance of communicative competence development, comprehensible input and exposure to the target language are regarded as some of the key factors to be considered in language teaching. Zhan (2010) confirms that communicative competence plays “an important role in language teaching and learning ... when children have limited input from any source, communicative development may indeed be retarded” (Zhan, 2010:50–51). Although the teachers in this study provided comprehensible input, it was limited to instructions and questions, thereby inhibiting learners' communicative development. Furthermore, it was evident that the



learners had limited exposure to spoken English and there were insufficient materials for learners to engage with in the classroom.

More significant studies were conducted on measuring communicative competence in various disciplines (Canale, 1988; McCroskey & McCroskey, 1988; Gaynor, 2014; Morreale, Osborn & Pearson, 2000). These studies indicate the necessity to prioritise communicative competence in language teaching and to be wary of equating learners' performance in tests and exams to language proficiency. This association of performance in tasks and proficiency levels was predominant in our schooling system as was evident in the findings of this study. Therefore, language teachers should be empowered to know that, "when we are teaching a second language we do not only aim to develop grammatical competence in the Chomskyan sense, but communicative competence ... a learner must not only learn to talk grammatically in the target language, he must also talk coherently and to the point" (Ntombela, 2008:36). Inevitably, for the fact that the text-based approach was prescribed alongside the communicative approach in the CAPS, communicative competence ought to be articulated and prioritized as the end-product of the text-based approach.

5.3.2 Practical significance

I have indicated that in the main, the study contributed to the existing body of knowledge regarding the text-based approach and communicative competence within a specific context. The researcher anticipates that this study will inform educational policy formulation and decision-making because the findings were critical, particularly in teaching practice and the development of learners' communicative skills. In addition, pertinent issues relevant to FAL teaching and learning are raised that necessitate attention regarding the improvement of teaching and learning. Coupled with the improvement of practice, is my own learning, development and enhancement of research skills, including the vast knowledge gained in the understanding of research paradigms.

5.3.3 Emotional significance

In this section I document some of the unexpected incidents that happened during the course of this study. I came to realize that there was more to learn and experience beyond the scope of conducting research. These reflections are



articulated in a manner that binds the intended purpose of the study – an investigation – with a wider range of events that add value to the researcher’s knowledge and experience as a professional. The reflections manifest themselves as weighty, valuable, learning memories attached to my research study.

I start by alluding to my experience while conducting classroom observations. In chapter 3 I referred to the fact that my professional experience in teacher training could possibly have influenced my observations. Therefore, I strictly had to attune myself to a researcher position to avoid the potential for bias. This awareness challenged me to do extensive reading on classroom observation, and as I read and searched for more information, I recognised its importance in educational research. Because of the process involved prior to the actual entrance into the classroom, many additional aspects – which could not be documented because of the scope of this study – were revealed. Examples of these were matters relating to location, community background, school management and the relationship with the Department of Basic Education.

On entering the classroom, there was evidence of what counts as the state of reality. In chapter 3 I discussed the interpretivist-constructivist paradigmatic stance of this study and the concepts “epistemology and ontology”. My understanding of these concepts helped me construct meaning from the state of reality as it unfolded in the classroom. Eventually, I concur and believe that classroom observation is reliable and critical to the understanding of how teaching and learning takes place in the classroom by noting and capturing “the naturally occurring events of an educational intervention” (Chesterfield, 1997:1) and for the improvement of teaching practice and teacher evaluations (Whitehurst, Chingos & Lindquist, 2015:64). In that sense, reliable, effective and relevant protocols are an essential component of classroom observation for achieving the desired goals of a study. Coe, Aloisi, Higgins and Major (2014:4) confirm that reliability of classroom observations can be achieved by “the use of high-quality observation protocols”.

The study showed that teachers value professional development. Therefore, by utilizing various resources, including legitimate non-government sectors that have capacity to assist the Department of Basic Education, there is certainty of intensifying teachers’ knowledge base. The kind of strengthening needed is the in-



depth knowledge and appreciation of curriculum matters, as well as the understanding of how to achieve curriculum goals. In present times, it should be expected of every teacher to be aware that curriculum reform was aimed at redressing past societal imbalances. Therefore, the curriculum was modified to consider, among others, inclusion of the broader socio-cultural communities and to promoting social justice. This measure helped in providing equal education for all, particularly the previously disadvantaged South African citizens. Perhaps if teachers were empowered to such levels of understanding, they would endeavour to increase efforts for the development of all learners, in whatever situation.

Curriculum challenge is not a new concept in South Africa. In chapter 4 I referred to curriculum challenges teachers have encountered since the introduction of Outcome Based Education (OBE). This study has shown that, to date, the challenges persist and it is evident that a lack of curriculum understanding impacts on language teaching in several ways. By implication, the failures in education will perpetuate if not adequately addressed. Sadly, in the interim, learners get promoted to higher grades and progress to tertiary education and into adulthood without the requisite language proficiency levels.

I need to reiterate two critical issues raised by teachers in this study as a call for help and assistance in the form of support to both teachers and learners. The first is remedial teaching and the introduction of English early in the Foundation Phase (FP). Regarding remedial teaching, I believe that teachers should be trained in guided reading and writing as a means of supporting learners who struggle while at the same time supporting advanced learners through the provision of more challenging activities. The methodologies in the Balanced Language Programme (BLP) (cf. chapter 2) are helpful for providing support and scaffolding of learning.

Finally, I reflect on the incident I foreshadowed in the introduction regarding the withdrawal from participation (cf. chapter 3). I allude to the incident to demonstrate that, in research, one gets emotionally and mentally challenged when unexpected real-life situations of this nature occur. This is one matter I discuss with disappointment and grave concern because of the manner in which the teacher thought about participation in a research activity. It was apparent that she was influenced and misinformed by certain departmental officials, whom she quoted, to



withdraw because the researcher stood to benefit from her participation. In my reflection, I found it unprofessional for officials, in their capacity, to provide misleading and misinterpreted information meant to sway participants' decision-making. I reflect on all these, yet with the view and understanding that in the field things might not happen as planned and as wished for. Ultimately, such undertakings broaden the understanding of social research and the upholding of ethical standards by allowing participants to withdraw at any time.

In these few lines I record my reflections from the time I conceptualised and embarked on intensive reading for this study. Throughout, I kept thinking that understanding and conducting research should be introduced at a much earlier stage in institutions of higher learning. While there is evidence of research in certain disciplines at honours level, it seems that in many other disciplines in South African institutions research is vigorously introduced at master's level, and many students have to self-teach, trying to understand the nature of research and the processes involved. While this approach has the advantage of students making sure they utilize all available resources to learn, the earlier research methodology is introduced as a subject, the easier it could be for students to embark on research. In my mind, students would be ready to conduct research with solid knowledge and understanding of what it entails and how research is conducted. It has been documented that in South Africa there is a dire need to improve research output and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) "expects every academic to publish 1,25 articles annually in journals the Department has accredited" (Schulze, 2008:644). Accordingly, students need to be empowered with intensive knowledge in research so as to facilitate the generation of more research of higher quality and "significance" (Jansen, 2011:139).

5.4 Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity were discussed in chapters 1 and 3, and in this section I briefly clarify some issues that were pertinent in ensuring reliability and validity of this study. While I cannot claim uttermost reliability due to the limitations of the study, as a researcher I carefully considered reliability measures when conducting the study in a number of ways. To ensure reliability, four data collection methods were used, which contained rich item content relevant for the understanding of the problem under



scrutiny. This measure proved to be productive because I had the opportunity to look at the data from different perspectives, thereby arriving at more comprehensive sets of interrelated findings. Some of the items were constructed in an almost similar, but obscured manner, to establish whether the participants were being consistent. This measure was helpful, because it contributed to the analysis of data by revealing inconsistencies present in the responses. For clarity, I ensured that the items on the protocols were presented in simple, uncomplicated language and that the questions were suitable for probing the issues concerned.

Primarily, I maintained consistency when administering and using the research protocols, which I had intentionally designed to achieve the purpose of the study. I endeavoured to uphold the same approach and manner of dealing with the participants, so that I did not lose focus of my intended visit to the schools and to operate within the set of ethical parameters. After a series of self-practice before commencing with the data collection process, I managed to compose myself and act professionally throughout. This composure contributed to stability and consistency during data collection. Furthermore, the employment of two external auditors played a critical role, ensuring reliability of the scoring of the questionnaire responses.

In terms of validity, the instruments were accurate in measuring phenomena I intended to understand for the purpose of answering the research questions. In addition, the research instruments provided a platform to generate an in-depth understanding which led to rigorous discussions, and insightful interpretation of data. I employed member checking to validate what I had documented by asking the participants iterative questions, and by viewing the videos on the same day that the observations were conducted in order to add any missing information.

5.5 Limitations of the study

In this section I present potential theoretical, contextual and methodological limitations of the study. Limitations in research empower “the reader to appreciate what constraints were imposed on the study, and to understand the context in which the research claims are set” (Vithal & Jansen, 2010:35).

The problem under study was understood within the parameters of the theories of language teaching and learning and text-based teaching models discussed in



chapter 2. The theories were deemed appropriate to support the text-based teaching models. Knowledge of the theories is considered useful for effective application of the text-based approach and meaningful classroom practice.

I chose the mixed method research design anchored by the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm and my construction of knowledge and understanding of phenomena under study was confined to these paradigmatic orientations. As mentioned in chapter 3, the data collection methods were purposely chosen for corroboration of the findings and the claims set in this study were limited within the methods and protocols used in a quest to answer the research questions. Therefore, each research question was answered within the confinement of the research protocols.

Furthermore, the study was limited to three purposefully selected participants of the same age group, bearing approximately similar qualifications and experience levels in disadvantaged schools. The fact that the study was conducted during the implementation of the GPLMS could pose a limitation due to its influence on the implementation of the text-based approach in schools.

5.6 Recommendations

The contribution of the text-based approach to English education was investigated in three public schools in South Africa and the results yielded in-depth insight into matters linked to the implementation of the approach. However, the results cannot be generalised due to the contextual limitations of the study. Based on the findings of the study, I formulated recommendations that I thought would play a critical role in addressing issues related to the implementation of the text-based approach, communicative competence and pedagogical content knowledge. These were pivotal aspects that helped me construct meaning and draw conclusions for providing answers to the research questions. The recommendations are classified into two distinct, yet related areas of education and teaching practice.

5.6.1 Recommendations for policy formulation

This study illustrates the degree and level at which policy informs teaching practice, evident in the commitment towards the implementation of the departmental literacy strategy (cf. chapter 4). The willingness of teachers to observe and follow



instructions should be valued as a strong point on which to build continuous teacher training and development and for formulating practicable teaching policies.

I personally recognise the CAPS as an authentic and content-rich document for the implementation of the text-based approach. However, for achievement of the envisaged goals, I recommend that the curriculum document should be explicit in spelling out the aims and objectives of FAL teaching, including how teaching should be conducted and why it is imperative that the aims and objectives should be honoured and achieved. As the text-based approach is prescribed alongside the communicative approach, the CAPS should emphasise that communicative competence is a critical end-product in English FAL education. The emphasis on communicative competence should also be articulated in professional development and literacy intervention programmes.

Given the diverse social contexts in South Africa, the curriculum needs modification of content for suitability and relevance. In situations where learners have limited exposure to the additional language and the language is introduced in Grade 3 or 4, policy formulation could consider making an additional selection, among the prescribed texts, of texts that meet learners' elementary needs. These texts would be manageable in such circumstances, and would encourage more learner participation and engagement. It is understandable that we need advanced development in education, but an overly ambitious curriculum could be challenging and therefore disempowering for both teachers and learners.

The improvement of teaching practice and the achievement of quality education are determined by teachers' sound pedagogical content knowledge. The cascading model of teacher development has proved in many ways ineffective (cf. chapter 4). Therefore, I advocate for a systematic, directly hands-on teacher training model that includes theory and practice. It is critical for teachers to understand not only the terminology, but all the concepts introduced in the curriculum document. Although the glossary provides explanations, a concept such as scaffolding needs in-depth mediation not only of what it means, but how it is practiced and why it is crucial to maintain throughout for effective teaching.



Similarly, the scant explanation of teaching methodologies and strategies cannot be considered beneficial and useful for actual classroom practice. There is high probability for a variety of interpretations by those who have to put the methodologies into practice. As an experienced teacher trainer, I have learnt that teachers require and appreciate practical demonstrations and if possible, demonstrations with their own learners to inspire them and guide them to a higher level. O'Connor and Geiger (2009:264) confirm that teachers "wanted to observe practical demonstrations on how to implement the strategies they had learnt, preferably with their own learners". I am of the view that South Africa is an extremely resourceful country. Putting the available resources together, including all relevant institutions, the mode of training I recommend is highly possible.

Whereas I believe that we have a progressive curriculum, I find it difficult to understand why the necessary resources were not provided to support the curriculum in order to achieve the desired teaching and learning goals. This study found that the resources available in the classroom were provided specifically for the implementation of the literacy strategy and not for everyday teaching. Under these circumstances, I recommend the provision of suitable materials to enable teachers to deliver the curriculum. For that I would firmly commend the CAPS as an enabling curriculum. In this instance, where learners were at an emergent reading level due to the commencement of English the provision of enlarged texts or Big Books would be an investment. With proper training, teachers would be able to conduct shared reading to provide learners with the support they need at this level. Teachers could also be trained in the production of authentic, enlarged reading materials. I endorse shared reading as an essential methodology for modelling and scaffolding reading at elementary level, and for giving learners confidence to negotiate reading independently. In addition, it is essential that teachers know the techniques and steps followed in all the methodologies.

If possible, the CAPS could be used in conjunction with a somewhat modified version of the Foundations for Learning Campaign (FLC) (cf. chapter 2) for streamlining daily teaching and learning activities and the use of guidelines on the methodologies. The following chart is an example of the guidelines in the FLC document:



Shared reading or shared writing

- Introduce the text and new vocabulary. Draw out learners' prior knowledge.
- **Read the text, modelling a reading strategy**, e.g. predicting, noticing **story structure, reading different types of text**, reading diagrams and graphs (my emphasis), etc.
- Read the text with the learners joining in, using **shared reading techniques** (my emphasis). Or write a short text using shared writing techniques.
- Check understanding and **encourage learners to respond** (my emphasis) to the text through focused oral questions (Government Gazette 30880, 2008:14).

I refer to a somewhat modified version of the FLC because reports regarding the FLC have stated that the campaign was “a necessary and welcome initiative but that attention should be paid to simplifying particular aspects of the Campaign” (Meier, 2011:549). In my opinion, strategies that worked and proved effective in the improvement of learning should rather be fine-tuned than completely abandoned.

By inference, the role of Department of Basic Education advisors in schools was alluded to. The situation revealed rigidity of some officials when monitoring the GPLMS or when visiting schools. In particular, the focus was on teachers working towards completion of lessons for learner readiness to perform well in the Annual National Assessments (ANA), not for learning for its own sake. In some areas, information contrary to the CAPS content was given to teachers to follow. For example, the participants were forbidden to employ code-switching while it was officially encouraged in the CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:77; 150). This is a matter of concern since there have been reports that in some cases, officials themselves are “generally unable to provide teachers with the assistance they need” (Department of Basic Education, 2013:4). Perhaps this could be attributed to the placement of advisors “in subjects or phases that might not have been their specialization” (National Education Evaluation and Development Unit, 2012:29).



I take this opportunity to mention my involvement in the Free State Literacy Strategy (2008) and the Khanyisa School Transformation Programme of the Limpopo Department of Education (2009) as professional trainer and technical advisor. In these programmes the Department of Basic Education worked in collaboration with the non-governmental organization (NGO) sector in “train-the-trainer” workshops (Schollar, 2006:i) focusing on skills transfer and skills sharing in the area of language and literacy development. This collaboration proved beneficial in terms of common understanding, uniformity of information dissemination and acceptable approaches when working directly with teachers. Furthermore, this would be an advantage of bringing teachers to a more or less similar level of understanding, leading to cutting-edge teaching practice in all schools.

Beyond their individual professional characteristics, I recommend that the nation and the Department of Basic Education should appreciate and celebrate the calibre of teachers represented by the participants in this study. I purposely use the term ‘calibre’ for reasons that the participants were selected through purposeful sampling to represent the target population. I also use the word for personal reasons, owing to the genuinely professional manner in which the participants portrayed themselves throughout all my visits at the schools. As such, formulation of manageable policies and on-going, effective support would be valuable as part of appreciating the teaching fraternity.

5.6.2 Recommendations for further research

Based on the findings of the study, which I acknowledged was conducted on a minimal scale and the results not to be generalised, further research could be conducted as proposed in this section. In addition, the reliability and validity measures taken in this study provide assurance that more studies of this nature could be generated.

A similar kind of study could be conducted using a different set of methods, and research could be done to investigate the implementation of the text-based approach as prescribed by the curriculum in higher grades. Due to the fact that participants in this study were of the same age group, and to a great extent on the same level of qualifications, more participants could be invited for broader understanding of the



phenomena under study. Participants could be varied in terms of age group, levels of qualification and whether they have received curriculum training or not.

Schools in this study were part of the Gauteng Department of Basic Education's literacy intervention strategy, which was evidently influential in the execution of the text-based approach. Therefore, a study could be conducted with neutral schools and in different backgrounds, for example, in deep rural contexts and in private schools.

This study alluded to the importance of communicative competence and indicated the number of studies measuring communicative competence. A study could possibly be conducted on measuring communicative competence in different levels of schooling to determine learners' ability to perform real-life situation tasks, orally and in written form.

In this study, code-switching posed a challenge due to learners' diverse linguistic backgrounds. Learners were from Sotho, Xitsonga and Zulu speaking backgrounds while some spoke different languages from outside South Africa. A study could be conducted on code-switching in extremely diverse situations.

A number of additional and critical issues pertaining to English FAL teaching surfaced in this study, for instance, the late introduction of English, availability of resources and remedial teaching. These could possibly open opportunities for research related to text-based teaching for communicative competence.

5.7 Conclusion

The research findings revealed that above all, there is a critical need for strengthening curriculum knowledge, curriculum management and delivery. The intensification would instil confidence in teachers and would ensure that best teaching practice takes place in the classroom. Best teaching practice involves moving away from traditional, old-school teaching methods towards contemporary teaching strategies and techniques for the achievement of the quality of education so much aspired to in South Africa. Quality education is a broad concept and learners' performance in tests and national assessment should not "be seen as an accurate indication of the quality of education in the country" (Spaull, 2013:8). It is imperative that before teachers can be expected to deliver, they have to be brought on board by



increasing their knowledge base and capacity, and constantly supported to achieve that which is envisaged by the curriculum.

This study found that there was a gap between CAPS aspirations and GPLMS aspirations, which means that what the curriculum envisages might not be what any literacy strategy intervention aims to achieve. It is understood that all intervention strategies are meant to produce positive results. However, the teaching was focused on completion of daily activities in preparation for the Annual National Assessments (ANA). This led to rigidity with no room left for other essential factors in teaching and learning such as creativity, flexibility and fun. I personally believe that if learners were adequately taught and given ample opportunities to learn and practise through the employment of different, yet appropriate strategies, they would confidently and successfully participate in any form of assessment or examination.

The results prove undoubtedly that the text-based approach was partly implemented without in-depth knowledge and consciousness by the teachers in the Grade 4 classroom. According to the curriculum and the text-based approach itself, it would thrive amidst a variety of texts, thereby promoting immersion, engagement, modelling and exposure. To the contrary, very few texts were available for successful practice of the text-based approach. As is evident from the findings, and due to factors related to the teaching of English, the development of learners' communicative competence was an area that calls for critical consideration.

In conclusion, as a researcher and educationist, I affirm that the text-based approach is suitable for English education in South Africa. The value of different types of texts as documented in chapters 2 and 4 provides reasons for my standpoint regarding the text-based approach. The use of texts falls within the international and national call and the encouragement for society to inculcate the culture of reading not only in institutions of learning, but across all societal organisations, including the home. Notwithstanding challenges documented in this study, I commend the South African Department of Basic Education for prescribing the text-based approach in English education and hope that this study has a chance of positively contributing to FAL teaching and learning.

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Without education, your children can never really meet the challenges they will face. So it's very important to give children education and explain that they should play a role for their country.

(Nelson Mandela)

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ADDENDUM A: LETTER TO THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

The District Director
Tshwane North Department of Education
Private Bag X945
Pretoria
0001

Dear Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

I am a registered PhD student at the University of Pretoria and I have been granted approval by the GDE to conduct research in four primary schools in your district. I humbly request your permission to visit and to work with the chosen schools. My research topic is “**The contribution of a text-based approach to English education for communicative competence**”.

The purpose of my study is to determine how the text-based approach is implemented for the development of learners’ communicative competence. The study employs a mixed method strategy which involves classroom observation of teachers offering a lesson which will be videotaped. In addition, the teachers will be requested to participate in an interview which will be audiotaped, and to respond to a questionnaire. I also plan to analyse grade 4 learners’ written work and I ask permission to make copies of some sections of the written work.

A letter indicating your approval and invitation to participate will be delivered to the selected schools. The letter will pledge confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation and the right to withdraw anytime participants feel uncomfortable with the activity. To ensure privacy, names of persons and schools will not be disclosed and the tapes will be in my safekeeping at all times.

The letter to schools will include an informed consent section the participants will be requested to sign. I will visit the schools to take the participants through the procedures and processes, so that they fully understand what will be taking place when data collection commences.

If permitted, I would appreciate that the schools be selected on grounds that they implement the text-based approach in First Additional Language in grade 4.

I presume the study will make a significant contribution towards English education and curriculum delivery that will eventually benefit our learners in grade 4. It is my intention to share the findings with your office and the participants when the study is completed, and to offer FAL education workshops to the participating schools.

Enclosed please find the GDE Research Approval letter dated 28 July 2014.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Signed

H.N. Tlaka (Researcher)

Contact No.: 0724971961

Signed

Dr L.J. De Jager (Supervisor)

ADDENDUM B: LETTER TO PRINCIPALS

The School Principal and Staff

XXXX Primary School

Soshanguve

Pretoria

Dear Sir/Madam

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY ENTITLED “THE CONTRIBUTION OF A TEXT-BASED APPROACH TO ENGLISH EDUCATION FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE”

I am a registered PhD student at the University of Pretoria. Your school has been selected to participate in my research study and I wish to thank you heartily for your kindness in voluntarily accepting the invitation to participate in my research study which involves working with one grade 4 teacher.

The purpose of my study is to determine how the text-based approach is implemented for the development of learners’ communicative competence.

The study employs a mixed method strategy which comprises classroom observation of a First Additional Language lesson, a semi-structured interview, a questionnaire, and document analysis of learners’ work. I humbly request that the lesson be videotaped, and the interview audiotaped. I would also like to make copies of relevant sections of the learners’ written work.

As a researcher, I am obliged to abide by the ethical standards that include confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation and the right to withdraw anytime the participants feel uncomfortable with the activity. To ensure privacy, the participants’ names will not be disclosed and the videotapes will be in my safekeeping at all times.

Please note that letters of consent will be forwarded to the grade 4 parents and the learners will be asked to assent by signing in the presence of their parents.

I shall make an appointment to meet with you prior to the commencement of data collection for a formal discussion session. In the session I will explain all processes

and procedures, so that the study is conducted in a manner that serves the purpose for which it is intended.

I thank you once more and I believe the study will benefit the school in matters relating to English education and curriculum delivery, which in turn will benefit our learners. I intend sharing the research findings with you and the participants on completion and to offer FAL education workshops, working with the participants.

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

Yours faithfully

Signed

H.N. Tlaka (Researcher)

Contact No.: 0724971961

Signed

Dr L.J. De Jager (Supervisor)

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I, voluntarily accept to participate in this research study. I am fully informed and I understand all the procedures, processes and the purpose of the study. I also understand that I may withdraw my participation at any time.

Participant's signature: Date:

School principal's signature: Date:

Researcher's signature: Date:

ADDENDUM C: LETTER TO PARENTS

P.O. Box 63
Sovenga
0727

Dear Grade 4 Parents

PARTICIPATION IN A PhD RESEARCH STUDY

I am a PhD student at the University of Pretoria. It gives me great pleasure to inform you that your child's school has been chosen to participate in my research study entitled **“The contribution of a text-based approach to English education for effective communicative competence”**.

The purpose of my study is to determine how the text-based approach is implemented for the development of learners' communicative competence.

The study employs a mixed method strategy which comprises classroom observation of the teacher offering a First Additional Language lesson, a teacher's semi-structured interview, a teacher's questionnaire, and document analysis of learners' written work. The lesson be videotaped, the interview audiotaped and I will also make copies of relevant sections of the learners' written work.

This means that, as a grade 4 learner, your child will be involved in the activity and might be captured on the videotape. Also, his/her written work might be photocopied. Therefore, I humbly appeal to you to grant me permission thereof.

As a researcher, I am obliged to abide by the ethical standards that include confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation and the right to withdraw anytime the participants feel uncomfortable with the activity. To ensure privacy, the participants' names will not be disclosed and the videotapes will be in my safekeeping at all times

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

I humbly request you to sign the attached informed consent form, as part of compliance with the ethical requirements of my research study.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Signed

Henrietta Ntombi Tlaka (Researcher)

Contact No.: 0724971961

Signed

Dr L.J. De Jager (Supervisor)

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I, voluntarily grant permission for my child to participate in this research study. I am fully informed and I understand that as a grade 4 learner, he/she will be involved during classroom observation and might be captured during videotaping.

I also understand that I may withdraw his/her participation at any time.

Parent's signature: Date:

Researcher's signature: Date:

ADDENDUM D: LETTER TO LEARNERS

P.O. Box 63
Sovenga
0727

Dear Grade 4 learner

PARTICIPATION IN A PhD RESEARCH STUDY

I am a PhD student at the University of Pretoria. It gives me great pleasure to inform you that your school has been chosen to participate in my research study. The title of my study is: **“The contribution of a text-based approach to English education for effective communicative competence”**.

The purpose of my study is to find out how the text-based approach is used to develop your communication abilities.

To do the study, I shall be visiting your class during the First Additional Language period. I shall be observing your teacher as she teaches you, while also video-taping the class. I will also look at, and make copies of some of the learners' written work which may include some of your work.

Because I will be video-taping the lesson, you may appear in the video and your written work might be photocopied. For this I need your permission. I have already explained all this to your parents.

I promise to protect your rights so that you are safe. Your name will not be given to anybody and I shall keep the tapes and the copied work safely with me. You are free to decide not to take part and you are also allowed to pull out at any time if you feel uncomfortable. Just let me know.

I now ask you to volunteer and agree to take part in this activity. To show that you agree, please sign the form below in the presence of your parents.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Signed

Henrietta Ntombi Tlaka (Ms)

Contact No.: 0724971961

Signed

Dr L.J. De Jager (Supervisor)

AGREEMENT FORM

I, voluntarily agree to take part in the study. I shall be in class and I know that I might be video-taped during the First Additional Language lesson. I have been told that I will be protected, my name will not be known and the tapes will be kept safely in a private place.

I also understand that I may pull out at any time if I feel uncomfortable.

I sign this form in the presence of my parent/s.

Learner's signature: Date:

Researcher's signature: Date:

ADDENDUM E: LETTER TO ASSISTANT

P.O. Box 63
Sovenga
0727

Dear Research Assistant

REQUEST FOR VIDEOTAPE ASSISTANCE DURING CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

I am a PhD student at the University of Pretoria and I shall be collecting data for my study in four different schools. I have been granted permission to conduct the study entitled **“The contribution of a text-based approach to English education for effective communicative competence”**.

The purpose of my study is to determine how the text-based approach is implemented for the development of learners’ communicative competence.

The study employs a mixed method strategy which comprises classroom observation of the teacher offering a First Additional Language lesson, a teacher’s semi-structured interview, a teacher’s questionnaire, and document analysis of learners’ written work. The lesson will be videotaped, the interview audiotaped and I will also make copies of relevant sections of the learners’ written work.

Therefore, I kindly request your assistance to videotape all the lessons I shall be observing in the classrooms.

Please note that this research study guarantees strict confidentiality and anonymity. You are thus expected to uphold utmost professionalism by not disclosing information about what expires during the whole process. Under no circumstances will the tapes be duplicated, and the originals will be in my safekeeping.

I humbly request you to sign the attached informed consent form, as part of complying with the ethical requirements of my research study.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Signed

Henrietta Ntombi Tlaka (Researcher)

Contact No.: 0724971961

Signed

Dr L.J. De Jager (Supervisor)

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I, voluntarily agree to assist the researcher by taking videos during lesson presentations. I undertake to act professionally regarding confidentiality and anonymity. I understand that my role is limited to video recording only and that I am not allowed to discuss any research matters with anyone.

In case I am unavailable or wish to withdraw, I shall inform the researcher in writing and in good time so that she can get a replacement.

Assistant's signature: Date:

Researcher's signature: Date:



ADDENDUM F: QUESTIONNAIRE

Title: The contribution of a text-based approach to English education for communicative competence.

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK).

Please fill in the biographical details and complete this questionnaire as candidly as you can. Thank you.

Gender: Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age group: 20-40	<input type="checkbox"/>	41-60	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching experience:			
Number of years teaching English:			
Other subjects you are teaching:			
Qualifications:			

1. How often do you refer to the CAPS document?

- Seldom
- Regularly
- Not necessary
- Sometimes

2. How do you rate your own knowledge of English as a subject?

- Very good
- Good
- Fair

3. Were you trained to teach English?

- Yes
- No



4. Were you trained in CAPS implementation of FAL teaching?

Yes

No

5. If yes, how do you rate the quality of training you received on the scale of 1 to 10?

1 = Poor, 10 = Exceptional

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

6. If you ranked 5 and above, explain how the training helped you understand the implementation of the text-based approach to FAL education.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

7. Briefly, state what the text-based approach entails.

.....

.....

.....

.....

8. Which following teaching methodologies are you familiar with? Please tick (✓).

Reading aloud	
Shared reading	
Shared writing	
Group reading	
Group writing	
Guided reading	
Guided writing	



Independent reading	
Independent writing	

9. Choose one and briefly explain how you implement it in the classroom.

.....

.....

.....

.....

10. Which methodology/methodologies do you employ regularly?

.....

.....

11. Explain how this/these helps/help improve learners' communication skills.

.....

.....

12. Mention 3 stages of the reading process.

.....

.....

.....

13. Mention 5 stages of the writing process.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

14. What is your understanding of the concept 'scaffolding' in teaching?

.....

.....

.....

15. Which of the following prescribed texts are available in your classroom? Please tick.

- Big Books or enlarge texts
- Selection of single copies of readers
- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Audio/visual aids

16. Give an example of an information text.

.....

17. Give an example of a transactional text.

.....

18. Give an example of a narrative text.

.....

19. How can you use text to teach, say, vocabulary/tense/parts of speech/a simple Subject Verb Object (SVO) sentence? Choose one, or any that you are comfortable with.

.....
.....
.....
.....

20. Why, do you think learners should get sufficient exposure to the English language?

.....
.....
.....
.....

21. How can we ensure that learners get sufficient exposure to English?

.....
.....

22. Do you think the text-based approach is suitable for the development of learners' verbal and written communication skills? Please explain.

.....
.....
.....

23. What do you think are the repercussions of promoting learners with poor FAL skills to higher grades?

.....
.....
.....

24. Perhaps you would wish to voice your own opinion or comments regarding FAL teaching:

.....
.....
.....

ADDENDUM G: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FORM

Title: The contribution of a text-based approach to English education for communicative competence.

School: AA/BB/CC Date: Observation time: Duration:

Feature	Observation Notes	Reflection
1. Text type		
2. Conformity of text to CAPS guidelines		
3. Text level appropriacy		
4. Teaching methodology (stages)		
5. Teacher's language use (communicative competence)		
6. Learners' language use and involvement		
7. Teacher's questions (types of questions)		
8. Learners' response and language competence		
9. Learners' questions		



10. Error correction		
11. Lesson structure		
12. Classroom environment: Teacher-learner relationship		
13. Teaching and learning materials (LTSM)		
14. Classroom management		

Additional information

ADDENDUM H: INTERVIEW

Title: The contribution of a text-based approach to English education for communicative competence.

TEACHERS' INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

School:Date: Time:..... to.....

The purpose of this protocol is to elicit information on classroom implementation and teachers' views regarding the text-based approach.

Question	Response
1. The text-based approach is one of the approaches recommended by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. What is your understanding of the text-based approach?	
2. How do you make sure that you implement the approach in FAL education?	
3. How do you introduce a new text type to the learners?	
4. During the lesson, how do you encourage learners to communicate their thoughts in English? You may use an example.	
5. The curriculum states 'communication for social purposes'. What does that mean?	



6. After reading a text, think of an oral activity you could use to help learners use language as in a real life situation.	
7. After reading a text, which written activity could you use to promote good communication skills?	
8. What are the reasons for teaching English?	
9. Is the text-based approach suitable for achieving the purpose? Please elaborate.	
10. Do you code-switch when teaching English?	
11. Why?	
12. In general, at what level can your learners speak English? Poor/Moderate/Good	

13. What could be the reason for that?	
14. Can you think of advantages of the text-based approach?	
15. Any disadvantages?	

Thank you.

ADDENDUM I: SITE AND PARTICIPANT PROFILE

S	P	G	AG	E	YTE	OS	Q
AA	A	Male	41-60	25	25	Social Science	Diploma Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE)
BB	B	Female	41-60	20	18	Life Skills	Primary Teacher's Diploma (PTD(S)) Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE)
CC	C	Male	41-60	27	4	N. Sotho Social Science Mathematics Natural Science	Primary Teacher's Diploma (PTD)

Key: S – School

P – Participant

G – Gender

AG – Age Group

E – Experience

YTE – Years Teaching English

OS – Other Subjects

Q – Qualifications

ADDENDUM J: LEARNERS' WORK

✓

Classwork 23 July 2018

Comprehension Page 2 DBE

a) Who is the main character in the story? The main character in the story —
Manda and her friend Ann.

b) Who built a tree house? is Manda's father.

c) What did Manda and Ann find in the tree? Manda and Ann find the bird's nest.

d) How did the mother bird protect her eggs? he was afraid.

e) Give the title of the story.
Manda and the bird's nest

Classwork

2014.08.11

Activity: Good!

Sentence

Question 1

Question 2

1. The girls are singing.

The girls are singing ✓

The girls are singing ✓

2. The boy is hitting the drums with his hands.

The boy is hitting the drums with his hands ✓

The boy is hitting the drums with his hands ✓

3. The artist is painting with a paintbrush.

The artist is painting with a paintbrush ✓

The artist is painting with a paintbrush ✓

4. The actors are standing on the stage.

The actors are standing on the stage ✓

The actors are standing on the stage ✓

Formal Assessment 21 August 2014

Comprehension Test 10/2

- (a) ~~The~~ The kind of this test is a poem.
- (b) The verse in this poem a Five.
- (c) ~~The~~ The Animals Fly with feather
- (d) Animals that have fin is Fish
- (e) Animals that lay eggs in this picture is a snake and Tortoise
- (f) Animals that have eight legs is a Spider
- (g) An animal can slither is Snake
- (h) ~~Big~~ can an animals eggs be as as a tennis ball.
- Yes a butterflies fly lay eggs

Section B

- (a) ~~The~~ ~~the~~ 3 Noun snail
chatter creep slither
- (b) ~~The~~ the correct spelling is eggs
- (c) Animals lay eggs are small
- (d) An eggs is a big and small
- (e) A Tortoise have a hard shell

Very Good

14/03/14

5 Different
Animal that
lay eggs
Fish Frog
Snake

Animals that
lay eggs in
sac is
Spider

Which
Animals
lay eggs

2 Place where
Animals lay
eggs in the
ground and
tunnel

2 Animals that
lays eggs in the
sand Turtle

3 Animals
that lay
eggs in
the water
Fish Frogs

Corrections

Mind Map

lay their eggs in sac and
Turtle lay their eggs in
sand.

Final draft
Title: ~~Different Animals~~ that
lay eggs

Some animals that lay eggs
are snake and fish. Animals
lay their eggs in different places.
Some animals lay their eggs
in damp ground or in the
hole. Two animals that lay their
eggs in water are fish and
frog. Spider lay their eggs
in sac and Turtle lay their eggs
in sand.

WEEK 5.

18 August

Home-work.

~~Year~~ Vocabulary

1. The Sun is shining.
2. My brother hides my phone.
3. There are many Butterflies in the park.

Tuesday WK 6 Les 14 18 February 2014
Writing and presenting: Description of a character

What does she look like? → Brown

Some other words to describe her

slow

The tortoise

What kind of animal is she? → tortoise

How does she walk? → slow

Thursday WK 6 less 15 20 February 2014
Description of a character

Title: The tortoise

The tortoise is a brown animal she has a hard shell and a small tail
~~but~~ The tortoise walks slow and is not very fast. She is slow and clever
 The tortoise is a very slow animal because he walks very slow

Friday WK 5 Less 13 ~~or~~ Less 14
Sequencing an instructional text

Title: Washing hands

you will need
soap and water

Method

1. turn on the tap
2. put some soap in your hands
3. rub your hands together
4. rinse your hand under the tap
5. close the tap

Monday WK 8 Less 15 ~~or~~ 10 March 2014

Writing and presenting
Writing an Instructional Text

Title: How to butter a piece of bread

You will need
1. ~~butter~~ butter
2. ~~Toaster~~ Toaster
3. Knife
4. bread

Method

1. use Knife of butter
2. ~~stir the~~ Knife you butter the bread after

ADDENDUM K: GDE APPROVAL LETTER



GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

For administrative use:
Reference no: D2016 / 167

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	28 July 2014
Validity of Research Approval:	28 July 2014 to 3 October 2014
Name of Researcher:	Tlaka H.N.
Address of Researcher:	P.O. Box 63
	Sovenga
	0727
Telephone Number:	015 962 8291; 072 497 1961
Fax Number:	086 273 7735
Email address:	ntombi.tlaka@univen.ac.za
Research Topic:	The contribution of a text-based approach to English education for communicative competence
Number and type of schools:	FOUR Primary Schools
District/s/HO	Tshwane North

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

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

Handwritten signature
2014/07/27

1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research

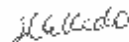
9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
 P O Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 365 0506
 Email: David.Mekhele@gauteng.gov.za
 Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

Open Blank

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

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

Kind regards



Dr David Makhado
Director, Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 2006/07/29

2

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director, Knowledge Management and Research

9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0505
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

ADDENDUM L: DISTRICT LETTER TO SCHOOLS



GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Eng: Kabelo Molebaloa
Sub-Directorate: CLI
Tel: (012) 543-1034
Fax: 086 224 1105

TO : THE PRINCIPAL
SEKAMPANENG PRIMARY SCHOOL

FROM : KABELO MOLEBALOA
CES: CLI

DATE : 7 AUGUST 2014

SUBJECT : PARTICIPATION IN A PHD RESEARCH STUDY

Sir/Madam

Please be informed that Ms. H.N. Tlaka has been granted permission by GDE to research into the topic: *The contribution of a text-based approach to English education for effective communicative competence*

One of your Grade 4 teachers will be involved in this project. All details will be explained to you by the researcher.

Your kind cooperation and support is highly appreciated.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Regards


KABELO MOLEBALOA
CES: CLI

ADDENDUM M: MAP OF TSHWANE NORTH DISTRICT

