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Implementation of SASL in Foundation Phase:
A Case Study about Transformational and Transformative Leadership

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Dissertation
Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a M Ed Degree in the School of Education
Faculty of Humanities,
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Supervisor: Mr. Guy Mcilroy

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Abstract

South African Sign Language (SASL) is officially recognised as a formal Home Language school subject within the National Curriculum Statement Policy of South Africa. However, this long awaited roll-out of the CAPS SASL raises a number of issues within the context of each school for the Deaf regarding implementation and school leadership. Hence, a case study was undertaken at a public school for the Deaf located within Johannesburg District to draw attention to these issues. Using Freire's concepts of *Dialogue, Conscientization and Praxis* (Freire, 1972) as a means to bring about transformational changes within the school for the implementation year of SASL, 2015, the study explored the dialogue between School Management Team (SMT) and staff members who teach the Deaf learners. The models of school leadership investigated were: transactional, transformational and transformative leadership (Shields, 2010) as a framework for the changing roles as demonstrated by the SMT and the said staff members. Qualitative data provided insight into different strategies employed by them as well as class assistants to implement SASL; and further revealed the changes experienced within the school and by several staff members, where members were becoming more aware of their SASL abilities and how they would want to improve. Emergent themes included the 'SASL curriculum', 'leadership and change', 'bilingual education and quality of education' for Deaf learners. Change was evident between the positional authority of SMT members and the language authority of the Deaf staff members and revealed how this transformation in respect for different roles of the SMT assisted the SASL implementation. Findings revealed that SMT members and Deaf staff need to engage in extensive dialogue and implement strategies to facilitate the SASL implementation if there is to be meaningful transformation within the school.

Key terms:

Critical dialogue, medical model, socio-cultural model, SASL curriculum, school leadership, transformational leadership, transformative leadership, transactional leadership.

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation, "**Implementation of SASL in foundation phase: a case study about transformational and transformative leadership**", is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education by dissertation at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

……..

Michelle Clara Batchelor

…….

Student number

……..day of …….in the year 2016

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CAPS:	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
CMT:	Curriculum Management Team
DoE:	Department of Education (prior 2010)
DBE:	Department of Basic Education (post 2010)
DHE:	Department of Higher Education (post 2010)
ECD:	Early childhood Development
GDE:	Gauteng Education Department
GET:	General Education and Training
HL:	Home Language
HOD:	Head of Department within a school management team
LOLT:	Language of Learning and Teaching
LTSM:	Learning and Teaching Materials
NCS:	National Curriculum Statements
NQF:	National Qualifications Framework
SASL:	South African Sign Language
SGB:	School Governing Body
SMT:	School Management Team

DEFINITIONS

Conscientization

Conscientization which is based in dialogue, has to be a process that is at best consensus and at least convergence seeking, into the reflective action necessary between people who create together (Taylor, 1993, p. 70)

deaf

Audiologists use the term ‘deaf’ to identify individuals whose hearing loss refers to an audiological condition or medical condition that can be remediated (Reagan, 2008, p. 167).

Deaf

The term ‘Deaf’ with a capital ‘D’ has been used to identify those who identify with and share the same cultural values of the Deaf as a minority linguistic group (Reagan, 2008, p. 166).

Dialogue

Dialogue is the encounter between men (persons) who together through united reflection and action have an aim to transform the world (Freire, 1972, p.61).

Praxis

Action and reflection which truly transform reality are the source of knowledge and creation (Freire, 1972, p. 73).

School Management Team (SMT)

This team is composed of the principal and the senior teachers, the deputy principal(s) and the heads of department. They are responsible for the daily functions which supports and promotes teaching and learning within a school (DBE, 2000).

Transformative Leadership

This term refers to leadership that is based on a deconstruction and reconstruction of social/ cultural knowledge framework that generates deep and equitable change in social conditions (Shields, 2010).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is based on the organisational culture; changing directions, developing people and redesigning the organisation while managing the instructional programme (Shields, 2010).

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership focuses on results and conforms to the existing structure or policies within an organization. Transactional tasks are most commonly completed by persons in formal positions of authority who are responsible for an organization. (Shields, 2010)

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Chapter One

Introduction

"The most powerful response to leadership comes through the demonstration of humility not the exercise of power."

Professor Jonathan Jansen (Guest Speaker addressing principals of schools at MC Kharbai School, February 2014)

1.1. Statement of Purpose

This case study aims to explore the implementation of South African Sign Language (SASL) in the Foundation phase and the leadership practices employed by members in the School Management Team[1] (SMT) at a school for Deaf[2] learners. Within this framework there will be an in-depth understanding of the complexities of SASL implementation and the critical roles played by the Deaf staff, this includes Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants. The roles of transformational and transformative leadership will be fore grounded in this exploration.

1.2. Background

Previously SASL was not officially recognised as a language subject, but since December, 2014, SASL on a Home Language level within the CAPS framework has been legislated for the implementation starting in the Foundation phase (grades R-3).

Deaf Education and the status of SASL as a Home Language (HL) within South Africa is changing as more emphasis was placed on the inclusion and recognition as an official language. The President, Mr. Jacob Zuma, in December 2012 proclaimed in a Ministerial Report (Department of Basic Education, 2013, p. 2) that SASL must be developed and standardised for it to be a 12th official language of government This proclamation was motivated by the Springate Court case[3] where the Deaf learner, Kyle

[1] SMT – The School Management Team consisting of the principal, deputy principals and heads of departments tasked with the curriculum programme of the school.

[2] Deaf with a capital "D" signifies a group of individuals who identify themselves as culturally Deaf and not disabled; they use South African Sign Language. They do not view themselves as audiologically "deaf", where deafness is seen as an impairment, but rather, as part of a strong Cultural Deaf association (Wrigley, 1996:14, Padden & Humphries, 1988).

[3] The Pietermaritzburg High Court heard case No. 4846/2009, Springate and Others versus the Minister of Basic Education and Others, on 19 August 2009 regarding the non-recognition of the SASL as a subject in the schooling system.

Springate (2009) and others challenged the Minister of Basic Education on the status of SASL as a school subject.

Also DeafSA through ongoing lobbying and support for the recognition of SASL as official language provided more motivation for the start of this process. The Minister of Basic Education, Ms. Angie Motshekga announced that SASL would be offered, as a home language to all Deaf learners at schools for the Deaf, to start in 2014[4] (DBE in press, August 2013). This landmark announcement for Deaf Education recognises the constitutional rights of Deaf learners to quality education and provides official access to SASL Home Language. Never before in South Africa, and especially within Deaf Education, has SASL been granted the above status within the National Educational Curriculum. A new dawn for SASL had started, but how does the implementation of policy translate into practise within a school?

The development of this curriculum was the responsibility of the Curriculum Management Team (CMT) as appointed by the Department of Basic Education (DBE). The standard of SASL HL is similar to other languages, such as English HL, in structure, content and sequence as it is taught in schools (DBE, 2013, p.7). But at the school level, implementation of this curriculum is the responsibility of the SMT to ensure that SASL is offered on the required Home Language level, that infrastructure, curriculum administration and the social cultural[5] changes are ready within schools. School leadership, specifically transformational, transactional and transformative leadership models offer a vehicle for the SMT to make such changes.

1.3. School Context

This study took place in an outlying suburban school that services close and distant townships and borders an informal settlement. This school accommodates Deaf/hard-of hearing and hearing learners. This is a day school, the learners in Foundation phase introduction to SASL is at school, through interaction with Deaf role models, in the classroom with the teachers and also with their Deaf peers. The learners are further

[4] The Implementation of SASL was postponed to 2015.

[5] Social Cultural change – refers to change that recognises Deaf people as a minority culture in the world with their own language, social norms, and culture. It promotes Deaf people's right to collective space within society to pass on their language and culture to future generations.

marginalized by the current reality that when they have to access academic subjects in the Foundation phase, Mathematics, Life Skills and English First Additional Language (FAL) through a language which they are still acquiring socially

At school level, the SMT is expected to provide informed leadership when SASL as a Home Language is implemented. To distinguish between school management and school leadership, school management is the daily monitoring and control of teaching and learning within a school by a team, the principal, deputy principals and heads of departments, the SMT. In contrast, school leadership refers to influence used to bring changes within a school, changes based on values and a vision. Bush (2003) links leadership to the values or purpose of the institutions or schools while the role of management relates to implementation of daily technical issues, such as the daily operational requirements of an institution or school.

The SMT is expected to implement the official SASL CAPS HL curriculum and the dynamics of leading this process in the absence of a prescriptive SMT implementation plan from the DBE. It is tasked with providing schools with effective learning and teaching as cited in the recent policy, the 'Standards of Principalship' (DBE, 2016, p.5). This policy, although applicable to all school principals within South Africa, anticipates schools in which all learners can attain their highest level of achievement in their learning, and hold principals to account for their performance within their schools. This policy would apply to principals of schools for Deaf learners as well, thus ensuring quality education for Deaf learners with the focus on SASL implementation.

However, implementing this policy at school level has not been easy: there are several critical areas that remain unresolved. These include: SASL as a Home Language for learners with little or no language in the Foundation phase, the lack of availability of resources, training for educators and the transformation within the school where SASL becomes the Home Language (HL), but also the culture at school. This implies that the SMT take the social changes required from staff and learners into consideration to a transformation that includes SASL as a language of teaching and learning, understanding and embracing Deaf Culture and having higher academic expectations of Deaf learners. These changes could result from the different experiences and expectations by the role players (SMT, Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants)

responsible for the implementation in the Foundation phase. At the heart of these changes are the discussions or on-going dialogue about implementation and examining school leadership that will address SASL critically, in the context of the school. For this reason, amongst others, this research investigated the contributions of leadership by members of the SMT with the assistance of Deaf staff (Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants) for the start of CAPS SASL HL.

1.4. Problem Statement

The implementation of SASL requires that the SMT implement a transformation of the school curriculum to accommodate the SASL CAPS policy within the framework of the school context in the absence of a prescriptive implementation plan from the DBE. This places a myriad of implementation concerns onto the SMT; it includes the majority of Deaf learners born to hearing families, with little or no exposure to SASL. Many Deaf learners come from multilingual home backgrounds but with limited linguistic access to a spoken language this results in language delays.

The effect of multi-lingual and multi-cultural home environments of Deaf learners before entering the schooling system is a reality in Deaf Education and in South Africa. SMTs should be cognisant of its impact on SASL implementation. Störbeck and Magongwa (2006, p. 113) state that schools for the Deaf should be responsive to the multicultural needs of the learners and the curriculum at school should infuse Deaf culture. Prior to the implementation of SASL CAPS, many schools for the Deaf have prioritised the introduction of Deaf role models through Deaf class assistants as the start of exposing Deaf learners to the socio-cultural change they encounter at this early stage to align with the multi-lingual and multi-cultural nature when Deaf learners enter school.

In general terms, at schools for the Deaf the SMT should practise leadership that transforms the school academic culture, being aware that SASL has academic outcomes to be taught within the classroom, whereas previously SASL was not a school subject and it is still not an official language. This further includes all other academic subjects, e.g. English First Additional Language (FAL), Mathematics and

Life Skills which are taught through a written medium of English[6] or another spoken language which the SGB officially selects through the school language policy. Simultaneously, especially within the Foundation phase, Deaf learners are also introduced to the social-cultural environment within Deaf culture as the school introduces the child to SA Sign Language socially and then academically (Aarons, 1998). SMT have to manage this change of the school and the learners that calls for management teams to become self-reflective of school practices.

The SMT management practices for SASL implementation as required by the DBE include the following: a) selecting appropriately qualified staffing; b) timetabling with a new language as Home Language and English as First Additional Language; c) the infrastructural set-up for the audio-visual technology and the visual curriculum within the classrooms; d) the training and expertise required for the audio-visual equipment; e) the ordering of specialized LTSM[7], the capacity for electronic storage of all visual materials from the learners and f) the SASL CAPS training for the identified educators. The above implementation functions and responsibilities are described as daily operational or transactional tasks of an organisation or a school for which persons in management are responsible. Burns (1978) and Bass and Leithwood (1994) refer to this type of leadership as Transactional leadership, where there are organisational expectations that must be achieved.

It is the opinion of this study that for schools to meet the linguistic, academic and cultural needs of the learners, it can only be achieved if schools become more inclusive of cultural diversity. They (schools) could effectively start by focusing on dialogue between the SMT with all staff- Deaf and hearing. A significant part of this research examines the Freirean[8] theories on Dialogue, Praxis and *Conscientization*[9] (Freire, 1972) which is an important starting point for the SMT in transforming the social-cultural paradigm at schools. This dialogue addresses the core issues of leadership that affect SASL and its bearing on the implementation within the school. To address

[6] School Governing Bodies determine the two languages through the language policy of the school. (South African Schools Act, (1996)

[7] LTSM – Learning and Teaching Materials, for SASL; they are specialised visually accessible materials.

[8] Freirean – Paulo Freire - (1921-1997) Brazilian educationalist most concerned with critical pedagogy, dealing with educational practices and liberation for the oppressed.

[9] Conscientization, Praxis and Dialogue – See definitions and discussion in Chapter 2.

issues of linguistic and cultural minorities and bringing about changes for the improvement of the lives of the minority, it is not only viewed as transformational, but also transformative (Shields, 2009). Therefore, in addressing the Freirean theories in this study, transformational, transactional and transformative leadership theories of school leadership will be explored for implementing SASL CAPS curriculum and this requires transformation of school leadership.

The SMT should therefore engage in discussions or continuous dialogue that should accommodate the change of attitudes, perceptions and behaviours of teachers as they grapple with SASL as a Home Language. This dialogue between the SMT and Deaf staff members, to a lesser degree could also include aspects of Sign Bilingualism as part of this process. Sign Bilingualism[10] exists where the Deaf child is taught two languages, using two different modalities, that is, Sign Language, visual-gestural modality and a spoken language, aural-oral modality or a text version of the oral language (Grosjean, 2010). The key points of Sign Bilingualism are explained further in Chapter Two, with reference to the model developed by Swanwick and Gregory (2007).

1.5. Aim of the Study

This study is aims to explore the implementation of SASL (CAPS) and the transformational role of school leadership (SMT) through critical dialogue.

1.6. Role of the Researcher

My role places me in the fortunate position to be at the forefront of changes that must be effected. Since the research setting is my working environment, I collected data as an insider, participant, observer and researcher. Bonner and Tolhurst (2000) as cited in Unluer (2012, p.1) identified three advantages to being an 'insider-researcher':

a) Having a greater understanding of the culture being studied;
b) Not altering the flow of social interaction unnaturally and;
c) Having an established intimacy which promotes both the telling and judging of the truth.

[10] Sign Bilingualism ensures equal opportunities for both languages, a sense of regard and value for the linguistic minority language and culture as well as the empowerment of the Deaf (Swanwick and Gregory, 2007).

These factors assisted this research greatly and supported an in-depth study of the changes taking place within the school. A discussion about insider-researcher and measures taken to maintain the validity and transparency of the research process is presented in Chapter Four.

1.7. Research Questions

Critical Question

How has the SMT facilitated the process of implementing SASL CAPS HL within the Foundation Phase?

Sub Questions

- Which of the school leadership theories: transactional, transformational or transformative Leadership have been applied by the SMT members as a leadership model that drives the implementation of SASL as a HL to the school?
- What changes have occurred in the Foundation Phase as a result of implementing the SASL CAPS curriculum by the SMT and Deaf teaching staff?
- What were the concerns of Deaf teaching staff regarding the SASL CAPS implementation and how would these concerns been addressed by the SMT?
- What would be the implications of these findings at other schools for Deaf regarding how school leadership implements SASL and SASL CAPS?

1.8. Outline of the Chapters

Chapter One

This chapter provides an introduction to SASL, the concerns associated with the implementation of SASL at school, Sign Bilingualism and the need for a change to a socio-cultural model. It includes the purpose, rationale of the study and critical questions.

Chapter Two

In this chapter I present a theoretical framework that examines critical social theory, focussing on aspects of social practice and critical dialogue that inform practice. I explain Freire's theoretical concepts which deal with Dialogue, *Conscientization* and Praxis as these relate to school leadership and Transformative Leadership. In

conclusion, this chapter considers the paradigms of Deafness in the light of the bilingual-bicultural approach.

Chapter Three

This chapter provides a review of literature in two sections. The first section begins with explanations of educational leadership, management and the roles of the SMT. The concept of leadership for implementation is discussed by looking at a comparison of transformational, transformative and transactional leadership practices and the section concludes with a consideration of the transformative and transformational leadership necessary for change to implement SASL.

The second section focusses on SASL CAPS Policy and Deaf Education. The role of language policy and planning perspective is discussed, looking at the management implementation framework of the DBE for SASL. The importance of the bilingual-bicultural model for sign language concludes this section, focusing on bilingualism with Sign Language as the primary language.

Chapter Four

The qualitative nature of the research design, research methods and analysis is explained. An overview is provided as to why the case study methodology was most suitable for this research. Clarification is provided on the complexities of being an insider-researcher, while the processes involved in obtaining permission to gather data at the research sites and consent from the participants to be interviewed are described in detail. The research plan is described, in conclusion.

Chapter Five

The findings that emerged from the data collection and data analysis are discussed in this chapter as Phase 1, which examines the first six months of implementation. The research tools, surveys and focus group discussions are analysed and the research data is presented according to the themes and sub-themes that emerged.

Chapter Six

This chapter represents the last six months of implementation of SASL in the Foundation Phase. Final focus group discussions and surveys are conducted and notes from my observations of teachers' training are included. The emphasis in this chapter falls on the role played by the SMT and the changes which the latter brought about for the changing role of Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants during that process.

Chapter Seven

This chapter concludes the research by drawing on significant information contained in the preceding chapters, in order to provide a summary of the research findings; furthermore, the final recommendations are made.

1.9. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the problem statement regarding the SASL implementation, as well as the background and school context for this study. The problem statement highlighted the concerns of this implementation and focusses on the roles played by the SMT, Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants.

In conclusion, the primary emphasis of this study is concerned with exploring the changes due to the implementation of the SASL curriculum, which include the experiences and impact experienced by the SMT, the Deaf educators and the Deaf class assistants. Transformational, transactional and transformative leadership is studied during this period of implementation to gain an understanding of the expertise of different staff and if such expertise could benefit this process. The secondary focus is placed on how this dialogue between SMT members and Deaf staff contributes to emphasising changes in leadership roles for the implementation of SASL.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a general but brief explanation of a theoretical framework and the paradigms that informed this research. For Henning (2004, p.25) the framework of a study is useful when "a researcher is able to make explicit assumptions about the interconnectedness of the way things are related in the world". Thus, the theoretical lens of a researcher informs a study by positioning it within a discipline or a subject.

In the field of educational research, this lens is informed by a range of paradigms that have developed: Positivism[11], Phenomenology[12], Critical Theory[13] and Post-Modernism[14]. Creswell (2007, p. 248) refers to a paradigm as a world view, a set of beliefs which guides action. A paradigm can be defined as an approach to research which provides a unifying framework of understandings of knowledge, truth, values and the nature that informs it.

The outline for the theoretical framework of this study is as follows:

- Critical Theory is discussed briefly, focusing on aspects such as social practice, power relations and the critical dialogue that informs practice within the context of a school
- Concepts from the work of Paulo Freire, such as Dialogue, *Conscientization* and Praxis are discussed in relation to the actions taken during implementation.
- The foundation for Transformative leadership is discussed.
- The chapter concludes with a discussion about Deafness and the paradigms as dealt with through a bilingual-bicultural approach.

[11] Positivism Paradigm - "Where it is that facts can be collected about the world; language allows us to represent those facts unproblematically". (Briggs, Coleman & Moriaane, 2012, p. 16)
[12] Phenomenology Paradigm -"Where it is that facts are seen from the person's point of view. (Briggs, Coleman & Moriaane, 2012, p. 18)
[13] Critical Theory - "Where it is accepted that values are central to all research activities, describing and changing the world". (Ibid, p.16)
[14] Postmodernism - This paradigm rejects universalising modes of thought and global narratives; understand knowledge as localised; and seeks universal legitimacy such as the truth. (Ibid, p. 16)

The theoretical framework of a research study locates the research within a specific discipline. Within the discipline of Deaf education, the pedagogical aspects of the Deaf learner are not just a question of Sign Language, but also how the perception of educating a Deaf child is addressed in policies and practices within a school. This should entail priority budgetary considerations for pedagogical and linguistic access through SASL to curriculum content as prescribed, and that Deaf rights to language and culture are prominent within the school culture.

Sign Language is the single most important element that defines Deaf cultural identity (Reagan, 2008, p. 168) and therefore one's perception of deafness would define all other decisions regarding Sign Language.

It consequently becomes important to study the impact of the transformation which SASL as a Home Language and as the LOLT has on a school. Previously, SASL was administered within schools through various non-standardised policies. There was little conformity to a standard of practice for implementing SASL in schools that offered Sign Language informally. The SASL curriculum, in its current form, presents a curriculum that the SMT must implement, therefore the SMT members have to work through this curriculum, they are required to examine their school and the social cultural context of the learners and staff members (hearing and Deaf) and establish ways to implement SASL. This study also examines the critical theory paradigm more closely as well as how it relates to Freirean principles of critical dialogue, critical consciousness and praxis that apply in the context of Deaf Education. These concepts are discussed when the implementation of South African Sign Language (SASL) by the SMT is considered. This will be foregrounded by focussing specifically on their leadership role from a critical theory perspective.

2.2. Critical Theory

Critical Theory is "a philosophical approach that considers the social, historical and ideological forces" states Henning (2004, p. 23) and sees it as a process that deconstructs the world, by questioning the power relations within it. According to Meekosha and Shuttleworth, they state

> It (critical theory) critiques and changes society, aims to dig beneath the surface of social life and uncover the assumptions that keeps us from a full and true understanding of how the world works. (Meekosha and Shuttleworth, 2009, p.51)

Stemming from critical theory that deals with the critique of society and culture, critical social theory is focussed on liberation and transformation of our understanding about the world. The fundamental goal of critical theory is the advancement of "emancipation" through knowledge (Leonardo, 2004). Shuttleworth and Meekosha (2009, p. 48) state that many critical theory researchers address the question of social politics, social practice and social injustices within society and education. For instance questions such as: "Whose interests are being served compared with whose interests should be served?" So quality education, ensuring that Deaf learners attain academically, has always been a rights-based issue. Kincheloe and McLaren (2000) posit that the critical research paradigm enables the researcher to practise an in-depth understanding that involves identifying and transforming socially unjust social structures, policies, beliefs or practices. Its primary aim is to identify and help resolve activities that contribute to inequalities and injustices in sectors of society. Therefore, within Deaf Education, a social justice rights-based approach is advanced by ensuring that the right to quality education and Sign Language is accessible within the school and the classroom.

It is at this point that I position this research into the implementation of SASL from a critical perspective within Deaf Education. My intention in this research was to investigate the implementation of a visual language, i.e. SASL (South African Sign Language) viewing it as a social justice rights issue. It has become increasingly important to examine the role of school leadership and the way in which its members incorporate SASL and its curriculum as an integral part of the school. This concerns the dialogue that a school management team holds with itself and with the rest of the staff concerning the needs of Deaf learners with regard to linguistic access.

That dialogue begins with the leadership of the school, which means that members in leadership must engage critically, through ongoing dialogues, by exploring current and intended practices in SASL, with other members of staff, the Deaf teachers and class assistants. As a school principal and researcher, I believe this will be the start in identifying and resolving some of the barriers of implementing SASL.

Furthermore, within the critical theory paradigm, a '*conscientisation'* (Freire, 1972) is raised, to construct a moral vision for a better society. In the context of this research this relates to a process of transformation, which means making SASL a more integral

part of everyday activities, while simultaneously enlisting the guidance of Deaf staff members. It calls for a mind-shift of expecting more from all staff and learners. Expecting more means having higher expectations of the SASL curriculum, of the learners and of teachers.

2.2.1. Critical Dialogue

Critical dialogue is about questioning the attitudes, perceptions and beliefs of systems and people. Here I want to highlight the work by Paulo Freire (1923-1997), who promoted social transformation within education. I link critical theory with Freire's critical dialogue because the SMT is responsible for the process of bringing about the change: a passive acceptance to implement SASL without question, would not lead to social cultural changes within the school. I am going to explore three of Freire's thematic concerns in education, namely, 'Dialogue'[15], 'Praxis'[16] and '*Conscientisation*'[17]. For Freire (1972, p. 99), dialogue is a moment where humans come together and reflect on their reality. Through a critical reflection, where open and honest discussion takes place, a deeper understanding, or rather "the consciousness", is awakened and actions are decided and acted upon. This process may constitute a changed reality, a new course of action which could benefit those who previously were denied benefits within a social system. Critical consciousness and praxis will be discussed later in this chapter.

Where groups of people join together, they have the common objective of solving a problem starting through dialogue, which starts the SMT group thinking about how a school implements the official SASL CAPS subject. To engage in dialogue is the beginning of gaining knowledge. For Freire, dialogue is the cornerstone of creating an awareness of what needs to be changed, as understood by the persons who are most oppressed; as described by O'Shea and O'Brien (2013, p.16-17). Freire states (1972, p. 65),

> Without dialogue, there is no communication, and without no communication, there can be no true education. Education which is able to resolve the

[15] Dialogue – Dialogue is the encounter in which the united reflection and action are addressed to be transformed. (Freire, 1972, p. 61)
[16] Praxis – Action that is informed or conscious action, man's thinking and action upon reality. (Freire, 1972, p.78)
[17] Conscientisation – The process of developing a critical awareness of one's social reality through reflection and action. (Freire, 1972, p.52)

> contradiction between teacher and student, takes place in a situation in which both address their act of cognition to the object by which they are mediated.

In the context of this research, it becomes imperative that persons with expert knowledge in SASL be seen as the leaders of the implementation, by engaging in dialogue with other members who could be experiencing concerns on how to use SASL for teaching and learning in the classroom. What this implies is that the Deaf educator or Deaf class assistant could be in a position to guide or advise a person in management positions at school. Fundamentally, the common goal is improving teaching and learning for Deaf learners through SASL.

In the work of Freire (1972, p. 46) who condemned the literacy programmes in schools where learners were taught as 'empty vessels', he uses the term: 'banking model of education'[18] where those that are taught (learners) have 'no voice' and the teacher is the sole distributor of knowledge.

The image of a 'banking mode of education' can be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, the DoE has provided schools with the SASL curriculum, and school managers are required to implement it. The situation of managers implementing the curriculum, without critical dialogue or critique with reference to their context, is tantamount to the banking mode of education (Freire, 1972, p. 48). Within the context of this research, without the ongoing dialogues and concerns of the Deaf staff (educators and class assistants) being expressed to the SMT about their language experiences and the learner's experiences of the language, proper implementation cannot take place. This dialogue has to be about the real issues that affect a school; we need to critically address the real difficulties and the social realities at our school. To implement a policy, without being critical as a school, is similar to Freire's 'banking' style of education. For Freire (2011, 2004) being critical is being real, while Durakoglu (2013, p.103) who cites Freire (2011) states, *"*the main purpose of education is to develop the social awareness and critical thinking skills of people*".* Achieving this purpose equates to raising awareness of the real issues within the school and bringing changes to address the same.

[18] Banking Education – The concept of education that knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those they consider to know nothing. (Freire, 1972, p.46)

In my view, as principal there should be more dialogue between the DBE and the school managers who have implemented SASL in schools. However, there should be more critical dialogues, when viewed through the vastly different contexts found amongst all schools for the Deaf. There is not enough dialogue about the organisational, cultural and linguistic concerns around the SASL curriculum that schools are experiencing and are left to find their own solutions. We have to keep dialogue with the education department open through ongoing management and leadership workshops and inform the DoE of concerns and problems experienced, but also indicate how, as a school, we have tried to circumvent these problems. What we need is Freire's "problem-posing education' style, where there has to be critical dialogue on what happens at 'ground-level' at the school sites. O'Brien and O'Shore (2013, p.78) refer to 'problem-posing' education and state that "the more sophisticated knowledge of leaders are remade by the empirical knowledge of the people*."* In other words, the knowledge gained at schools during the process of implementation as experienced by the Deaf must be explored through dialogue. The knowledge gained here should be communicated to the DBE in an attempt to challenge the normative view that the SASL Home Language Curriculum policy can be implemented as is, for all Deaf learners in all schools.

There also needs to be transformation of how one views SASL, which calls for critical thinking as found in the principles of the SASL HL CAPS document (DBE, 2013, p. 3) that states:

> Active and critical learning: encouraging an active and critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths" as well as the call for "Human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice: infusing the principles and practices of social and environmental justice and human rights.

Critical thinking as part of implementing SASL is not just a critical outcome of the NCS Curriculum but is also necessary for the SASL curriculum.

Within the school context, the SMT should also be analytical as it rolls out SASL in the schools. Actually, Freire (1972, 1978) places an even bigger responsibility on those in authority e.g. the school managers and the educators. Freire puts it forward that they have the responsibility to develop a critical consciousness through self-reflection and the effects that those new insights would have on their students or learners.

With regard to the Deaf teaching staff, Foley (2007) refers to a process of "giving voice" to a particular group through the use of dialogue that can only be liberating if it happens in an environment of "equality". For Higgins (1996) as cited in Foley (2007), this equality cannot happen "without humility" or where leaders place themselves "above others or as owners of the truth".

This critical dialogue, that brings these groups together, is not only about a social change to implement SASL as a subject within the schools for the Deaf, but is also concerned with the transformation of the schooling system for Deaf learners where Sign Language is prioritised as being instrumental in improving the quality education for our Deaf learners.

2.2.2. Critical Consciousness, '*conscientization'* (Freire, 1972)

The act of developing an awareness of the social reality is through ongoing reflection, action and subsequent reflection on the actions taken by members on the SMT, including the educators. Freire (1987, p.13) posits that "by studying and reflecting on our lack of freedom, we learn to become free". Similarly, persons in positions of authority at schools, by studying not merely how to lead Deaf Education but how one lacks in the exercise thereof is the beginning of learning how to grow in our leadership.

2.2.3. Praxis

Praxis is defined as 'action and reflection', where the action is informed through dialogue and linked to making a difference in the world. For Freire (1978) it was not just enough for people to come together in order to gain knowledge of their social reality, but that they should act together and critically reflect upon their reality too, so as to transform it through further action and critical reflection. He states that, "praxis is possible only through consciousness when the need for a better future is achieved through the acceptance of the critical role of social justice" (Freire, 1978, p.164).

In the context of this research, the point of praxis exists when the principal and the school leadership team, upon critical reflection and through critical discussions on their leadership roles, decide on positive changes for the learners. This occurs after the first round of discussions and focus groups - identifying the concerns (roles of SMT, teachers etc., time, hard of Hearing (HOH) learners, assessments, language

access)[19]. Reflection about changes must be ongoing (iterative) and must be carried out in an honest acknowledgement concerning which practices can make a difference for our Deaf learners. Critical questions must be asked to open up this dialogue, reflect on the questions and explore actions for improvement.

Such questions in the context of Deaf Education include:

- How do we know that the learners are benefiting from the SASL CAPS curriculum at school?
- How do we know if Deaf learners understand the teachers' signing?
- How can SASL as a language promote quality learning and teaching for all our Deaf learners?
- How can persons in management promote a more 'problem-posing' teaching style in the classroom?

Concerning these questions, Freire (1978, p.164) argues that the need for a better future is through the critical role of social practice in education (in the school). It is also necessary for leadership to be fully one with the people (teachers, learners). This occurs through the constant exchange and interactions between those who teach SASL and those who, like myself, are school managers or administrators together with members in the SMT.

The next section provides an overview of school leadership that follows the transformative model. This model deals with transforming systems for minority groups and is related to critical theory and Deaf Education.

2.3. Transformative Leadership

In this section, Transformative Leadership is explained from the perspective of educational leadership.

In an attempt to define and explain the theoretical framework of such leadership, I need to contextualise it within the body of educational leadership and identify its inherent characteristics.

Educational leadership entails many aspects of leadership, within a person or the position that they occupy, depending on the context in which it manifests itself. For

[19] SASL implementation concerns are discussed in Chapters five and six.

Fullan (1999) this leadership concentrates on a sense of service and shared mission. For Sergiovanni (2001), it concerns values and relationships, while for Day (2004) it is concerned with the ethical and emotional practices of the leader. For Leithwood (1994), transformational leadership is about identifying characteristics such as setting direction, developing people and redesigning the organisation.

For the purpose of this research, transformative leadership was chosen because it is concerned with the change, social justice and transformation that will be effected. Shields (2009) states that much of transformative leadership is built on the work of Freire (1970, 1998) in that education for change should lead to liberation through transformation and through a critical understanding of the roles by those in power and the powerless.

In this study, the focus is on how we as the SMT administer the curriculum, asking ourselves as teachers, as school managers, whether we are enabling linguistic access through SASL - not just as a subject but as a language of teaching and learning. Are we interested in good academic literacy for our Deaf learners, by teaching them critical skills and exposing them to Deaf role models in literature and Deaf culture? Denzin and Lincoln (2013, p. 345) state that an 'oppressive culture' in our schools is created by 'top-down' standards imposed and not challenged. They propose having teachers, (and I include school managers), who become self-critical and begin to explore their current practices in our schools. They state (2013, p.346),

> Promoting teachers as researchers is a fundamental way of cleaning up the damage of deskilled models of teaching that infantilise teachers by giving them scripts to read to their students…Teachers who engage in critical practice find it difficult to allow top-down content standards and their poisonous effects go unchallenged.

In the same way as administrators or school managers, we must become critical and communicate the challenges encountered within the context of our schools to the DBE. As stated above, teachers cannot uncritically take a curriculum and unquestioningly implement it. This is synonymous with the 'banking model' of education (Freire, 1972). Schools who implement SASL in this way could be following a medical model of Deafness (discussed in the next section), where they still practise an oral approach to SASL. They could make the Deaf learner to 'fit' the curriculum, when rather the school should critically examine the curriculum and the context of the learners and how the SASL curriculum should be implemented for their academic success.

Shields (2009, p. 89) posits that transformative leadership comprises leaders using their powers to transform social realities while Weiner (2003, p.89) views this leadership as "an exercise of power and authority that begins with questions of justice, democracy and the dialectic between individual accountability and the social responsibility". Therefore, it is the responsibility of school leaders to create schools where SASL is accessible.

Transformative leadership indicates a substantive change to an organisation, a change that requires a dismantling of traditional ways into a reconstructed and democratic new social context. Cornell West (2002, para 3) articulates it as:

> An oppositional stance to the hegemonic forms of school leadership and promises a reformed change, as it engages the existence of race, class and gender inequalities present in schools as an agenda for institutional change.

This view of leadership assumes a different theoretical frame and a new way of practice from the old way which conformed to traditional leadership. In this system, there is an engagement of the "voices": people whose opinions previously were not thought to be substantially relevant, now become important and necessary in the processes of change**.**

West (2002) presents a view of Transformative Leadership that engages in critical dialogue about the different dynamics within the diverse roles of all individuals within a school. He states, (2002, para 12)

> Transformative leadership demands that educational leaders critically assess the asymmetrical relations of power in the organizational context and deconstruct through critical interpretation, those practices and cultural artefacts that engender an anti-democratic discourse in organizations such as schools.

This form of leadership deals with identifying what constitutes quality education for our Deaf learner, what social injustice it begins to address and how role players can make a difference. It is the start to listening to all concerns from members in leadership, from Deaf teachers and Deaf class assistants when determining how we would move forward. It does not apply to the process of implementing SASL alone, but also to the socio-cultural paradigm of deafness that guides the decisions for our learners.

2.4. Paradigms of Deafness

There are two paradigmatic views of deafness for the understanding and determination of the language policy for SASL. Peel (2005, p. 9) explains that people's own paradigm of deafness will determine the way they view, treat, teach and value Deaf learners and Deaf Education. This includes the medical paradigm and the socio-cultural paradigm.

2.4.1. The clinical-pathological (medical) paradigm

The clinical-pathological paradigm of deafness is also known as the "medical model"[20] or the deficit model. The emphasis underlying this paradigm is to remediate or "fix" the deaf person, so that they would fit into the 'hearing world' (Mcilroy, 2008, Peel, 2004, Reagan, 2008). This paradigm generally follows the oral approach within Deaf Education with little or no regard for Sign Language or Deaf culture. This paradigm is also termed "pathological", as the Deaf person needs to find a way to 'fit' into the hearing world. Statements such "All Deaf people can be cured with an cochlear implant….having an interpreter is sufficient" may be found in the work of Mertens (2009, p.35), where she highlights some of the assumptions made by hearing people who do not have knowledge about Deaf culture or the regard for a visual language.

2.4.2. Socio-cultural paradigm

To accept deafness in terms of a socio-cultural paradigm, commonly referred as the "Social Model"[21], entails that deafness is not a disability, that Deaf culture and Sign Language is a representation of the DEAF-WORLD (Reagan, 2008, p 169). This acceptance of a socio-cultural construction of Deafness in education implies that SASL is accepted as the preferred 'language-in-education' policy (Reagan, 2008). Accepting SASL as the language of teaching and learning speaks directly to social justice: that of the rights of the Deaf learner.

[20] Medical Model – This Model emphasises the need for medical intervention to "fix" the disability (Reagan, 2008, 167-169).

[21] Social Model – This model celebrates, respects and regards the rights of Sign Language and Deaf Culture for Deaf people (Reagan, 2008, 167-169).

A socio-cultural perspective within a Deaf context highlights the importance of social interaction in language learning and Deaf culture identification as the cornerstone for the recognition of a Deaf paradigm. Peel (2004, p.12) emphasises that educators should view Deaf learners from the socio-cultural perspective and that in doing this, the rights of Deaf learners to receive quality education are acknowledged and strived for. In this context, it is through language that a child/learner acquires world knowledge. Grosjean (1992), on quality education for Deaf learners, strongly advocates for the rights of the Deaf child to master the ability of two languages, Sign Language and a written/oral form of a spoken language. This is critical for their social, cognitive, academic and physiological development as well as their vocational ability. To teach two languages to the Deaf child involves the Sign Bilingual approach.

See Störbeck (2000, p.52) 'Enrichment Bilingualism' where this approach looks at the skill in both the primary and the secondary language, with ongoing emphasis on the minority language and culture throughout, whilst developing the primary language. At schools, we first have to focus on a Basic Interpersonal Communicational Skills (BICS) approach which relies on context and content of the language for enrichment; then we can focus on the Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) approach if we want to see learners start thinking critically and engaging with the school curriculum. When SASL becomes the language of thought, academic improvement in all other subjects becomes attainable. But the change starts with the implementation of SASL, when all staff responsible for the SASL curriculum becomes critical by asking and discussing SASL access for all learners and teachers.

2.5. Bilingual and Bicultural Education

Gregory and Pickersgill (1998) and Swanwick and Gregory (2007) published a Sign Bilingualism Model that describes and emphasises the philosophy of Sign Bilingualism. This is built on a linguistic and cultural minority model of deafness, on the social model of disability. Deafness is not regarded as a barrier to linguistic development, educational achievement or social interaction. According to Swanwick and Gregory (2007), Sign Bilingualism is based on equal opportunity, regardless of race, language, gender and disability. Sign Bilingualism is based on the following:

- Value for linguistic and cultural minority cultures,

- Regard and respect for language and culture of the Deaf,
- Empowerment of Deaf people,
- Children have equal rights to be able to access quality education with a relevant curriculum.

Regardless of the model described above and the theoretical rationale to incorporate a bilingual approach, the principal and the team are still posed with the problem of implementation. Sign Bilingualism is directly linked to the SASL CAPS policy, see (DBE, 2013) The SMT should have an understanding of Sign Bilingualism and how it would fit into the context of each school.

Enns (2006) presents a Sign Bilingual framework that takes Deaf culture into account. This framework recognises that signed and spoken languages are two different languages. Sign Language is the preferred mode of communication and that Deaf learners should be exposed to sign and spoken languages, these are different and distinct languages (2006, p. 11). There are seven principles for a Sign Bilingual framework, (Swanwick and Gregory, 2007) that explicitly support the implementation process which in turn becomes the responsibility of the school management and the important aspects in the critical dialogue of the SMT:

- **Curriculum Access**: full access to the curriculum, with full access to assessment
- **Language use in the classroom**: Teachers should be clear about which language they are using and should also make learners aware of the differences between sign language and English
- **Language support**: Staff and surrounding classroom environments should be adapted for the learner's optimal language access
- **Resources**: provision of technological equipment, access to visual materials, as well as sufficient texts.
- **Assessment**: assessments focused on constant monitoring of the learner's language development.
- **Staffing**: long term staff training, Deaf role models, representation of Deaf staff on management

- **Parents**: school is responsible to train and educate parents.

2.6. The 'Critical Dialogue" and SASL CAPS Policy

This critical dialogue should entail a critique of the role of transformative leadership for the implementation of Sign Bilingualism and SASL as a Home Language. This research will also examine curriculum issues for school change within the context of Deaf education. The critical dialogue examines the issues listed above and how the dialogue should discharge its responsibilities and rectify the social injustices found in schools that cater for Deaf learners.

A central theme for this study is the critical dialogue of the SMT and the Deaf staff members when implementing SASL CAPS Home Language. The diagram (Figure 1) below illustrates dialogues between the SMT, Deaf educators and the class assistants as regards SASL HL implementation, while the arrows indicate the ongoing changes that incorporates transactional, transformational and transformative changes.

Having all stakeholders within the school ask questions of a critical nature is a means of clarifying the different roles and expectations, not just from the SASL curriculum, but from each other as well.

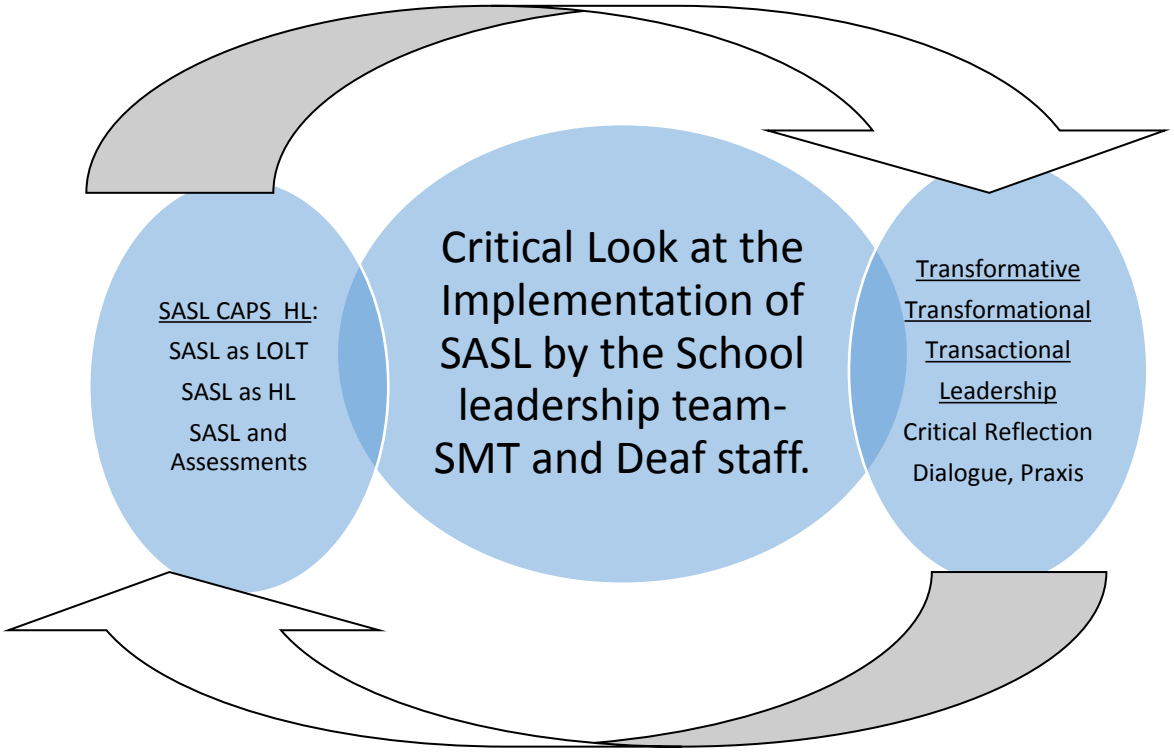


Figure 1: The fundamental elements in the critical dialogue for the SMT

2.7. Conclusion

This chapter provided an understanding of a theoretical framework and how critical dialogue should be applied when implementing SASL.

The role of critical theory was explained in view of Freire's concepts about critical dialogue, c*onscientization* and praxis. These concepts were discussed within the context of Transformative leadership where leaders use their powers to change social realities in the same way as SMTs could focus on bringing a substantive change when implementing SASL and making SASL accessible.

This chapter concludes with an explanation of the paradigms of deafness, the clinical-pathological paradigm, or otherwise known as the medical model and the socio-cultural paradigm. The latter paradigm, also known as the 'social model' posits for the rights of Sign Language and Deaf culture for Deaf learners. Emphasis was placed on quality education for Deaf learners in view of the socio-cultural paradigm.

The next chapter presents the literature review on leadership and management and Deaf education while foregrounding leadership approaches and the approach that would incorporate critical dialogue for the SASL implementation.

Chapter Three

Literature Review

> *"Times change. We can't blame educators or administrators for not having known all along that ASL is a full-fledged language, before the fact was discovered and confirmed in recent years. But we can blame any who rigidly adhere to old and unsuccessful practices now that the evidence is in and scholars, educators, and community leaders alike are calling for change." (*Lane, 1992, p. 169)

3.1. Introduction

A literature review has several purposes, which include: to report on what has already been researched as it relates to the research problem, to compare similar research methodologies used to investigate the related research and to synthesise all the relevant literature into an argument that drives the study (Macmillan and Schumacher, 2010, p. 73-74).

The outline of this literature review for this study is covered within two sections: The first section is about management and leadership and is as follows:

- The role of educational leadership, management and principalship,
- A comparison of transformational, transformative and transactional leadership practices,
- Transformative and transformational leadership approach to implement SASL CAPS policy.

The second section is about Deaf Education.

- Deaf Education history,
- Language policy and SASL implementation,
- Bilingual Education.

This chapter concludes with the importance of the bilingual-bicultural model for sign language, where bilingualism as an educational paradigm for the Deaf that prioritises Sign Language as the primary language and a written language as the first additional language (FAL) is discussed.

3.2. Management and Leadership

Christie (2010, p. 695) examines the 'Landscapes of Leadership' roles in South Africa and distinguishes between three core concepts: 'management', 'leadership' and 'principalship'. She argues specifically that "principalship is defined by the responsibility and accountability within the position of the principal and highlights that the principal has the advantage to recognise the synergies and interrelationships of the different parts of the school" (2010, p. 696).

3.2.1. Role of the principal

The DBE has recently made principals aware of their primary role and responsibility for school change and school improvement is the duty of principals. This promulgation states in the *Government Gazette*[22] 39827 (2016, p.3):

> The purpose of the transformation of any education system is to bring about sustainable school improvement and a profound change in the culture and practice of schools. The extent to which schools are able to provide such support and implement the necessary change will depend on the quality of leadership and management at school.

Previously, the tasks for principals were drafted alongside those of other stakeholders, such as deputy principals, Head of Departments and educators (PAM Document)[23]. Having separate legislation on the 'Standards' of principals regarding school reform places far greater responsibility on principals for the improvement of their schools. This entails that they are accountable for the implementation and management of curriculum, the enhancement of quality teaching and learning and the general management of all resources and programmes.

3.2.2. Leadership and management within schools – The SMT

The phrase 'School Management Teams' (SMT) in the school refers to the structure appointed by the Education Department through the school governing body to plan, organise, lead and supervise all daily teaching and learning activities within a school. The SMT is made up of the principal, deputy principal/s and the Heads of Departments

[22] *South African Government Gazette* No. 39827, the Standards of South African Principals, March 2016.
[23] PAM Document – Personnel Administration Measures, Department of Education, Educators Employment Act.

within a school. (PAM – document on Personnel and Administration Measures, 2016, a policy document alongside the SASA, South African Schools Act, 1996.)

Principals are ultimately responsible for the leadership and management of their schools, as reiterated in the 'Standards of Principalship' (DBE, 2016) referred to earlier. To differentiate between leadership and management, an important aspect of this study, Christie (2010) argues that 'leadership' in schools is about the influence directed to individuals for the achievement of goals, who could be persons in formal management positions or not, while for Christie, management focusses on organisational tasks, goals to be achieved and is normally aligned to formal positions.

Bush (2003) describes leadership as the influence and purpose in and outside of the structures of management, that it can be exercised at several positions within the school structures and not only linked to positions of authority. This would mean that staff not in formal management positions are able to hold leadership positions within the institutions. He further states that 'management' maintains the organisational systems within a school and management tasks are also delegated and are linked to proper resources and accountability. Fleich and Christie (2004), maintain that well-managed schools are primarily focussed on the core-business of a school, which is teaching and learning.

With regard to changing how the SMT manages schools, Fullan (2001, p.3) argues for "re-examining the moral purpose of school leadership and its critical role in changing the context and 'changing mind-sets' of teachers". This is done through combining the five core competencies:

- Focusing on a broader moral purpose
- Keeping on top of the change process
- Cultivating relationships
- Sharing knowledge
- Setting a vision.

Having these abilities allows leaders to create the conditions for change and gather together other staff to, as Fullan (2001, p.3) expresses it, "do the important and difficult work under conditions of constant change". He examines this moral role of members

on school leadership and posits that the time has come to change the context of school leadership with its increased academic demands and the changing cultures of schools. He further states (2003) that the principal with a moral imperative to bring about change, can help implement the change in the school where and when it is needed by developing leadership in others. Moving from a leadership model of 'leadership in a person, ('the principal'), to leadership in others based on their experience is the SMT's combined responsibility so as to effect the changes within the school. This raises the question about the type of leadership model that is necessary to manage the change in the school in preparation for and implementation of SASL**.**

In this research, it becomes imperative that the principal, with the SMT, leads the organisational structures for change, implementing SASL. More importantly is the task of SMT to identify and build up the leadership that creates the kind of team that is necessary for managing and leading the change to incorporate the SASL curriculum. Change in schools offering the SASL CAPS curriculum is required, hence the need for SMTs to revisit the organisational structures within the school and possibly do some self-reflection on the social and academic conditions of the learners.

3.2.3. School Leadership and Deaf Education

In the past, many schools for Deaf learners would focus on a deficit perspective of deafness, mentioned earlier, known as the Medical Model[24]. Mertens (2009, p.17) cites the work of Chiu (2003) who argues against a deficit perspective and considers the social context where a minority is found. Chiu, (2003, p.167) in Mertens (2009, p.17), makes a radical statement that "The narrow focus on language and culture as barriers has not only hindered a wider theoretical understanding of the problems, but has also had the effect of perpetuating ineffective health promotion practices". Although Chiu speaks for a minority ethnic group and their equal right to health, she argues that a 'deficit mentality' was used by administrators to focus on the problems solely as barriers. Linking this deficit mentality to the context of Deaf Education and Sign Language equates to a lack of respect for the users of SASL and an inability to understand the learners.

[24] Medical Model of Deafness discussed in Chapter 2.4.1.

The recognition of SASL CAPS HL as a national school subject is the beginning of acknowledging the equal right of a Deaf learner to be educated in a language (should he/she choose SASL), which is through an accessible medium as well as the right to quality education. Using the viewpoint of Chiu above, in the context of the school management team, they should prepare for the substantial change required for SASL. This change must be linked to culturally appropriate strategies (See Deaf Culture later in this chapter) that facilitate an understanding amongst Deaf and hearing individuals within the institution that will create improved recognition and regard for SASL. This is related to our view of Deafness, the way we teach and how we view our Deaf learners, a priority for quality education. It is, moreover, about making the paradigm shift from a disregard of SASL and Deaf cultural understanding, to valuing the socio-cultural model where our learners find themselves. At this point, I focus on the role of leadership and management in schools for the Deaf as SASL has forever changed the landscape of education in our schools. In valuing the social-cultural model of Sign Language, persons in leadership positions or with leadership experience in Sign Language should work together to effect the changes for implementation.

The next section focuses on leadership from three perspectives: Transformational, Transactional and Transformative leadership which have been identified as leadership models that drive the change in an educational institution.

3.3. Transformative, Transactional and Transformational Leadership

Change in any school organisation involves turning away from how staff members have understood and implemented school programmes in the past towards a new way of doing and understanding new school actions, especially when the change/transformation affects learning and teaching. Burns (1978, p. 20) asserted that "Transformational Leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality" He differentiated between transformational and transactional leadership, defining transactional as a "give and take" relationship (1978, p. 21) while transformational leadership is built on cultural changes to the organisation through changing perceptions, values and motivations. Both these leadership styles are distinct from each other since their purposes are different as indicated in Table 1, on page 44. The purpose of transactional leadership in schools is the managing of the day-to-day

teaching and learning activities, while transformational leadership involves building school vision, intellectual stimulation and the individual growth of staff and restructuring of school goals (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1994). Although Burns (1978) is an old study, his view is still relevant as a source that makes reference to the 'cultural change' that is a characteristic of transformational leadership.

Transformational and transactional leadership drive the improvement of organisational structures. Transactional concerns the management activities to be completed, and policies to be implemented; this includes the daily operational routines, while the central focus of transformational leadership remains an organisational change.

A transactional leadership task for the SASL Home Language subject would involve implementation of resources, such as fully qualified educators who are able to sign proficiently, a techno-visual classroom for face-to-face communication and a fully visual curriculum, the required visual and text material found in the SASL CAPS Policy (DBE, 2013, p. 9). However, the transformation of the educational organisation also requires having higher expectations of Deaf learners concerning their ability to access the curriculum through two languages.

With SASL as a subject and a LOLT, there is an opportunity for Deaf culture to be highlighted: the curriculum content should prioritise Deaf role models and Deaf history while the focus should be on SASL linguistic development and improvement as well as on continuing finding new ways of improving a learner's linguistic accessibility (Parkin, 2009).

Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) posit that with regard to transformational leadership, authority and influence are not necessarily allocated to those occupying formal administrative positions, rather; this type of leadership is *"*attributed by organizational members to whomever is able to inspire their commitments to collective aspirations*"* (2006, p.205). This is a focus point of this study and will become more evident as it progresses.

As this study focusses on a curriculum application for persons with 'disabilities', a further leadership theory must be described, Transformative leadership.

Shields (2010, p. 4) positions transformational and transformative leadership as having similar roots for the improvement of the school, staff, resources and vision moving forward, but states that transformative leadership examines change that is based on addressing social rights and improving the lives of minority groups. For Shields (2003, p.1), transformative leadership begins with issues of social justice and democracy and links education and educational leadership to the contexts in which it finds itself. According to Shields (2004), transformative educational leaders are engaged in moral dialogue, discussing critical matters that deal with improvement for people who are normally marginalised. This dialogue facilitates the development of strong relationships, challenges existing beliefs and practices and grounds educational leadership in social justice. Similarly, Weiner (2003) as cited in Shields (2015, p.8) describes transformative leadership as "an exercise of power and authority that begins with questions of justice, democracy and the dialogue between the individual accountability and social responsibility."

I have highlighted three models of leadership as presented by Shields (2010, p. 6) see (Table 1, p. 44). Shields (2010) differentiates between three theories of leadership as opposed to the two theories by Burns, i.e. transformational, transactional and transformative leadership. I have specifically highlighted and focused on transformational and transformative Leadership because that is where this study would focus the dialogue of the SASL CAPS implementation.

Table 1: Differences between the three theories of leadership.

	Transactional	Transformational	Transformative
Related Theories	Bureaucratic Leadership Scientific management	School Effectiveness School Reform School Improvement Instructional Leadership	Critical Theories (race and gender) Leadership for social justice
Processes	Immediate cooperation through mutual benefit and agreement	Understanding of organisational culture, setting directions, developing people and redesigning the organisation	Deconstruction and reconstruction of social/ cultural knowledge frameworks that generate inequality, dialectic between individual and social
Key Values	Honesty, responsibility, honouring commitments and fairness	Liberty, justice and equality	Liberation, emancipation, equity, democracy, justice
Leader	Ensures smooth and efficient organisational operation through transactions	Looks for motive, develops common purpose, focusses on organisational goals	Lives with tension and challenge, requires a moral courage, activism
Emphasis	Means	Organisation	Deep and equitable change in social conditions

3.3.1. Transformational and Transformative Leadership

Van Loggerenberg (2002, p. 29) investigated transformational leadership and dynamic curriculum reform and concluded that this process implies a paradigm shift, resulting in re-conceptualised classroom practice, and that the reform process is more complex. She affirms that visionary leadership at school level is pivotal for effective dissemination of transformational processes. She refers to a ‘paradigm change’ while Shields (2003) puts forward a case for transformative leadership founded on a process of deconstruction, moving to reconstruction of new processes that promote change in

the social conditions of the learners. Freire (1972, p. 64) who also promotes empowering the minority, asserts that for transformation to occur, a deep and equitable change must be emphasised in the social conditions of an organisation (school). Many writers (Shields, 2004; Denzin and Lincoln, 2013 and Quantz, Rogers and Dantley, 1991) as cited in Shields (2010) concur that transformative educational leadership speaks to changing the context where it is found. This change is based on social justice and human rights through a critical assessment of current systems. Concurring with Freire's argument, who is regarded by many as the father of critical pedagogy, Durakoglu (2013, p.104) states that transformation can only occur when there is dialogue about issues of injustices and social inequalities, in similar vein to the thrust of Shields' argument on transformative leadership.

The members of this ongoing dialogue could vary, from Deaf staff members advising the SMT members to Deaf educators discussing the learning needs of Deaf learners with Deaf class assistants and SMT members, or even to SMT members discussing assessments with Deaf educators. The element of dialogue is crucial for SASL to unfold within the schools.

In the context of this research, transformative and transformational leadership approaches would require persons in management, together with Deaf staff working together, to create the change for SASL as the language of the school. As mentioned previously, the SMT is accountable to implement SASL according to the prescripts from the DBE which has adopted the Transactional leadership model for the realisation of NCS SASL CAPS HL in our schools. This is found in the Curriculum Management Report, (DBE, 2013) where the management of the school is expected to cooperate with the administrative and organisational requirements.

Mafora (2013, p.38), undertook a study in Transformative leadership with five principals of schools within Soweto. He argued that principals and their SMTs have to be at the forefront in making a difference to the inequities and marginalising conditions within schools.

Finally, the work of Quantz (et al) (1991) as cited in Shields (2015, p. 7) regards schools as organisations with transformative leaders that must use their power to transform the present social relations through various groups. These groups must begin dialogues that require a language of critique and possibility. What we need is

more dialogue in schools that starts by looking at present situations, then moving in identifying areas of change for the improvement in SASL for the improvement of the learning conditions of the learners. This should be an ongoing and critical dialogue to promote a change of how SASL learning conditions should change the social and academic conditions within the school.

In the next section, I focus on dialogue and aspects related to critical transformative approach.

3.3.2. Transformational leadership and dialogue

Durakoglu (2013, p.102-107) looked at Freire's conception of "Dialogue-based Education" and summarised this aspect as the relational opportunities created through education-based dialogue. In this dialogue, having a critical mind-set starts with holding open and honest dialogues that presuppose quality education for all Deaf learners. As indicated earlier, this critical dialogue, by school management teams and Deaf staff members with respect to the implementation of SASL for quality education, is the fundamental focus of this research. A leadership that makes critical dialogue an essential element to learning and teaching Deaf learners is the beginning of the acknowledgment of the shortcomings in our schools. Change cannot happen in our schools without an understanding of the need for it.

3.3.3. Roles and Responsibilities of SMT Members

Ndou (2009), who conducted a study on transformative leadership practices by school principals and SMTs, states that the SMT should not possess just detailed knowledge of the realities of teaching and learning, but that it should offer guidance and clarity of purpose on how it translates in the classroom. This is done through ongoing

> opportunities for discussions, reflection and evaluation to give learners the maximum scope to develop the academic, spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of human life *(*Ndou, 2009, p.38).

My intention is to stress the specific roles of the different members within the SMT by making references to workshops and reports about SASL and school managements. As this study examines the implementation of SASL by the management team, this

means that their administrative roles must be clearly understood by all teaching staff directly responsible for SASL.

At a workshop conducted by the DBE (2011), Dr Simelane[25] highlighted the respective roles and responsibilities of the principal, deputy principal and HODs for the implementation of SASL. Briefly, these responsibilities include:

Heads of Departments:

To promote the proper education of Deaf learners, engage in class teaching and liaise with relevant structures on the school's curricular and curriculum development.

Deputy Principals:

To provide professional leadership within the school and assist the principal by promoting proper education for Deaf learners, also assisting with the development of training programmes for staff.

Principal:

To ensure that the education of Deaf learners is promoted in accordance with approved policies, provide instructions and guidelines for the instructional programme and make sure that the school is provided with all necessary resources for effective teaching and effective recruitment of qualified educators according to recruitment policies.

Considering these roles, I revert to the guidelines provided by the DBE in the CMT report, (DBE, 2013, p.10-12), and align these specifically with the afore-mentioned roles. The SMTs have the following responsibilities ensuring effectiveness of SASL within their schools:

- Principals / SMTs must ensure that the minimum requirement is met, i.e. an educator offering SASL is fully qualified, and is paired with a Deaf assistant
- They must have attained the recognised three/four year teaching qualification with specialisation in SASL
- The teaching assistant should possess the accredited competency in SASL, at least at a NQF[26] level 5

[25] Dr. Simelane –Director: Inclusive Education with Department of Basic Education.
[26] NQF – National Qualifications Framework.

- The Deaf assistant must be fluent in SASL and should have meta-linguistic training on the level of NQF L 4 as a starting point
- For teachers currently teaching Deaf learners, they must attend in-service training in SASL signing skills at NQF level 5 and 6
- Focus of in-service training for educators and Deaf assistants must focus on Deaf culture, meta-linguistic competencies, grammar aspects of SASL, SASL curriculum and methodology.

As previously mentioned, one of the core duties of the SMT is to ensure sufficient resources are available for teaching and learning. Appropriate resources for effective SASL implementation include the purchasing and effective monitoring and control of equipment such as: laptops, DVD players, data projectors, televisions, memory devices as well as ensuring that classrooms are fitted with the necessary security for the safekeeping of the afore-mentioned equipment. All staff directly responsible for teaching SASL must have sufficient training for the recording, editing and storage of SASL teaching, learning and assessments for the learners.

It needs to be emphasised that these management tasks are necessary for the successful implementation of SASL, but a transformative social-cultural change is also required. In the work by Storbeck and Magongwa (2009), they placed emphasis on how changing the pedagogy for Deaf learners requires the following four approaches: the 'Contributions', 'Additive', 'Transformation' and 'Social Action approach'. The last two: Transformation and Social Action are approaches that are relevant for this research. For instance, the former approach challenges schools to ensure Deaf learners have access to "various perspectives and frames of reference from different heroes and contributions in events in history" (2009, p. 123) where these contributions assist the learners to start developing a critical mind-set whereas the latter approach builds on the former approach by "requiring students to reflect on their beliefs and values of the oppressive community and identify a course of action" (2009, p. 124) This is the radical change that should happen in schools, brought about by the paradigm shift in the regard for SASL, but the change starts at the Foundation level, and therefore the focus of this research is based at this level. It is here at the Foundation Phase that learners and educators must develop an approach using SASL as a cognitive language. It starts with providing maximum exposure to SASL in the years when learners are just starting to learn language, using language not only to

communicate, but also to make linguistic connections. The Foundation Phase is critical for early language development and language acquisition and building knowledge through the use of language. It is here that the socio-cultural development in South African Sign Language with peers and role models is introduced and where learners are introduced to their Deaf friends. Learners coming into this phase experience many language delays due to late exposure to sign language. This is therefore part of the problems we have with implementing SASL. It is in the first years within the Foundation Phase that learners are intensively stimulated in language development and undergo a socio-cultural emersion in language.

The socio-cultural model provides not just for the implementation of SASL, but also for a school's change of focus on how it views language and disability. Grosjean (1992) argues for the right to quality education for Deaf learners and the ability to use not only Sign Language proficiently but also another oral language (spoken or written format) so that the Deaf learners be given equal opportunities to succeed.

The following section explores Deaf education, a history about SASL and the rights of Deaf learners to use SASL as the language of teaching and learning for the successful implementation of SASL in our schools.

The next section focuses on Deaf Education and the pertinent changes that have occurred for this research.

3.4. Deaf Education: A brief history

Deaf learners have been faced with different languages used for teaching and learning and social communication in schools. This includes Total Communication and SSE (Sign supported English). Many of these approaches have yielded less than adequate results when looking at the academic abilities of Deaf learners. Although research carried out internationally yielded various success in specific projects, e.g. the Star Schools Project run by Dr Steven Nover in New Mexico from 1998-2002[27], there still remains a dearth of knowledge in South Africa on how the schools for Deaf learners are able to assist learners to succeed.

[27] 'Nover' Star Schools Project took place as a five year project, where critical pedagogy implementing sign language as part of the bilingual approach for Deaf learners was studied.

Deaf Education has been characterised by Deaf learners leaving schools unable to read and write on an equal level to their hearing peers, a result which has been verified by many studies on Deaf education (DeafSA, 2006; Magongwa 2008; DeafSA 2009; Störbeck et al, 2010) Some of the reasons attributed to the low literacy levels include: the different pedagogical approaches practised at different schools catering for Deaf learners, an inaccessible curriculum and the inability of educators to adequately sign or assist Deaf learners to access an academic curriculum.

Störbeck *et al* (2009, p. 142) refers to schools for the Deaf and explains that mind-sets have not changed. Curriculum content is not covered according to the prescribed curriculum as educators select that which they are able to sign, excluding that which poses a problem for the teacher. This then becomes a problem when one is trying to assess the standards within Deaf education. This situation additionally becomes complex when Deaf learners are identified late, learn a language (Sign Language or any accessible oral language) later, or when Deaf learners have little or no language support or any stimulation at home.

Prior to 1994 all schools for the Deaf were segregated along racial lines and divided according to the spoken language of the ethnic groups in line with separate educational development policy (Störbeck *et al*, 2009, p.136). Despite the abolishment of the Apartheid Policy, several previously Black schools continue to be poorly resourced in their facilities and what they are able to offer learners. This particular research site has good resources and facilities, but learners come from socio-economically deprived homes, where there is little to no language stimulation from the family. When Deaf teaching staff conduct SASL classes for parents, the attendance was very poor.

Many of the afore-mentioned studies have also revealed that schools have not fully grasped the socio-cultural model of deafness and find themselves unable to move from a deficit model, the medical model,[28] of deafness. The stakeholders at schools, (school administrators, the principal, deputy principal, and the HOD and the Deaf and

[28] See Chapter 2 (Medical Model and Social Model outlined).

hearing staff) are the drivers for the change required to create schools where the recognition and regard for Deaf learners and SASL becomes paramount.

The DeafSA[29] Position Paper (2006) emphasised the right of the Deaf learner to be educated in SASL as the home language. This right provides the recognition and the regard for the Deaf and Sign Language that is fundamental to the socio-cultural paradigm of Deafness. However, as discussed earlier, the DBE has given the responsibility for implementing and establishing SASL as a language within a school to the principal and the SMT. Nonetheless, the above change process can only be achieved if the SMT asks critical questions about how to transform the school by prioritising a few critical issues in the academic life of a Deaf child. These include implementing SASL for learner academic success, making literacy (Sign Language and another language (oral/ written) a priority, while having high expectations for each Deaf learner and the belief that every Deaf or HOH child can succeed, their main concern (Peel, 2004; Ganiso, 2012; DeafSA 2003, 2006; Akach, 2010).

3.4.1. Sign Language and Human Rights

Discrimination against Deaf people and their right to use SASL is prevalent throughout the South Africa. Magongwa (2008, p. 48) makes the following statement:

> Worldwide, the discrimination against Deaf people happens on a daily basis…within an educational setting, the use of sign language as the language of learning for Deaf students is not catered for, neither is sign language nor is Deaf history or culture taught as schools subjects, particularly in South Africa.

Currently, even with the introduction of SASL as a LOLT, SASL is not officially recognised as an official language, while in other European countries such as the United Kingdom and the USA, Sign Language is officially and legislatively recognised as the language of Deaf people. (Magongwa, 2008)

SASL is a visual-spatial language used by the Deaf Community of South Africa, (DeafSA 2003, 2009). SASL is also a natural language equal to spoken languages

[29] DeafSA- Deaf Federation of South Africa – Nationally recognised body for the promotion of rights and development of Deaf people in South Africa.

that allows for opportunities for Deaf learners to grow, learn and express thoughts and feelings as contained in the SASL CAPS policy (DBE, 2014, p. 8).

Provision for the regard and recognition for SASL is made within the Constitution of South Africa[30] (1996) Section 6 as the language of choice for Deaf learners. The South Africa Schools Act[31] (1996) provides for the official recognition of SASL as a language of teaching and learning at a public school. Furthermore through the Integrated National Disability Strategy[32], the INDS, (1997) promotes a strategy for the transformation from a medical model to a socio-cultural model to take the rights of people with disabilities into account. As a result the DBE, with several other stakeholders such as, DeafSA and PANSLAB[33] had to develop an education policy to "Promote and protect equal educational opportunities of children with communication disabilities and protect their language medium" (1997b, p. 68).

The national policy, Education White Paper no. 6 (EWP6)[34] , (DoE, 2001) is essentially concerned with the removal of barriers to learning for special needs learners and focusses on changing and modifying the school environment. Protecting the rights of all learners through the Constitution is mandated through this policy. It also states that specific needs of learners must be addressed within an inclusive education system. Störbeck, Magongwa and Parkin (2010, p. 141) highlighted four such barriers from this policy which I believe are important for school principals and their SMT to be cognisant of:

- Inappropriate language of learning and teaching;
- Inappropriate curriculum;
- Inappropriate and inadequate support services;
- Inadequate and inappropriately trained school managers (principals).

[30] SASL in The Constitution - Act 108 of 1996 Learners have "the right to receive education in the official Language or languages of their choice" (29 (1) & (2)).

[31] The South .African Schools Act (South African Schools Act 1996 [No. 84 of 1996] Chapter 2, No 6(4)) makes provision for SASL to be used as a language of learning and teaching (LOLT).

[32] INDS – Integrated National Disability Strategy: A national strategy document that focusses on the rights, rehabilitation, education and employment for people with disabilities. (1997b)

[33] PANSLAB – Pan South African Language Board

[34]Education White Paper 6 –In 2001, the DoE issued a basic framework policy document, focussing on Special Needs Education, looking at Inclusive Education and Training System

In this study, I address the implementation of CAPS SASL, in line with the points as raised by Störbeck *et al* (2010, p.141). Implementing SASL requires a great deal of dialogue among the persons responsible for this process which include the SMT with expert advice from Deaf staff members. This group should be analysing the curriculum and how it can be used to address issues of providing a quality education for Deaf learners in the context of a school.

In concluding, a review of the progress of the White Paper 6 Policy done in 2015 emphasised a rights-based approach for the full implementation of quality education for learners with barriers. It states that,

> *It is also about the acceptance of equal rights and social justice for all learners and this is achieved by transforming the education system to effectively respond to and support learners, parents and communities by promoting the removal of barriers to learning and participation in that education system in an incremental manner.* (DBE, 2015, p. 3)

As principal, my view on adherence to White Paper 6 Policy means that schools should analyse the barriers to learning within our schools and find ways on how management teams can address it. The implementation of SASL CAPS Policy represents the start of the removal of barriers, recognition for equal rights and social justice for all learners, the respect for quality education for all Deaf learners: this is the change required.

This change referred to throughout this study, is contained in legislation and policy, such as the Constitution, SASL, INDS, White Paper 6 Policy [35] and protecting the right to quality education for Deaf learners at school level. This is the responsibility of the SMT, this is a dramatic change for schools for Deaf learners and as expressed by the views of Störbeck et al (2010, p. 141)

> …of policies on deafness to be explored … for effective implementation, specialised training for teachers …leadership needs guidance as they plan to meet the needs of their unique learners.

Current policy and training from DBE focusses on SASL as a language subject, which is an essential element needed by educators engaged in teaching this subject.

Educators are finding implementation difficult, as this study will reveal; therefore ongoing training is needed. However, here I am also referring to the school leadership training on a rights-based approach for quality Deaf Education for all learners and what that constitutes on two levels, in the day-to-day activities of school: the transactional tasks of managing, but also in the transformational tasks at school. This is a matter of exploring the school vision, the training by the educators, how school goals and school priorities are planned for, which includes the right to use SASL as a LOLT.

The next section considers SASL as a language of instruction and identifies the inherent requirements for its implementation.

3.4.2. Language Policy, Language Planning and SASL Implementation

As a principal, I am not aware of any guide or policy from the DBE with a specific school management and leadership process to follow for implementing SASL policy at schools. Thus, it becomes expected that the implementation of SASL CAPS be undertaken by SMTs of individual schools in ways that are relevant to their context. At the same time, in this context, there is the potential for the transformation of the regard for SASL, its policies and practices, which should guide the implementation.

For Reagan (2008, p. 175-176) the use of Sign Language in the education of Deaf learners, is not just for educational purposes, but is a fundamental human right. To establish SASL as a language of learning and teaching, the socio-cultural view must be adopted as an integral part of Deaf education. To highlight this point, I have listed the pertinent recommendations by Reagan (2008, p.181):

- SASL should be used as the medium of instruction within the classroom ensuring that Deaf learners have full access to the curriculum, but also that educators demonstrate full competence in SASL;
- Training programmes must be in place for hearing parents and hearing teachers entering the system;
- SASL should be offered as an additional language option for students and learners in other schools;
- SASL should be added as an official language of South Africa;

- Several Government agencies e.g. PANSALB[36] to further language policy planning that influences decisions on how SASL is implemented.

The DBE has based the implementation of SASL[37] in line with many of the social-cultural recommendations found in advocacy groups and organisations such as DeafSA, SLED and PANSALB. These include: SASL as a Home Language, ongoing training for staff offering SASL as a subject, funding for additional infrastructure, additional staffing for the implementation of SASL and several in-service training programmes[38] to capacitate staff at schools. The SMT and by implication the principal, is responsible not merely for the implementation of SASL HL, but also for contextualising this implementation in a manner unique to his/her school. However, the approach taken by the DBE for the implementation of the policy is a "top-down" one, as evidenced by assumptions that are stated within the SASL CAPS policy for grades R-3, (DBE, 2014, p.9):

> In developing this curriculum several assumptions were made including that the CAPS for SASL would match as closely as possible other Home languages in terms of structure, content and sequence; that teachers of the curriculum would be skilled in SASL and appropriate teaching methodologies and that appropriate SASL learning and teaching support material (LTSM) would be identified and developed.

The expectation is that the teaching and learning of SASL should be equal to other oral languages which are on a Home Language level. A further requirement of the DBE is that teachers within this crucial 'starting' phase will be sufficiently skilled by means of training programmes to have the necessary SASL language abilities and the "appropriate" teaching methodology to deliver this subject.

In a presentation by Ingrid Parkin[39] (a Deaf principal) to principals and deputy principals at a workshop organised by DBE[40] regarding the role of management, she highlighted several responsibilities to be adopted for quality education, looking

[36] PANSALB – Pan South African Language Board.
[37] SASL Implementation Requirements – See CMT Report (2013) Also SASL CAPS Foundation Phase (2014) Policy documentation.
[38] SASL Training Programmes include - Ongoing SASL national training of educators and teachers assistants in SASL content and assessments. Additional training also included improved English writing strategies for Deaf class assistants.
[39] Ingrid Parkin – Deaf Principal of St. Vincent School for the Deaf in Rosebank.
[40] DBE – Department of Basic Education – School Management Workshop in Pretoria, 9-11 March 2009.

specifically at the proficient use of SASL for teaching and learning. Two recommendations concluded from the workshop and which are pertinent to this study, have been highlighted:

- Schools should move away from entrenching the 'dependency mode' and have high expectations for Deaf and Hard of Hearing learners; this also includes moving away from dependence-mode on the DoE;
- Mind-sets of principals must refocus on curriculum.

In 2010, as a teacher, Batchelor (2010, p.498-501) when considering the Deaf, affirmed the above recommendations about language and quality teaching. Although there are diverse challenges within schools for the Deaf, schools must transform to offer SASL and provide quality education. Fundamental to successful implementation is the mind-set change within the leadership at schools to ensure that teachers are competent on three levels: a) to be proficient in SASL; b) have a good understanding of one's own subject domain and most importantly; c) understand Deaf pedagogy to teach one's own subject domain.

Störbeck and Magongwa, (2009) in contemplating Deaf Culture, Deaf Identity and preparing Deaf learners for the adult world, maintain that (2009, p.124), more important than teachers being fluent and having a good grasp of Deaf culture, they also need to understand their own values, beliefs and prejudices. Necessary are mind-set changes, not just by teachers, but by persons in management positions who have the authority to make decisions that influence the teaching and learning in the class. Schools are not always able to follow and comply with top-down approaches, as the context of each school is different, so that it is here where leadership and the manner in which programmes are implemented bring changes to mind-sets and perspectives. School managers and SMTs must bring staff together in creating a vision of how SASL should be the primary language not simply for teaching and learning but be a fundamental aspect of the socio-cultural nature of the school as well.

The change could occur solely when school managers are able to encourage staff, in the implementation of SASL, as to how the pedagogy is organised not just for a curriculum of facts, but rather for teachers "…to become agents of liberation and

empowerment" (Banks, 1994, p.160 cited in Storbeck and Magongwa, 2009, p.124). Here SASL education cannot just be about teaching a subject, teaching facts, but also the use of the SASL CAPS curriculum as a tool for thinking critically in all other subjects. The issue is not only about what is taught but how it is taught (Ibid, 2009, p.125). Freire speaks about teacher and learner coming together and understanding the problem together, "problem-posing education". This means that the teacher is able to acknowledge the skills of the learner and allows the learner to be critically minded. In an SASL school environment, that would constitute hearing teachers acknowledging that Deaf learners and Deaf staff are more proficient in SASL than themselves. Furthermore, hearing staff could become proficient teachers of the Deaf by improving their signing skills and knowledge of Deaf education and Deaf pedagogy to teach SASL.

The next section focusses on bilingual education, particularly at educational approaches practised internationally and in South Africa.

3.5. Bilingual Education

Bilingual education refers to the use of two or more languages, where the majority language is normally the language of the community and the home language or 'mother-tongue' language is the minority language (Garcia, 2008).

Bilingual education refers to education in more than one language, and could encompass more than two languages. Bilingualism within Deaf education is more than just two or more languages: it is a 'Bilingual-Bicultural' educational approach that is viewed as a cultural issue (Störbeck, 2000; Swanwick, 2000): the learner is born into a hearing culture and generally exposed to Deaf culture and Sign Language when entering school. The bilingual-bicultural approach advocates that children who are deaf be taught in Sign Language (ASL, BSL, and SASL) as the L1 (primary language). The (L2), secondary language, would then be taught as a written and/or spoken language used in the community, with the L2, as the language of literacy. Lane, Hoffmeister and Behan (1996: 294) as cited in Steyn (2015, p. 38) state that the bilingual-bicultural approach has various benefits: (1) it can foster a healthy self-image in the learner; (2) it can develop the learner's cognitive potential; (3) creates a bridge

to the learner's existing linguistic and cultural knowledge, and (4) develops the learner's reading and expressive skills in the spoken language (which is his/her L2).

The aim of bilingual-bicultural education is to develop age-appropriate fluency in both languages where the academic subject matter is taught transitionally, using the learner's primary language, Sign Language, and where both languages are viewed as equal.

Through this educational approach, the Deaf learner is able to use two languages successfully, their natural language which is a visual language, i.e. Sign Language as well as an oral language through written and or oral means. However, this poses a challenge, since as much as 95% of Deaf learners live with hearing parents, who cannot provide the natural access to a First language (SASL) for the Deaf; therefore, schools have the responsibility of providing quality access linguistically for two languages for a Deaf learner, SASL as well as an oral or written form of an oral language.

3.5.1. Bilingual-bicultural approach – other countries.

This programme has proved successful in Sweden (Mashie, 1995) when in 1981, the Swedish Parliament passed a law stating that people who are Deaf need to be bilingual to function successfully within family, school and society. Recent developments in Sweden in Bilingual education as indicated by Svartholm (2014) indicate that with regards to the reading abilities of Deaf students who completed their schooling according to this model, they reached a reading level corresponding to hearing children in the same age group. In their writing they still made some grammatical errors, showing that Swedish was their second language, but their written language was nevertheless well-functioning and fully intelligible to others. (2014, p. 37)

Furthermore, with written assessment testing, Svartholm mentions the following findings from the school year, 2007-2008:

> The percentages of Deaf students who passed the tests were ranging between Mathematics (55%), English (59%), Swedish (69%) and Sign Language (77%). The corresponding figure for hearing students that year was nearly 95% on average for these core subjects. Thus, Deaf students did not reach the same levels as hearing students did. (2014, p. 38)

Although the Deaf students had not reached similar academic levels as their hearing counterparts, Svartholm indicated that the number of Deaf students at tertiary institutions had increased from 48 students in Universities to 143 students in 2008-2009 (2014, p. 38). She concludes that with bilingual education over the years of implementation, the following should be adhered to (2014. p.46-47):

- All persons within the 'inner and outer' circle responsible for the child's education should have a shared responsibility in providing the child a visual accessible language;
- Teachers of the Deaf must be fluent in Sign language, but also be cognisant of the linguistic demands in teaching Sign Language as a Home language; in doing this they develop their visual awareness and visual communication skills;
- Opportunities must be developed for the child to communicate naturally and engage in meaningful communication, with a variety of role models providing access for social, cognitive and emotional development.

Bilingual education is theoretically built on the Cummins 'Language Independence'. (Cummings and Swain, 1986, p.207) This theory proposes that the Deaf child must be exposed to their first language as early as possible. Second language acquisition of a written oral language is dependent on the first language as a point of reference. Only when the learner has mastered Sign Language and gained a general knowledge through Sign Language, is a model for teaching English reading and writing introduced. Depending upon the amount of residual hearing the learner might have, learners are then taught/ exposed to speech, adding another communicative mode. However, Sign Language is a visual language and Mayer (2010) points out that as many Deaf learners come from hearing homes where "the natural" acquisition of their L1, is not natural but "protracted". This means that Deaf learners takes a prolonged time in 'learning' their Home language. When deaf children come to school, there is a vast difference in signing abilities of the learners which provides a stumbling block when measured using L1 to gain linguistic access to L2 (Written, then hearing).

Mayer (2010) further reported on a bilingual study done by Johnson, Leigh and Forman (2002) about the principles, practices and outcomes of their Sign language based programmes and the impact of these on Deaf learners' educational abilities in

Australia. Their findings included concerns on how to implement the Sign Bilingual programme fully, Deaf learners were not exposed to and engaged in the natural language at an early onset, there was no family support as well as little support of Sign Language as the HL. Furthermore, a lack of second language pedagogy and physical resources for teaching Auslan (Australian Sign Language) at preschool and primary school contributed to the difficulties of the success of the Sign bilingualism programmes for students.

Many countries, such as Sweden, Finland and Australia have learners fitted with one or two cochlear implants, from a very early age, promoting a strong emphasis on hearing therapy for Deaf learners (Svartholm, 2014, p. 45). In contrast, the South African government has not prioritised cochlear implants for Deaf learners. Instead there are a miniscule number of learners that are fitted from private funding, therefore, most deaf learners' choice of linguistic access in this country is through a visual modality, SASL and also an oral language in written or spoken format for literacy purposes (Storbeck and Moodley, 2014).

A further consideration for the SMT and the choice of SASL as a L1 or L2 is learners that have cochlear implants and enter the Foundation Phase. A cochlear implant is a device that is surgically connected to the inner ear as it bypasses the outer and middle ear where there could be a damaged pathway. The first cochlear implant was done at the Chris Hani hospital in 2009[41].

Currently at this research site, there are three learners with cochlear implants within the Foundation phase. SASL is taught to these learners as a L1, and English through written format, and where possible with the assistance of additional speech therapy, also through oral format.

3.5.2. Deaf bilingual education – South Africa

Bilingual Education for the Deaf in South Africa has not been without challenges. There are not many fully bilingual (SASL and another oral language) teachers (Deaf and Hearing) of the Deaf (Störbeck 2000, Glaser 2012, Akach 2010). A further complication within our South African context is the multi-lingual oral homes from

[41] The Chris Hani Hospital Cochlear implant Programme started development in 2006, with the first patient, a two year old boy implanted in 2009.

where our Deaf learners come. A Deaf learner is introduced to their primary visual language when entering Foundation phase, where the language of literacy is English but the language where informal communication is based could range between any one of the eleven official languages.

A model for bilingual education was proposed by Störbeck in 1994, as cited in Störbeck (2000, p.56). Herein she argues for a bilingual education model where SASL is the first language and the language of instruction, and furthermore that an oral language, as the second language, be used as a written language for academic skills, once fluency in SASL has been reached. According to Störbeck, this model must be fully supported by role models from the Deaf Community as well as the hearing community as displayed below. (2000, p. 56)

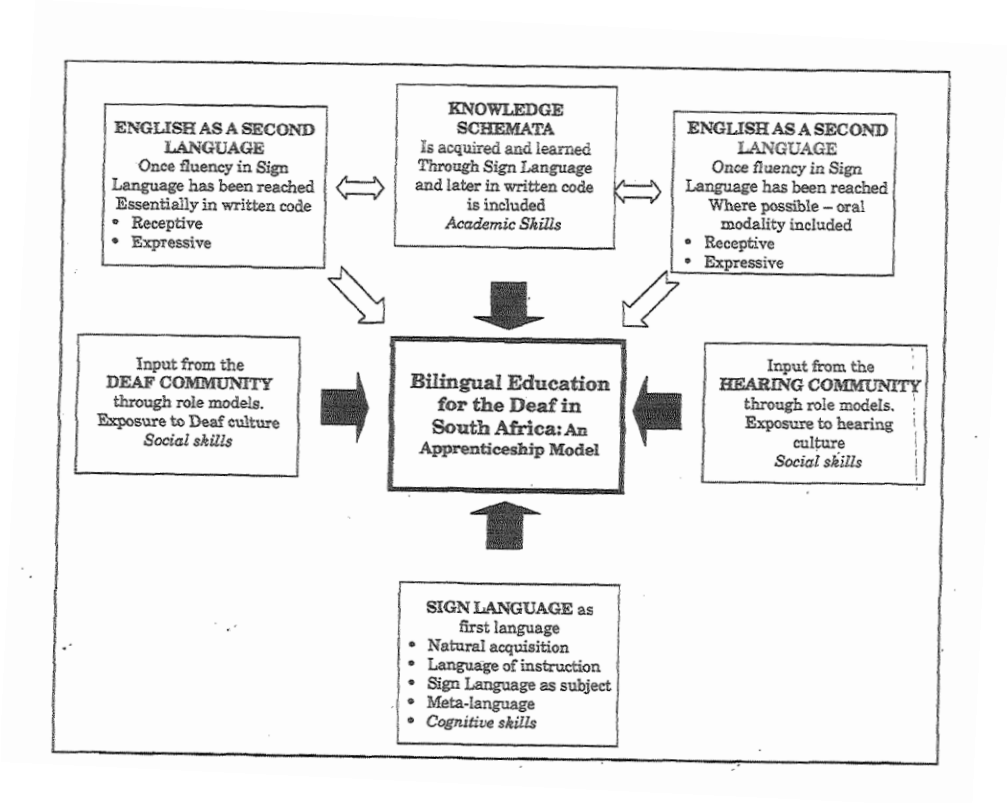


Figure 2: *A Model for Bilingual Education in South Africa*. Störbeck (1994)

Störbeck (2000) conducted a longitudinal study where Deaf learners provided valuable information regarding their language preference, that being SASL, but also acknowledged the need for the academic written component. The article concludes with Störbeck encouraging all involved in Deaf Education to keep on asking the difficult questions:

> …the central question to be raised should be how theories of bilingualism – that are based on two spoken languages – can be applied directly to Bilingualism in Deaf Education, where the one language is visual-gestural and the other is a written version of an oral language? (Storbeck, (2000, p. 58)

In 2014, a workshop presentation by Professor Akach and Mr Magongwa (2011) for SMTs on School Management held in Benoni identified four goals for successful bilingual education within schools for the Deaf:

1. To enable Deaf children to be linguistically competent;
2. To provide access to a wide curriculum;
3. To facilitate good literacy skills;
4. To provide deaf pupils with a positive sense of their own identity.

By way of comparison, Steyn (2015) conducted a longitudinal study on the implementation of the new SASL CAPS Curriculum with four learners entering Grade R at a school for the Deaf in Western Cape. This study highlighted that educators and teacher assistants with proficient SASL abilities were part of the Foundation team. Hostel staff were also trained in SASL proficiency. There was a separate unit established for the development of LTSM, as SASL LTSM was not readily available. The school made adaptations to their content subjects, as the school focussed on SASL, as the LOLT for the school. Their progress with implementing SASL CAPS Grade R showed proficient signing skills with the learners and fluent use of SASL, even though just one learner had access to pre-school Sign language through Deaf parents, other learners had grade appropriate reading skills in an oral language.

It is important to note that the implementation has proven to be successful, but equally important to note the additional changes that were added by the school, which were not prescribed in the curriculum. These include aspects where the school management made the cultural changes possible, such as:

- The establishment of a specialised LTSM unit at the school for additional production of SASL materials;
- Additional classes in SASL for staff, by the school;

- The decision was taken that SASL would be the LOLT as well as ensuring all assessments are available in written format as well as a visual format;
- Additional technological equipment for the above;
- Research about SASL and the school's progress on SASL by the Provincial Department of Education;
- Commitment to the implementation of SASL by ensuring systems that promote a social-cultural approach to SASL.

The school also added a visual SASL component which made provision for learners to access assessments for other subjects such as Life Skills, Mathematics in written or SASL formats, depending on the linguistic abilities of the learners. In this way, the school provided access to curriculum and assessment by giving learners the right to choose which communicative mode they could complete the assessments.

3.5.3. Dynamic bilingualism

Garcia (2012, p.10) provides a definition of 'dynamic bilingualism' as *the development of different languages at different levels*. In this type of bilingualism, languages are not kept separate and taught separately, but rather the plurality of languages is brought to the learning classroom and assists learners with 'making meaning within their learning'. Garcia posits that the 'plurilingualism' practices of languages "are both the centre of how language occurs, as well as the goal of communication in an increasingly multilingual world" (Garcia, 2012, p.4)

In a recent study conducted by Humphries (2013) he explored a paradigm shift in the Bilingual Model in Deaf education as "Schooling in ASL". This model moves away from a deficit perspective of bilingual education for Deaf learners, keeping deaf learners separate according to their Deaf or HOH status, as well as keeping languages such as ASL and English separate in the classroom environment. This model embraces the multi-culturalism that Deaf learners bring to the class, as well as the fact that Deaf learners come from homes where neither Sign Language nor English is practised and where multilingualism is embraced.

Humphries' model differs from Bilingual models in Sweden and Norway, as he stated that too little ethnic diversity is present in those countries compared to the USA. Similarly, the situation in South Africa is one where our Deaf learners are from homes

of multicultural and multilingual settings, and their exposure to SASL and English is rather limited. Humphries states that (2013, p. 18)

> Schooling in ASL, therefore has to be school for all Deaf children, regardless of language of the home/ community. The primary focus may be on the development of two languages, ASL and English, but it begins with the acceptance and inclusion of all languages brought to the classroom by the children and all languages they go home to their communities.

Previously, Deaf children were kept separate, and taught differently, depending on their language or communicative practices. Humphries' study in 2013 revealed that the combined group with the different communicative abilities is a strength, a learning tool in the ASL class, using a socio-cultural rich context in teaching both the languages of ASL and English. He is cognisant of the additional learning challenges that some Deaf learners pose, as found in the Gallaudet study (2011) with some learners presenting with one or other form of learning disability, but feel that these learners should receive the necessary support, just as any other hearing learner with a similar learning need would be supported.

In the South African context Deaf Education context, the Humphries's (2013) study holds much potential for the implementation of SASL, because Deaf learners coming into Foundation Phase have little or no exposure to SASL or English First Additional language. His model, 'Schooling in ASL', presents a pedagogy that focusses on the strengths of the Deaf staff, their knowledge on how Deaf learners 'learn' best, and taking this 'best practice' into the classroom. For Humphries, the central idea in this approach is

> Doing schooling is ASL is the beneficial interaction of sign and vision, languages and cultures, and even speech and hearing, in richer social environments that are viable learning environments. Code switching and modality-switching are natural reactions to communicative situations needs in the classroom. (Humphries, 2013, p.19)

This approach is based on using ASL for academic language through alternative pathways and using ASL to support the learning of English, a bilingual education narrative guided by Deaf staff trained in this manner (2013, p.9).

3.6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter focuses on Transformation and aspects of Transformative leadership and fundamental elements for management in the critical dialogue when SASL is implemented in the school.

This chapter also provided an in-depth explanation about the role of Sign Language and human rights, and the social-cultural models promoting for the rights of people with disabilities.

In summary, the literature explored the complex landscape of Deaf Education, its history and how those complexities influence decisions about language usage within the school.

Sign Bilingualism is discussed, looking at international models and theories, and what that potential could possibly hold for the implementation within our current schooling situations.

The next chapter outlines the research methodology and rationale for employing this particular methodology in this research.

Chapter Four

Methodology

"A generative transformational view of change, sees everything in a process of coming into being, whereby anything at any point of time holds potentials already latent within itself" (McNiff and Whitehead, 2010, p.35)

4.1. Introduction

This chapter provides information as to how the research was conducted, starting with a brief explanation of Epistemological and Methodological concepts and a discussion of qualitative research. This is followed by outlining case study research instrumental for this study, and how it relates to this process. The role of the researcher as 'insider' is discussed extensively, exploring issues of validity as well as ethical considerations.

The research site, selection of participants, their importance for this research and data collection strategies with the participants are described thereafter.

The research tools used in this enquiry include longitudinal surveys, focus group discussions during the programme and upon completion of the research period, as well as observations. This chapter concludes with issues pertaining to validity, reliability, analysis of data and ethical considerations.

4.2. Research Paradigm

A research paradigm is a worldview or a whole framework of beliefs, values and methods within which research takes place. Henning (2004, p. 3) differentiates between quantitative and qualitative paradigms by understanding the research through a *"quest for understanding and for an in-depth inquiry."*

This study is qualitative and is an in-depth exploration about the critical dialogues for leadership roles and the implementation of SASL within the Foundation Phase between the SMT and the Deaf staff that influences transformational and transformative leadership.

Based on the focus of this study, a further consideration would be the knowledge of understanding about SASL, that all the participants brings to this dialogue and what informs this knowledge about their SASL implementation understanding.

Henning (2004, p.15) differentiates between epistemology[42] and methodology[43]: where the former is the exploration of questions such as what we know; and how do we know what we know, while the latter refers to the specific 'ways' we can use to try and understand the world better. McNiff and Whitehead (2010, p. 33) indicate that epistemology refers to what is known and how it comes to be known whereas methodology refers to how things are done.

It was important to establish the 'epistemology' of the participants, not only knowing what needs to done in this process, but for participants to explain their understanding about SASL teaching, as well as their leadership role expectations from the SMT that informed their understanding within the Foundation Phase. It was important to establish the participants' prior knowledge about SASL, what informed their perceptions regarding the implementation thereof and how that prior knowledge would impact on the dialogue.

The 'methodology' involved participants completion of two sets of questionnaire survey forms with two sets of in-depth focus group discussions, which focussed on participant's prior and post understanding on SASL implementation and their expectations about the leadership roles of the SMT for this process.

In the context of this research, what we do know is that SASL CAPS HL is a subject that has to be implemented, also that it has never been implemented officially before and that this process needs to be understood, not only as a policy, but also in practice. This is where I locate this research, focusing on the roles played by members in the SMT for this purpose.

[42] Epistemology – From the Greek word, 'Episteme" meaning knowledge, Epistemology is the study of knowledge. (Henning, 2014, p.15)
[43] Methodology – The methods used in finding 'how we go about enquiring knowledge'. (Wilson, 2013, p. 81)

4.2.1. Qualitative research

This research is an empirical qualitative study, which is described by Denzin and Lincoln (2013, p. 7) as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world …consists of interpretive material practices that makes the world visible and transforms the world.” The difference between a quantitative and qualitative research is that with the former, the research is based in an objective and unbiased way, collecting quantifiable data and analyses it. (Creswell, 2008, p. 46) This is done to find an explanation of the trends or relationship amongst the variables to provide a detailed understanding of what is being studied. (Creswell, 2008, p.51). The latter, qualitative research, is when the researcher obtains views from participants, then describes and analyses the responses to reach possible themes related to the research query. (Creswell, 2008, p. 46)

In qualitative research, the study examines the natural setting and attempts to make sense of it through the interpretive meanings people bring to it. Creswell (2008, p.62) explains that qualitative research requires exploration: the researcher must obtain a “deep understanding of the context”, to explore the situation in its totality. He defines qualitative research as “a means of exploring and understanding the meanings individuals or groups ascribe to a social human problem which is context-rich.” Therefore, to understand the research within the context means to understand behaviour and perspectives as they are influenced by context. This deep understanding of context is what makes this research significant.

Furthermore, according to Schumacher and McMillan (2010) qualitative research involves a process of inquiry where the researcher collects data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their setting and in their context, while Koshy (2010, p. 80) refers to a “naturalistic enquiry” which is qualitative in nature and where data obtained is context-related and context-dependent.

This qualitative study is not just about understanding how the SASL CAPS curriculum in the Foundation Phase was made accessible to learners within the unique context of this school, but also deals with investigating the way in which the process of transformational and transformative leadership implementation had brought about many discussions and expertise from different sectors of the school, as well as the changes which informed those discussions.

4.2.2. Critical paradigm

The research framework for this study is incorporated within two paradigms, the critical and the interpretive paradigm.

Within the critical paradigm, Henning (2004, p. 23) states that "research using this paradigm aims at promoting critical consciousness and breaking down the institutional structures and arrangements and examines the power relationships" between hearing and Deaf staff. This 'breaking down of structures' in the context of this research is a reference to the experts in SASL knowledge; in this study, the experts are the Deaf staff members. They are not in management positions but through the implementation, their leadership roles become important in driving this process. The critical paradigm allows us to think seriously about leadership roles and the power-relations which play out in the roles of the participants. Henning emphasises that "lived experiences and the social relations that structure these experiences are the main focus of critical research". (2004, p.2)

4.2.3. Interpretive paradigm

The interpretive paradigm is concerned with finding meaning within social situations and social phenomenon. For Henning,

> Knowledge is constructed not only by observable phenomena but also by descriptions of people's intentions, beliefs, values and reasons, meaning making and self-understanding…the researcher has to look at different places and at different things on order to understand a phenomenon (Henning, 2004, p.1).

The purpose of this paradigm is to gain a deep level of understanding of the perceptions of a specific group. The specific group in this research refers to members of staff instrumental to teach, monitor and facilitate SASL within the Foundation phase. The main research group was the members of the SMT. I investigated the roles of the different members on the SMT who are responsible for SASL, comparing their roles to those of the roles of the Deaf staff members and how these different roles are understood during this research. How those roles played out and changed was pertinent as we dealt with the challenges of implementing SASL CAPS in the Foundation Phase.

4.3. Research Design

According to Wilson (2013, p. 81) the research design "is the strategy which integrates the different components of the research project in a cohesive and coherent way". Creswell (2008, p.59) defines research design as "the specific procedures involved in the last three steps of the research process namely data collection, data analysis and report writing". In essence, the purpose of the research process is to gather data, conduct an intervention based on an investigation, evaluate the findings through reflection and plan the intervention. This research design is based on case study methodology.

4.4 Case Study Research

The exploratory case study methodology was used for this research, as it provides detailed knowledge about a single case. Wilson describes the case study as:

> a traditional, systematic approach to looking at events, collecting data, analysing information and reporting the results, with the end goal of describing the case under investigation as fully and as accurately as possible (Wilson, 2013, p. 257).

Stake (1995) as cited in Creswell (2007, p. 244) refers to a case study as a "bonded system" which has boundaries, in time and place. Furthermore (Stake, 1995) the 'case' could be an event, a process or programme, that is researched in-depth.

Yin (1984) as cited in Bassey (1999, p.26) points out that a case study is an empirical inquiry and "…Investigates a contemporary phenomenon, within its real-life context, especially when those boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.'

This case study is about a single event, the implementation of SASL and the leadership practices employed by members of the School Management Team and also focuses on the contributions made by Deaf teachers and Deaf class assistant members which were instrumental in this research. The research period was for the duration of 2015 and as mentioned takes place at one school site.

Throughout the year, it became evident that the introduction of CAPS SASL did more than influence our planning and preparation programmes for a new language; at the same time the implementation provided a transformation not only in school leadership but also in the perceptions of SASL as well as in the mind-set of staff members and to

a lesser degree, the learners. This research is an attempt to illustrate these changes through the case study method.

One of the values of case studies lies in presenting the richness of the complexity of all the different influences, perceptions and interpretations that add meaning to the findings reached. Merriam (1998, p.29) refers to a 'thick description' as the complete, literal description of an incident or entity being investigated, while Denzin (1998b, p.83) as cited in Creswell (2007, p.194) refers to a "'thick description' in a case study as the narrative that has to present detail, context, emotions …the voices, feelings, actions and meanings of interacting individuals are heard".

In this case study, the thick description portrays not only the implementation process of SASL, but also an in-depth understanding of the transformational and transformative changes brought about over a period of a year.

4.5. Researcher's Role

An important aspect running through this research was the integration of my role as principal with that of researcher and the subsequent transformation of both roles through critical reflection that came about as I examined the leadership practices of the SMT.

As McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p. 348) point out, "gaining entry into the field", the natural setting of the participants with reference to the research field, examines the researcher's role. This is done through either a "complete outsider or complete insider role", referring to data collection, the setting and the position of the researcher in relation to the participants. The "outsider" is totally detached from the participants, or the research site, "coming in, collecting data and then leaving" (2010, p.348), while the "insider" has a position within an organisation, and engages in natural processes within an organisation.

My multiple roles as researcher, participant, principal of the school as well as member of the SMT, comprised that of "complete insider", alternating across roles during the research. Within this dynamic role 'positionality', the SMT was the focus of this research. As a researcher I was immersed in this process and how it unfolded at the school; hence the constant reference to the 'positionality' of the different roles: insider researcher as a member of the SMT an outsider researcher commenting on the

process, but also an insider participant observing and reflecting on the process, collecting, analysing and interpreting data. Greene (2014, p.2) refers to the complexities of a researcher's positionality; she defines this role thus: "….positionality is determined where one stands in relation to the other, this can shift throughout the process of conducting research. The positions are relative to the cultural values and norms of the researcher and the participants". Contributing to this discussion, Merriam (2001) as cited in Greene (2014, p. 4) refers to "insider's positionality as the aspects of the insider-researcher's self of identity which is aligned to, or shared with the participants."

Green (2014, p.8) suggests techniques to assist the complexities of an insider's research, which include field-notes and a field journal, interactions with all participants within the research, triangulation, debriefing and reflexivity. I have attempted to adhere to some of the techniques mentioned, including reflexivity, triangulation and stating the constant awareness of positionality as well as the constant interactions with all the participants. In this way, I have attempted to stay true to the purpose of this research process and presented the data analysis and findings as unbiasedly as possible.

4.5.1. Researcher's role versus participant's role.

Being the principal of this research site, I was concerned that my position in the school would affect the contributions of the information received from the participants or validity of the data. In the position of this particular 'insider' status, I had to allow the participants the freedom to be completely forthcoming in their responses, even when those responses were contradictory to my beliefs as principal. Unluer (2012, p. 2) refers to role duality and adds that researchers often struggle to balance the insider role with that of the researcher. She states further that problems regarding an insider role include the possibility that a researcher would not see important information, or that the insider researcher would gain access to sensitive information and would have to determine ethically how this data would be included and validated within the research.

As a principal/ researcher, this case study research explored the process on SASL implementation by the SMT members. As stated previously, the research area was also my school and so I collected the data as an insider participant and observer. Being a member of the group (the SMT), as well as the researcher allowed me to ask

meaningful questions, understand the context of participant's answers and "project a more truthful understanding of the culture under study" (Greene, 2014, p.3.) However, critics of insider researchers warn of being 'inherently biased' (Greene, 2014, p.4) yet Aguilera (1981, p. 26) as cited in Greene, (2014, p. 5) sees the insider's bias as a source of both 'insight' and 'error'; hence the constant awareness of this position can in itself be a catalyst for the researcher to take steps to guard against it.

One of the potential difficulties which I had to remain cognisant of was my positional role of principal, 'as their boss' and what impact this potentially had towards the participants, in terms of them withholding information that they perceived as potentially harmful to their position as educators or class assistants. Therefore I provided the following measures at an attempt to ensure participants were not holding back information:

I provided the letter of consent to all participants (see Appendix A) to participate in this study voluntarily. I approached them individually within their classrooms (Deaf staff) or their offices (SMT). By this initial act, the principal 'cap' of authority was removed, to be replaced by the 'researcher's' cap.

Once the consent letters were returned, a meeting was conducted with each group, SMT, Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants explaining the study, their role in providing information through questionnaires and focus group discussions and also emphasising that should they have additional information which they would not like to share with anybody, but felt it was relevant to the study, they should let me know and I would see them individually.

4.6. Research Participants

Creswell (2008. p.213) maintains that the individuals should be carefully selected. He refers to 'purposeful sampling'[44] as being crucial for understanding the central phenomenon being researched. Patton (1990) as cited in Merriam (1998, p. 61) presents *'purposeful sampling'* as *"the assumption that the investigator* (researcher) *wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned"*

Merriam (1998, p. 61) further explains that *'purposive'* sampling requires the researcher to determine selection criteria prior to selecting the participants. Her *'criterion-based selection'* process is based on a list of pre-determined attributes needed by the study.

For this study, I have used (Creswell, 2008, p. 216) purposeful sampling that involves '*theory'* or '*concept'* sampling in which the participants were selected within a specific site, within a particular phase, the Foundation and because of their expertise in SASL teaching, understanding and experience (See the profile of participants selected Chapter 5.3). These participants have worked together and worked together with their HODs (leadership) for several years at this site. These selected participants were able to provide an in-depth understanding of how SASL HL should be implemented and stated their expectations of leadership and SASL within the school base. Hence, their experience became critical for this study. There was an expectation from the DBE that the SMT would implement SASL according to the prescriptions as mentioned previously.

As the research project leader, I have had the opportunity to work very closely with a group of professionals who also wanted to create change within the school. This assisted in more open and honest dialogue about leadership, management and the complications of implementation of SASL as a Home language at this site.

4.6.1. SMT participants

Three specially chosen SMT members were selected for this study as they were directly responsible for facilitating, managing and guiding the Foundation Phase.

The first participant from now will be referred to as SMT #1, and as an HOD responsible for SASL in the Foundation and Senior Phase of the school. She has added responsibilities of overseeing the ECD[45] which primarily included the introduction of SASL. Her tasks also included the fast-tracking of language learning and language stimulation when learners arrive at school.

[45] ECD- Early Child Development Phase – usually children ages 4 – 6 years old.

The second participant, from now will be referred to as SMT #2, is also an HOD[46] of the Foundation Phase responsible for grades 1, 2 and 3. As a manager, she is responsible for all of the academic curriculum content, the assessment criteria, as well as overseeing that all teachers within this phase are enabled to deliver the CAPS curriculum.

The third participant from this point will be referred to as SMT #3, and is the curriculum deputy principal, whose main focus area of management includes all Deaf learners following the CAPS curriculum; he manages the HODs responsible for grades 0-9, as well as ensuring all phases are equipped with the necessary resources for all subject areas, the infrastructure of all classrooms is conducive to teaching and learning and that the academic CAPS curriculum as stipulated by the DoE is adhered to.

All of these participants have more than 30 years combined experience teaching and working within Deaf Education, but they have each worked together in school management for the previous 5 years.

4.6.2. Deaf Educators

At the time of the study, there were two Deaf professionally qualified educators within the school. Both of them are teaching in the Foundation phase. The first educator (who further on will be referred to as DE #1) was responsible for Grade three this year, but has taught all grades within this phase. She is completely Deaf and has spent just under five years at the current institution. This participant was part of a DBE task team who looked at applicable LTSM for SASL in all phases. Although she is completely Deaf, lip-reads and is able to voice, she prefers to use SASL.

The second educator, who further on will be referred to as DE #2, is HOH and is currently teaching the subject SASL to all grades 1 – 3 in the Foundation Phase. She has spent more than 10 years at the current school within this Phase. She uses both oral and SASL communication. During this study, I communicated with them using an interpreter for the focus group dialogues, but for the informal discussions, I used oral communication as this participant lip-reads and voices all her responses.

[46] HOD – Head of Department – A teacher responsible to manage a phase or subjects and teachers within that phase or subjects.

4.6.3. Deaf Class Assistants

There were four Deaf class assistants selected as participants in this research; three females and one male.

The first Deaf class assistant (who further on will be referred to as CA #1) teaches and assists with the subject SASL in grades 3 – 9. He has always been involved in learners' development of their sign language and has been at the school assisting teachers in different subjects across all phases for more than five years.

The second Deaf class assistant (who will later be referred to as CA #2) had joined the school in 2015 and assisted within the Grade 1 class as a teacher assistant. She was selected as part of this focus group because she had spent many years at a school for Deaf learners in the Free State and has extensive experience in Deaf education.

The third Deaf class assistant (who below will be referred to as CA #3) was a learner at this school and had gone on with further studies. She has extensive knowledge in teaching Sign Language and assisting learners, especially understanding from the learner's perspective.

The final Deaf class assistant (who further on will be referred to CA #4) was also a learner at this school, but did not proceed to further studies, though she received her training and experience from this institution.

4.7. Research Site

The study was conducted in a school for Deaf learners, in Johannesburg. During the research period, there were 179 Deaf learners registered at the school[47], ranging from Grade O to Grade 9. The school also caters for hearing learners with learning disabilities; however, they were not part of this study as SASL HL was implemented in 2017 for the Foundation Phase only.

This phase had an enrolment of 59 learners (2015)[48]. There were six educators in that phase, two of whom are Deaf. There were also four Deaf class assistants who are shared amongst the six educators. During the study, there were six class groups of

[47] Total Deaf learner enrolment – Total amount of Deaf learners registered at the research site.
[48] Foundation Phase Enrolment: Learners who are doing SASL as a CAPS formal subject for the first time in 2015.

learners within this phase, but only five groups implemented the SASL CAPS curriculum; they were Grade R-3. Grade O was excluded from the study as the formal SASL curriculum was not prescribed for pre-grade O.

During the initial years in this phase, intensive language stimulation is performed, through SASL. Additional speech therapy is carried out by the resident speech therapist for learners whose parents have requested that their children continue to be able to voice.

4.8. Research Tools

The data collection strategies used as research tools were survey questionnaires, three focus groups of two semi-structured interviews with each focus group and observations of SASL teaching by the Deaf class assistants and the learning of SASL by the hearing teachers during this period. At the start of the research each participant was supplied with a questionnaire (Appendices H and I), with the aim of establishing the participant's views of the role of SMT and SASL implementation.

The focus group discussions were the primary data collection tool that was used. In semi-structured focus group interviews participants discuss their concerns as they grapple with policy implementation as expected by the department. Important for this research were the SMT members' views, perceptions and experiences of SASL and their role in implementing the changes required.

4.8.1 Survey questionnaires

Koshy (2010) states that questionnaires and surveys assist the research in two ways; firstly, providing baseline data on the participants' attitudes before any intervention is started, while secondly, an analysis of the surveys or questionnaires may help to shape the nature of the questions one may want to ask during the interviews or the observations one may want to make later.

The surveys were helpful in gaining an understanding of trends within the identified groups or individuals Creswell (2008). Surveys provide useful information for the evolution of programmes in education which assist policy makers in determining broad school changes. This research tool has also highlighted opinions about policy issues, and assisted to identify beliefs and attitudes of individuals or groups. (Creswell, 2008, p. 388) For this research, the questionnaire-survey was used to gain insight into

participants' perceptions, beliefs and practices of SASL progress, in addition to the role of the SMT regarding the management of implementation and their challenges in implementing SASL.

In order to ensure reliability and validity of data collection, the survey questionnaires assisted by comparing the responses with the focus group discussions and the ongoing actions by the teachers. The three educators on the SMT, the Deaf educators in Foundation Phase as well as the Deaf class assistants were asked to complete the questionnaires; before the research began and upon completion of the study. These statements and questions were derived from other studies and also discussed with my supervisor.

The use of the questionnaires offered both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages included the fact that they were relatively quick to administer and the questions were within the scope of practice of all participants. The survey was based on a 1-5 Likert scale rating; with 1 – representing 'never' and 5 – representing 'always'. A further advantage of the questionnaires was that it allowed the researcher to probe certain answers and gain further clarity. In this way, during the follow-up focus groups, more issues could be probed with the participants.

There was a hundred percent return rate on the questionnaires; although two participants did not complete one open-ended question in the first cycle, a viable amount of data was collected. The data was used to gain a fair impression of the initial perceptions about SASL implantation and the leadership role of the SMT for the implementation (7 / 9 participants answered).

For this research, a longitudinal survey design across three focus groups of participants was used, before the research process started and when the research was concluded. According to Creswell (2008. p. 391), longitudinal survey designs examine trends and changes within the same set of participants over time. Creswell (2008) identifies the Trend Study that involves identifying a population and examining changes within that population over time. This research survey addressed what participants thought about the support and leadership provided by the SMT in their implementation of a new language: the perceptions about SASL and their leadership role from the SMT members.

4.8.2 Focus groups

The primary data collection tool used was semi-structured focus group interviews. Focus groups become an ideal data collection tool when in-depth information is needed from persons of similar characteristics or interests, all sharing knowledge or a concern over a particular issue. The reasons for choosing focus groups were that the three groups were in similar departments, were working together, they taught similar learners and all had to implement SASL. Further of value were their in-depth and candid discussions about the topic with which they were all familiar.

Laws (2003, p. 299) as cited in Bell (2005, p. 162) cautions that focus groups have to be balanced in relation to age, sex, ethnic status or professional status. A well balanced group allows for members to contribute freely to the discussions, but is also dependent on how the focus group is facilitated by the researcher. The focus groups were arranged as follows: An SMT focus group consisting of members on management, the Deaf educator focus group who are the only two Deaf educators at school and are based in the Foundation Phase and finally, the Deaf class assistant's focus group, who are based not only in the Foundation Phase, but in other Phases as well.

During the case study research process, there were two rounds of focus group discussions. The first round of interviews obtained information on participants' views about SASL as a Home Language, how SASL could be implemented at this research site, what they saw as their role during that pilot year; what their experiences of the Deaf learners are and what changes they think would need to be made to assist the transition for the school. After these focus group discussions, the SMT members were at the forefront of the drive to implement, change and adapt the SASL curriculum.

The second and final focus groups for the three participant groups took place at the end of the implementation year where the evaluation of the implementation through open and critical discussion took place. There was a transformation that was evident within the SMT group, which was manifest in their changing attitudes to SASL despite them having experienced several implementation concerns.

As Krueger and Casey (2000, p. ix) note:

> "*Focus group interviewing is about listening…about paying attention…about being open to hear what people have to say…about being non-judgmental. It is about creating a comfortable environment for people to share.*"

Focus groups provide the researcher with the opportunity to collect data that reflect a range of opinions within a specific group of people. Furthermore, through dialogue, focus groups allow for research issues to be discussed in-depth as the discussants have a vested interest in bringing about a change through their actions.

4.8.2.1. Establishing trust

It is always important to establish trust and build confidence before interviews are conducted. This was done by reassuring the interviewees that their participation and contributions were valued as was their in-depth experience in Deaf Education, their years of experience with SASL and their years at the school working with learners and a visual language, which were all vital to the research.

It was important to be careful about my combined roles as the researcher, the principal and also as a participant researcher, as discussed at length earlier in the chapter. The nature of the relationship between the SMT focus group and myself was significantly different from the relationship that I have with the Deaf teachers or the Deaf class assistants. As the researcher and the interviewer, there were many roles to fulfil: facilitator, moderator, listener, observer and interviewer. Wilson (2013) highlights the importance of observation notes made during the focus groups. This dynamic examined the interaction of the group, whether there was consensus, disagreement and the power differences between the participants. This is where my self-reflections of the discussions during focus groups added much to the analysis.

As researcher, I was aware that this could have proved problematic in establishing trust within the groups for valid contributions from the participants, but it was exactly this awareness, that made me acutely mindful of the precarious situation my position placed me in as researcher (Greene, 2014; Unluer, 2012).

In stating this position, I ensured that all focus group interviews were video-taped, I used a professionally qualified interpreter with the Deaf participants and the transcriptions were independently and professionally undertaken by an independent person. The interpreter was known to the Deaf participants and this contributed to the assurance that their information would not be misinterpreted. Video footage of all the focus groups, SMT, Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants is available.

4.8.3 Observations

According to Creswell (2008, p. 220) observation is an accepted form of qualitative data collection. The advantage of observation in research includes (Creswell 2008, p. 222, Koshy 2010, p. 92) first-hand open-ended information being collected, an immediate interpretation available at the site where research takes place, while actual behaviour can be studied when there is difficulty with articulating an incident or a process. Disadvantages include (Wilson, 2013; Creswell, 2008; Koshy 2010) being limited to a single site which could also influence the rapport between researcher and participants as one has to make immediate decisions of what to record while, with observations, there is no chance of 'action replay' (Wilson 2013).

Field observations were conducted during periods of SASL training and development at school. The field observations offered the opportunity to observe the experiences of educators in SASL and whether they were competent in sign language. Many educators have acquired Sign Language skills through training workshops at their respective schools. DeafSA (2006, p. 12) states that "*some schools offer SASL training opportunities for both educators and parents, but there is no formal monitoring system or uniform training programmes."* This school also offers SASL classes to all staff on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which is the responsibility of the class assistants to do the training; however the varying levels of SASL abilities amongst educators often result in inconsistency in SASL classroom practise.

Therefore, Sign Language training of an academic nature was seen as a priority by the DBE, who mandated all principals to ensure that educators attend SASL classes in conjunction with SASL training offered by Higher Education Institutions, such as Universities offering NQF training in SASL.

I conducted observations where SASL was the focus of learning. The changes within staff members as they were learning SASL and using the language for more academic purposes were observed and noted for analysis. These included:

- Formal SASL classes conducted by the SASL Department from the Department of Languages of the University of the Witwatersrand. These classes were conducted at school, over a period of 6 months and included myself as a learner of SASL and other participants from the focus groups as well as other staff members, including seven members from SMT.
- Tuesday and Thursday SASL classes were conducted by members of the Deaf class assistants' focus groups. In this instance all hearing participants and other staff members including myself were the learners.

In concluding this section, observations provided an insight into the changes about the perceptions of several staff members that influenced the changing nature of the socio-cultural landscape of the school. The observational changes are discussed in Chapter 6.3.

In the next section I present the ethical protocol that was followed.

4.9. Ethical considerations

Qualitative research is by its very nature likely to be intrusive; therefore all the necessary informed consent forms safeguarding the identity and confidentiality of the participants, the data obtained and the school were maintained. Being mindful of all ethical issues, the following ethical considerations and safeguards were taken.

Ethical clearance, with protocol number 2014ECE057M dated 24th of November 2014 was received. (Appendix J). Permission from the Gauteng Education Department to conduct the study at the school dated 3rd December 2014 was obtained. (Appendix K) Permission from the chairperson of the School Governing Body for this research site, was requested, and email approval confirmation was received. (Appendix C, C1)

The participants were reminded that their participation in this study was voluntary, that their identities would remain anonymous through the use of pseudonyms and that their contributions would not affect their position within the school. They would not be penalised if at any stage they would want to withdraw from the study. This assurance

was to ensure that participants did not feel obliged to participate because of the researcher's position.

All participants were presented with information letters explaining the nature of the study (Appendix a), consent forms to be a part of the study (Appendix B) as well as consent to be audio and or video-taped (Appendix D and E). A further form was presented to participants explaining the need for their consent if the study is used in future research (Appendix F).

4.9.1. Interpreter and transcriber – ethical considerations.

A qualified interpreter associated with Wits Language School was used for interpreting all Focus group interviews where Deaf participants were interviewed, for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 (See Chapter 5). The interpreter was provided with a consent form, adhering to the confidentiality and ethics regarding this study (Appendix L).

For Phase I, I completed the transcriptions of all focus group interviews to gain a thorough understanding of all the participants' responses. I took the video-recorded interviews and my English translated transcriptions, once completed back to the participants to establish if their views were presented correctly. They viewed these and made minor changes based on what was interpreted as compared to what was transcribed.

For Phase 2, I required the services of a professional transcriber due to time constraints. The lady was provided with a video-recording of all the above focus group interviews and transcribed them into English text. These video-recorded focus groups were shown to all participants and were compared to the English texts for their approval.

4.10. Validity

For increased validity of the data in this study, I firstly compared findings of the focus group interviews with the findings from participants' survey information, of their experiences of the implementation of SASL. A comparison was also made of the three focus groups in comparing the participants' contributions to similar issues raised by the different focus groups. Secondly, the interpretive accounts of participants'

perspectives were based on their experiences of the process of SASL implementation and the role of the SMT members.

To ensure credibility and eliminate researcher's bias due to being too 'close' to the participants or the study in context, I sought the assistance of experts within the field of school leadership as well as of Deaf Education. Much of this assistance focused on guiding me when my position of authority influenced the contributions from the participants. Their comments and suggestions remained a useful tool to ensure the role of the participants was not compromised by my position as principal. Experts included:

- a fellow principal who had completed her Master's in education in school leadership;
- a lecturer who has extensive knowledge of SASL;
- A fellow senior educator who worked at the school with the current management team.

Their contribution as advisors for this research, provided guidance at different parts of the research, and by evaluating this research through challenging the assumptions that I reached they have helped me view the research from different perspectives. I presented the findings for discussions with critical friends, for their comments and review of the analysis of the findings. I tried to eliminate any possible bias, a threat to the validity of qualitative conclusions as an insider participant (Greene, 2014), as I guarded against my own expectations, misconceptions and the need to find answers that supported my preconceived notions about the study, through constant discussion with the participants as well as going back and asking for clarity.

However, all research and knowledge must be validated through a systemic collection of evidence and using the appropriate methods (Wilson, 2013, p.252). There are five forms of validity which must be applied to ensure that the research, the findings and the claims made are credible (Schumacher and McMillan, 2010, p.451). This includes 'democratic validity', 'outcome validity', 'process validity', catalytic validity' and 'dialogic' validity. I will only focus on three aspects of validity pertinent for this study:

- Democratic Validity

  Are there several stakeholders involved in the process?

For this research, the core research team consisted of the deputy principal (SMT #3), the HOD of the Foundation Phase (SMT #2) and HOD of SASL (SMT #1). Main sources of evidence came from the Deaf Educators and Deaf class assistants.

- Outcome Validity

  Wilson (2009, p253) asserts that the outcome validity should "generate a description of the complexities of the case and therefore validate an action plan suited the problem." In this research, the role of the SMT for the implementation of SASL was not a problem to be 'fixed' but rather an approach to be explored for sustainable changes to be implemented.

- Process Validity

  The data collection methods must yield effective and appropriate information needed. The data obtained from members in the SMT, management team, from educators and from class assistants was used for analysis; however, their contributions additionally opened up new possibilities for action (See Implementation section, Chapters 6).

4.11. Analysis of Data

Large amounts of data were gathered from the surveys, focus group interviews and the observations in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the process. The rich data which included transcriptions from all focus group interviews, the individual survey questionnaires information that was tabulated (see chapter five and six), as well as the opinions from the open-ended questions provided huge amounts of texts to work through.

4.11.1. Focus group Interviews and Individual questionnaires.

An inductive analysis process of moving from all the 'raw data' obtained to arrive at general themes and sub-themes was used and is discussed in Chapter five and six. The process of analysis was informed by the guidelines as highlighted by Creswell (2008, p.244). The process of analysis of Phase 1 and phase 2 is structured as outlined below:

1. *Step 1: Organising and preparing the data.*

   All the data were collected, the surveys were tabulated according to their ratings provided and the interviews were transcribed. I was responsible for the

transcriptions in Phase 1 and enlisted the services of a professional transcriber for Phase 2. I organised the data in files for each focus group, SMT, Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants.

2. *Step 2: Reading through all the data.*

   To gain a general understanding of each interview set, I studied the discussions of each focus group and made notes along the side as reminders of the aspects covered in each question. With the questionnaires, I studied the ratings (see table 5, p. 96) and (table 6, p.97) in Chapter 5 and highlighted ratings where either a 1 '*never'* or a 5 *'always'* rating was provided.

3. Step 3: *Beginning the coding process.*

   A preliminary analysis was devised where I started coding the data by using colour-coding[49] for the similar aspects covered across the focus groups. The initial codes list was extensive, and I had to combine the codes to start creating categories. Also, I looked at a comparison of the data from the questionnaires and did a cross-section of their ratings (see table 7, p.98) in Chapter 5

4. Step 4: *Using codes and generating themes.*

   Coded groupings of data were set aside into categories. Through analysis of these broad categories and over-lapping of codes within the categories through a process of comparison and contrasting, themes were generated. Admittedly, initially the categories were very similar to the final themes and sub-themes found Phase 2(Table 8, p. 107) and table 9 (p. 125) and in reducing the over-lap of information within the categories, I was able to generate themes.

5. Step 5: *Correlating the themes and interpreting the findings*.

   The broad themes included: SASL curriculum (SC), quality education for Deaf learners (QE), rights of Deaf learners (RD) and leadership and change (LC). Within each theme, sub-themes were formed based on the interrelated codes.

[49] Colour-Coding System – Analysis of information where colours are used to highlight different sections of information that becomes codes and categories.

In phase 2, Chapter six, again a further set of interviews and questionnaires were obtained. Once again I followed steps 1-5, but this time, only the themes of leadership and (LC) and SASL curriculum (SC) came through with related sub-themes. During this phase I also compared the outcomes of Phase 1 with the outcomes of Phase 2 with an aim to interpret the findings.

A schematic representation of the analysis process is presented below:

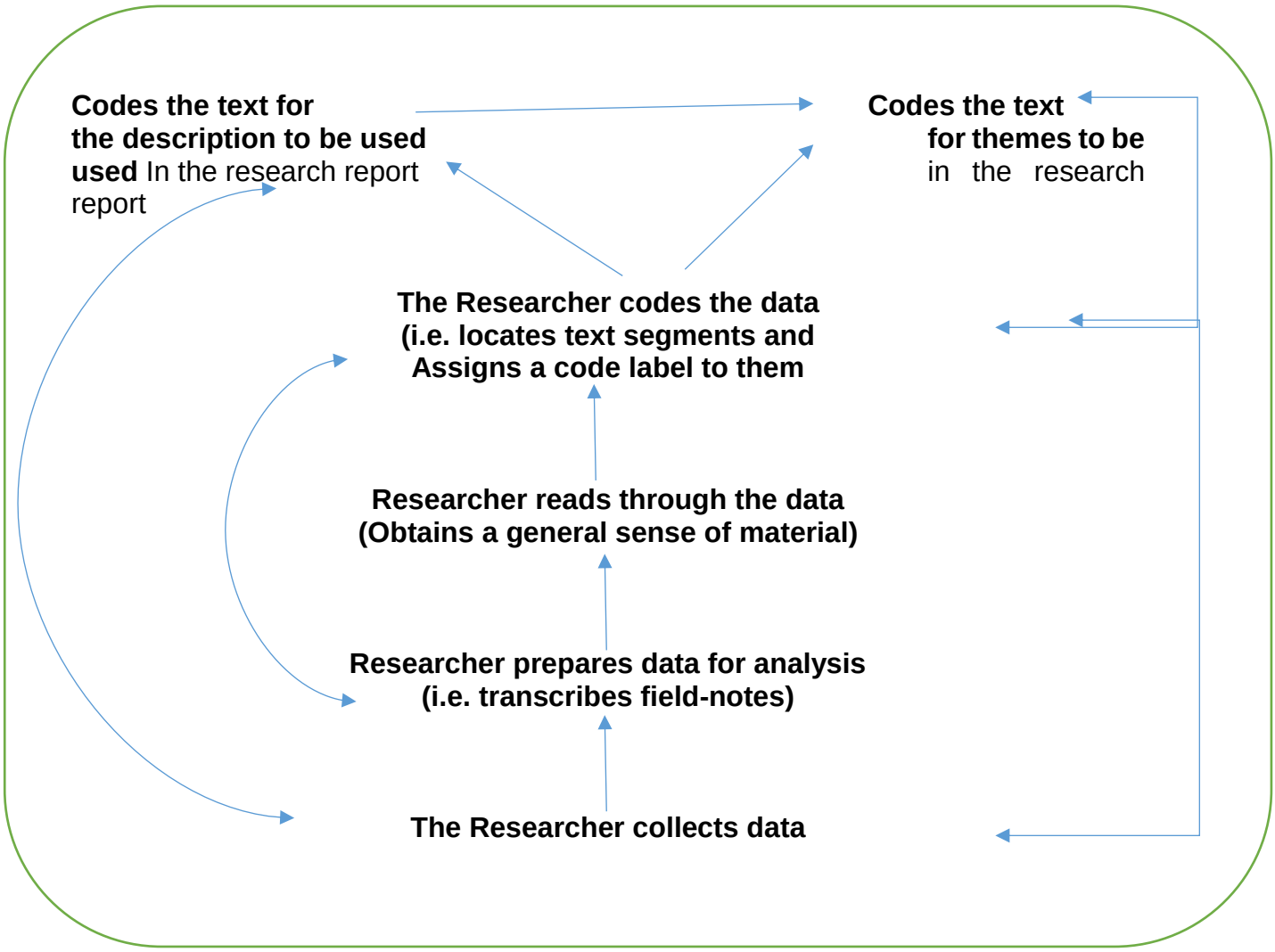


Figure 3: The Qualitative Process of Data Analysis; (Source: Creswell, 2008, p. 244)

4.12. Conclusion

In this chapter I have highlighted the theoretical framework for the methodology which I have chosen for this research. The exploratory case study method was discussed as an in-depth case study located over a specific timeframe.

Purposeful sampling was discussed and motivation for the selection of participants were provided. A description of the participants and their roles within this research site was discussed.

This chapter also described the duality of roles as researcher, insider, participant as well as principal of the research site and the challenges that were faced. Hence additional measures were explained within all the ethical measures taken.

The research tools discussed included participant focus groups, individual questionnaire surveys and observation were described and the process of data collection through the above was presented.

All ethical documentation was discussed with regards to participants, the university ethics committee and GDE approval as well as interpreter and transcriber documentation. Examples of each appendix can be found at the end of this dissertation.

Inductive data analysis process for the focus groups and survey questionnaires was discussed using steps 1 – 5 as highlighted by Creswell, 2008 with a schematic representation.

The next chapters, five and six, present the outcomes, interpretation and analysis of all the data obtained through an in-depth analysis of the themes generated. Chapter five is discussed as ‘Phase 1’, the start of the research period (see table 2, p. 90)
Chapter six is discussed as ‘Phase 2’ of this research and presents the outcomes, interpretations, interventions of strategies applied, as well as analysis of themes generated at the end of the research period.

Chapter 5

Data presentation, Interpretation and Analysis

Phase 1

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the outcomes of the qualitative investigation are presented by providing the findings of the analysis of the data obtained through survey-questionnaires, focus group discussions and observations. The results of the investigation into the implementation of SASL and the changes experienced within the SMT through transformational and transformative leadership are explored as the study unfolded during one year.

Phase 1 focusses on:

- A brief summary of the implementation year
- The biographical background of the participants
- Data presentation of Individual survey questionnaires
- Focus group discussions of the SMT, Deaf Educators and the Deaf class assistants
- Discussion of the themes and sub-themes.

5.2. The implementation year

The data analysis and the findings are presented as the process took place in 2015. Throughout the year, it became evident that SASL did more than influence our planning and preparation programmes for a new language; at the same time the implementation provided a transformation in the perceptions of SASL as well as in the mind-set of staff members and to a lesser degree, the learners. This research has attempted to illustrate these changes through the case study method.

I have presented the analysis of the focus groups with much detail, to provide a clearer picture about the context of the research site.

Throughout the year there were several processes unfolding, which all formed part of the first year implementation and also part of this research. These processes included achieving an understanding of the role of the Deaf staff and their leadership in driving this curriculum, assessment of SASL, understanding SASL and the HOH learner; also

grasping the changes involved when SASL as a Home language and English as a First Additional language were explored too. All these were studied as viewed from the perspective of the management responsible to implement the changes.

The first section furnishes the findings from the survey-questionnaires, followed by the focus groups and observations during the period April to August. The succeeding section addresses the final focus group at the end of the year, highlighting what was achieved in the Foundation Phase and the final survey-questionnaire completed by all the participants. A summary is presented in Table 2 (see p. 91)

Table 2: SASL Implementation and Research

Date	Activities within the school	Research
Term 1: January – March 2015	• SASL as a formal school subject implemented in the Foundation Phase • All infrastructural requirements for classrooms are ready • All teachers (Deaf) and Deaf class assistants selected	• Ethics clearance received • Proposal approved • Baseline Survey Questionnaires are administered to SMT, Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants
Term 2: April to June 2015	• Educators engage in SASL classes from Wits University • Notional time is adjusted for SASL and English • Learners complete formal assessments for June Report	• First focus group discussions • Observation of SASL classes conducted by Wits students for Staff
Term 3: July to September 2015	• Deaf Staff offer SASL classes to the Staff • SASL teacher engage in LTSM selection for SASL teaching • Teachers engage in formal training from the DBE for SASL Pedagogy	• Ongoing discussions about Implementation of SASL
Term 4: September to December 2015	• Final formal language Assessments for the year	• Final Focus Group • Final Survey with all participants • Observations of SASL classes and language improvements

5.3. Participants[50]

The participants were selected based on their experience at the school, their experience with SASL as well as their experience in teaching Deaf learners. The SMT team consisted of three members from the SMT. See section 4.5 for the rationale behind the selection of the core management team.

Two further groups of participants were selected. These included Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants within the Foundation Phase. These groups provided valuable information for this research and assisted with SASL implementation. Their broad perspectives on different viewpoints on SASL and their impressions on the role of leadership in the implementation of SASL provided the platform for dialogue, a core element for this study.

For ease of reference as well as maintaining confidentiality for the participants, I have provided each participant with a corresponding code as recorded in Table 3 (p. 93) on next page.

[50] Participants – The individual participants are discussed comprehensively in Chapter 4.6 (Methodology Chapter).

Table 3: Participant Codes

SMT FOCUS GROUP	PARTICIPANT CODES
SASL HOD (Head of Department)	SMT #1
Foundation Phase HOD (Head of Department)	SMT #2
Deputy Principal (Responsible for academic section)	SMT #3
DEAF EDUCATOR FOCUS GROUP	**PARTICIPANT CODES**
Deaf Educator in the Foundation Phase	DE #1
Deaf Educator responsible for SASL in Foundation Phase	DE #2
DEAF CLASS ASSISTANTS FOCUS GROUP	**PARTICIPANT CODES**
Deaf Class Assistant responsible for teaching SASL	CA #1
Deaf Class Assistant assisting HOD in Foundation Phase	CA #2
Deaf Class Assistant responsible for assisting teachers with language	CA #3
Deaf Class Assistant in Foundation Phase	CA #4

These groups supplied valuable information for this research and assisted with SASL implementation. Likewise, their broad perspectives on different viewpoints concerning SASL and their impressions of the role that leadership plays in the implementation of SASL provided the platform for the necessary dialogue. A biographical table, Table 4 (see p. 94) is provided for easy reference to the background information of each participant, their position within the school as well as their years of experience.

Table 4. Biographical Details of all the Participants

Participant Code	Gender	Hearing Status	Home Language	*Deaf Identity	Teach specific grade/s	Grade/ Phase responsible	No of years in Deaf Education	No of Years with current Management
SMT #1	Female	Hearing	English	Hearing	SASL Grades 3-9	Languages	More than 15	3 years
SMT #2	Female	Hearing	English	Hearing	All Subjects Grade 1	Foundation Phase	More than 15	6 years
SMT #3	Male	Hearing	English	Hearing	Oversee Grades R-9	Academic Section	More than 15	5 years
DE #1	Female	Hard of Hearing	Sign Language and English	DeaF	SASL Grades R-2	Foundation Phase	More than 15	6 years
DE #2	Female	Deaf	Sign Language and English	DeaF	All Subjects Grade 3	Foundation Phase	More than 5 years	5 years
CA #1	Female	Deaf	Sign Language	Deaf	SASL Grades 3-6	Intermediate and Senior	More than 5 years	6 years
CA #2	Female	Deaf	Sign Language	Deaf	All Subjects Grade 1	Foundation Phase	More than 10 years	2 years
CA #3	Female	Deaf	Sign Language	Deaf	SASL Grades 7-9	Intermediate and Senior	More than 5 years	1 year
CA #4	Female	Deaf	Sign Language	Deaf	All Subjects Grade 2	Foundation Phase	More than 5 years	6 years

5.4. Analysis of Individual Survey Questionnaires

The individual questionnaire-surveys (see Appendices I (1), p. 194 and I (2), p.197) were given to the participants at the beginning of the second school term. At that stage the participants had implemented the formal SASL CAPS curriculum for one school term.

This research instrument provided insight into participants' perceptions, beliefs and practices of SASL progress with regard to the role of the SMT implementation.

The three educators on the SMT, the Deaf educators in Foundation Phase as well as the Deaf class assistants were asked to complete the questionnaires. I also compared the findings of the responses obtained here with the findings obtained from the focus group discussions.

The results are presented in two tables. The first table, Table 5 (see p. 96), examines the ratings from the members of the SMT group, as they evaluated their role. The second table, Table 6 (see p. 97) reports the results of the Deaf staff members who work closely with the SMT members. Participants had to complete the survey and state their level of agreement with the scale provided.

For statements 1-10 participants were required to provide a rating, while statement 11, phrased as a question, asked for an opinion from participants regarding how well the SMT was leading the transformation of the SASL implementation within the phase, and the changes experienced by as the members as a result of the changes. Please note that with statement 11 responses the comments were not edited but were actual statements from the questionnaire.

One of the findings which I noted upon receiving all forms back was that the Deaf class assistants provided very few comments for statement 11. With this in mind, I ensured that the focus groups were linguistically fully accessible for the Deaf class assistants.

Table 5: Phase 1 - SMT Participants - Survey Results

	Participants	SMT #1 HOD SASL Subject	SMT #2 HOD Foundation	SMT #3 Deputy
1	SMT discuss linguistic needs	4	4	4
2	SMT discuss school vision in line with SASL	4	4	3
3	SMT develop goals used for SASL by the educators	4	3	4
4	SMT discuss school's mission with regards to SASL and school comm.	4	2	3
5	SMT refer to school academic goals when making curricular decisions	4	4	3
6	SMT point out specific strengths when referring to teachers communicative practices	3	3	4
7	SMT participate actively in the review of curricular materials for SASL HL	3	4	2
8	SMT meet individually with teachers to discuss student Progress in SASL Hl	3	2	2
9	SMT take time to talk informally perspectives on Sign Bilingualism	3	4	3
10	SMT creates professional growth opportunities to develop SASL social and academic level	3	3	5
11	Your opinion, how well SMT leading transformation to SASL curriculum	I think SASL is implementing the SASL curriculum as is guided by the policy and department instructions. Infrastructure and resources are available to teachers and learners.	SMT taking proactive steps that all educators are trained in SASL. Physical resources needed to implement are a high priority, active participation with DBE task teams, where issues affecting SASL are highlighted.	SMT does try to accommodate most of the expectations of SASL curriculum. As an SMT member, all needs have been met thus far. Personally I feel that we are making good progress with SASL HL.

Scale	
1	**Never**
2	**Seldom**
3	**Sometimes**
4	**Frequently**
5	**Always**

Table 6: Phase 1 -Deaf Participants: Survey: Individual Questionnaire

	Participants	DE #1:	DE #2:	CA #1	CA #2	CA #3	CA #4
1	SMT discuss linguistic needs	4	4	4	4	3	3
2	SMT discuss school vision in line with SASL	4	5	3	4	3	3
3	SMT develops goals used for SASL by the educators	4	3	3	3	3	4
4	SMT discusses school's mission with regards to SASL and school comm.	4	3	4	5	3	3
5	SMT refers to school academic goals when making curricular decisions	4	3	4	4	3	3
6	SMT points out specific strengths when referring to teachers communicative practices	4	3	3	3	4	4
7	SMT participates actively in the review of curricular materials for SASL HL	4	4	4	3	4	3
8	SMT meets individually with teachers to discuss student Progress in SASL Hl	5	5	4	4	3	4
9	SMT takes time to talk informally about perspectives on Sign Bilingualism	4	4	3	2	3	1
10	SMT creates professional growth opportunities to develop SASL at a social and academic level	5	5	4	2	4	Blank
11	Your opinion, how well SMT leading transformation to SASL curriculum	*SMT "leads" by providing training from the DoE, SLED and Wits. Also provides technology materials for deaf students Deaf materials improve SL abilities SL classes on Saturdays teachers, interpreters, using SL to improve SL in classroom	*Resources become easier when teaching to the learners. Deaf learners enjoy the technology, DVD players, TV, computers, Whiteboard, Thanks to SMT for all resources.	*Yes have they are bus	*SMT still make way new subject for SASL HL Strategy. SMT need chance more time get information about SASL curriculum for Deaf pupils will achieve future.	None Provided	*Interpreters there to help Sign Language improve, Staff members encouraged attend SLED and Wits Course, DVD, computers, were given to Deaf children to learn more about SL.

*Statement 11 – All quotes taken as verbatim statements with no edited changes to responses.

Grid

1=Almost Never

2=Seldom

3=Sometimes

4 =Frequently

5= Always

The next section provides an analysis of the responses obtained from the individual questionnaire surveys. Table 7 was developed indicating each survey statement along with the frequency rating of the five possible responses and calculated the average responses of all participants.

Table 7: Phase 1 - Participants' responses per statements

The Role of the SMT and SASL: Statements	Total Responses	%	S1: Linguistic Needs	S2: School Vision	S3: School Goals	S4: School Mission	S5: Academic Goals	S6: Teachers' Strengths	S7: Review Curriculum	S8: Individual Discussions	S9: Sign Bilingualism	S10: Growth in SASL
1=ALMOST NEVER	**1**	**1.6**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**
2= SELDOM	**6**	**6.7**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**
3=SOMETIMES	**36**	**40**	**2**	**4**	**5**	**4**	**4**	**5**	**3**	**2**	**4**	**3**
4=FREQUENTLY	**40**	**45**	**7**	**4**	**4**	**3**	**5**	**4**	**5**	**3**	**3**	**2**
5=ALMOST ALWAYS	**6**	**6.7**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**2**

5.4.1. Discussion of Questionnaire Survey Responses.

Surveys involve gathering information from persons related to an organisation or a particular phenomenon using a questionnaire. This research utilised survey-questionnaires for several reasons. Firstly, to establish trends in mind-sets of participants of their initial views regarding the SMT's participation in the implementation of SASL while secondly, at the end of the research another survey was administered with the same participants. The SMT participants also completed this survey, as a baseline reflection of their leadership role and their perceptions of SASL (see Table 5, p. 96). Koshy (2010, p.83) suggests that questionnaires and surveys are used to provide baseline data on the participants' attitudes before any intervention is started. As 2015 was the first year of implementing the formal SASL curriculum, it was important to obtain participants' initial experiences; this added to the essential dialogue between the SMT and the teachers and class assistants.

The next section offers a discussion of each statement and what the responses mean for this research.

Statement 1: SMT discusses the linguistic needs of the school

This general statement focuses attention on whether SMT members are engaging other staff on crucial language issues at school. At a time when Sign Language has to be implemented officially (Circular S15 of 2015)[51], it is essential that members in management positions, educators and all other stakeholders engage in this discussion.

Based on the responses from participants for this statement, there is a general feeling amongst all the participants (7/9), that the (SMT) "frequently" supports the linguistic needs through discussions at the school. Two Deaf assistants, CA#3 and CA# 4, feel that the SMT just sometimes discusses the linguistic needs of the learners.

Statement 2: The SMT discus the school vision in line with SASL

There is a general agreement, (8/9), amongst all the participant groups that the SMT frequently discusses the school's vision in line with SASL with all stakeholders. The school's vision is about building a curriculum suited to the academic needs of all the Deaf learners. Later in this chapter, more emphasis is placed on the uniqueness of each Deaf learner and the way that learner's needs should be catered to them. Heidi Holmes (2006) as cited in Mertens (2009, p.209) refers to the diversity within deafness[52], and queries:

> '…What about studying deaf people? Should we come up with different cultural values within the Deaf culture, such as hard of hearing, cochlear implants, oral, little hard of hearing, deaf of deaf…There is no one approach to the group of Deaf people.'

These "sometimes to frequent" responses could be attributed to the constant Phase meetings conducted by the HODs for Foundation and SASL respectively, where they are specifically looking at SASL, how learners are using it in their learning and how this has taken centre stage. In the following discussions on the focus groups, this point is raised again.

[51] Circular S15 of 2015, Promulgation of the Amendment to Policy and regulation pertaining to the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12.

[52] Deafness – (Hagemeyer 1992) as cited in Reagan (2002, p. 168) states that "the deaf population can be subdivided into a wide range of different groups, distinguished in part by degree of hearing loss, but also by language preference, educational experience, and relative integration into either the Deaf-WORLD or the hearing world".

Statement 3: The SMT develops goals used for SASL by the educators

Four participants provided a "frequent" response while five felt that the SMT just "sometimes" develops goals for SASL which are "easily understood and used for SASL HL". Goals would include the infrastructure for the classrooms, the SASL LTSM to be used by the educators and the ongoing training for staff members for this curriculum. Further goals, more crucially, would include whether educators, offering SASL HL, have a clear understanding of the pedagogy that underpins this curriculum. A general feeling of agreement exists that the SMT is developing and discussing the goals with the rest of the educators.

Statement 4: The SMT communicates effectively the school's mission with regard to SASL to the members of the school community

The school's mission is "to provide excellent and relevant educational programmes that allow our learners to play a responsible and meaningful role in society". One Deaf assistant provides an "always" rating, 3 responses of "frequent" and 4 responses of "sometimes" were received from the SMT, educators and the class assistants. One surprising response was from the SMT#1, a "seldom" rating where, as part of the SMT, she feels that the mission of the school is "seldom" communicated when referring to SASL.

Although SMT#1 is part of the management team, her rating of "seldom" for this statement shows a significant acknowledgement that as the SMT, there is no clear communication about SASL and the school goals and vision.

Statement 5: The SMT refers to the academic goals when making SASL HL curricular decisions with teachers

From the responses, five "frequently" and four "sometimes" from the participants, there seems to be general consensus that curricular academic goals are part of the considerations when the SMT looks at SASL. During the focus groups which were conducted in May a month after this questionnaire, the academic abilities of Deaf learners were extensively discussed concerning SASL implemented as a Home Language subject. Much of this dialogue is covered later in this chapter, but aspects such as timetabling, teachers and assessments were significant when the SMT made decisions in consultation with the Deaf staff and implemented certain changes.

Statement 6: The SMT points out specific strengths in teachers' communicative practices in and outside the classroom

From the data, there are five "sometimes" *a*nd four "frequently" responses combined (8/9) across the three groups of participants.

The SMT has often considered the SASL abilities of the staff to determine the best "fit" for grade and subject when deciding on timetabling concerns. At this site, the researcher being an insider participant, is aware of the policy and that educators who sign most accurately should be utilised in the Foundation Phase. The practice at the school is that the mentioned Tuesday and Thursday Sign Language classes are aimed at training all teachers, irrespective of their abilities.

Statement 7: The SMT participates actively in the review of curricular materials for SASL HL

The data shows that SMT#3, the deputy principal, has rated "seldom" in this regard, while there are (4/9) "frequently" and (3/9) "sometimes" responses. This could be attributed to the roles of the different participants. The deputy principal is not directly involved with the selection or production of curricular materials, only the procuring thereof, while the Deaf assistants and the Deaf educators are directly responsible.

Recently, DE#1 was enlisted to the National Department as part of the SASL subject curriculum LTSM screening team. She gained valuable insight into the different resources available locally, as well as what would constitute good criteria when selecting LTSM for this subject. In this way, DE#1 assisted the SMT in a selection that best suited the learners' needs. Curriculum materials, which include DVD repertoire for visual content support material, have not been developed as yet. The SASL CAPS Policy (DBE, 2014, p.9) states "that appropriate SASL learning and teaching support material (LTSM) would be identified and developed."

Statement 8: The SMT meets individually with teachers to discuss students' progress

The data shows a skewed result for this statement. The HOD participants state that they (2/9) "seldom" meet with individual teachers to discuss student progress, while both Deaf educators indicated an (2/9) "always" response: a contradictory finding. The Deaf assistant's responses included (3/9) "frequently". These results could be attributed to the fact that the Deaf educators would often go to the HODs and "informally" discuss their concerns regarding individual learners. I am personally aware as principal that many discussions take place concerning the HOH[53] learners and their access to SASL.

Statement 9: The SMT takes time to talk informally with staff during administration periods and breaks about their perspectives on Sign Bilingualism.

From the data, the CA#s' responses, (1/9), "never", (1/9) "seldom" and (2/9) *"*sometimes*"* show that they do not view the SMT as discussing Sign Bilingualism or that the SMT would seldom discuss this issue with them. This is in contrast to the Deaf educators and the SMT group, where (5/9) rate the SMT as "frequently" discussing Sign Bilingualism informally. From the SMT participants and the Deaf educators it is evident that they fully encourage the learners to be proficient in SASL and English, a key aspect in Sign Bilingualism They encourage the learners to communicate in SASL and also promote English written work. This aspect comes up again during the dialogue sessions. As a participant observer, I have rarely witnessed informal or formal discussions regarding the concept of Sign Bilingualism, but the concerns about implementation of Sign Language came through in the dialogue discussions.

Statement 10: The SMT creates professional growth opportunities for teachers to develop their SASL structure on a social and academic level.

For this statement the SMT#3 participant and DE#1 and #2 provide an "always" *(3/9)* rating, while the CA#1-4 and the SMT#1-2 range between "seldom" and "sometimes" (6/9). From the responses, the majority feeling is that the SMT is perceived as not

doing enough in equipping and preparing teachers for the SASL academic demands. This is another vital aspect: as was previously stated in this research, in Chapter 3 (Literature Review), hearing teachers of Deaf learners are unable to meet the curriculum academic demands of SASL.

The DBE required that educators attend SASL training and DE#1 and SMT#1 were sent to it. Furthermore, when the educators identified training, the principal (myself) or the deputy principal would make the decision as to whether staff could attend the training. The rating of the Deaf class assistants could possibly be ascribed to where senior management may have overlooked the Deaf assistants' interests and willingness to be trained.

5.4.2. Summary of findings of the questionnaire

In this section, I consider an analysis of the combined questionnaire responses of all participants as discussed above. Creswell, (2008, p. 388) points out that surveys also provide useful information for the evaluation of programmes in education which assist policy makers in determining broad changes in schools. In order for any changes to start, this survey was necessary to determine the perceptions about SASL as a formal language, to gauge all participants' perceptions about the roles played by the SMT and finally, to guide the questioning for discussions during the dialogues which followed.

In concluding this section, from the responses of all participants, including the SMT participants themselves, there was overall support and a positive agreement with how the SMT has adapted to the transformation of implementing SASL. At that time, the excitement of the new infrastructure, access to technology and the additional Deaf staff members could have influenced these results.

As a researcher, it was necessary for me to triangulate this data using other research tools. (Wilson, 2013, Merriam, 1998) This was done after the focus groups, with the said follow-up surveys at the end of the year.

5.4.3. Open-ended question

With regard to the open-ended question, **"Discuss how well you think the SMT is leading the transformation of the school in its implementation of the SASL curriculum?"** The following findings were made:

In the open-ended responses, the SMT and Deaf educator participants all made references related to compliance with policy from the DBE as well as mentioning the availability of SASL resources, which up to that point had not been used for sign language. SMT #1 stated, "*I think SMT is implementing the SASL curriculum as guided by policy and department instructions*…" while SMT #2 responded *"…active participation with* DBE *is necessary for proper implementation"* and DE #1 stated [that] *"SMT leads by providing training from Department of Education…"* Staying with this question, DE #2 again reiterated the leadership role as demonstrated by SMT in ensuring Deaf educators attend training. Her focus was on the different areas for Sign Language development at school, in contrast to DE #1 who was more focussed on the infrastructure for the facilitation of the SASL curriculum.

However, based on the (2/4) responses received from the Deaf assistants, it was requested that the SMT should provide systems for improving the understanding of this curriculum as well as seeking other service providers to improve the SASL communication abilities of other staff members.

From the above responses, it appeared that the SMT and Deaf educators shared a transactional approach for the implementation, while the Deaf class assistants share a more transformative approach for SASL (Shields, 2009).[54]

5.5. Focus Group Discussions

The following section reports the findings of the focus group discussions conducted with three focus groups. This includes: the SMT participants (SMT #1,SMT#2 and SMT#3), the Deaf Educators (DE #1 and DE #2) and the Deaf class assistants (CA #1, CA#2, CA#3 and CA#4)

Similar questions were discussed for each focus group. The document represented by Appendix G was used as a guide for the discussions as participants were free to highlight their points of view, share their concerns and state what they thought was needed to bring about change within the school. At the start of the focus group discussions, I stressed to the participants the importance of the duality of my role: as a researcher studying the processes at this institution for SASL, but also that of being

[54] See Chapter 3.3.

a participant by being a part of the management team responsible for bringing about changes within the institution. This extensive introduction given to the three focus groups was important as I needed to establish with the participants that their responses to this research could be made without any form of judgement or reprisal.

Their replies to all the questions were important for this research, as it added to the participants' sense of feeling safe that they could state their opinions, especially if those reflected positively or negatively on the process of implementation or the role of the members of the SMT. Transcriptions and a video copy of all the focus group interviews are available for verification. Before analysis of the focus group interviews could begin, all the interviews were transcribed and double-checked with the participants for their verification.

The focus group interviews were all conducted in the same venue, the school board room. All participants had consented to be video recoded (See Appendix D) and had consented that the findings of this research be made available. I also enlisted the help of a professionally qualified SASL interpreter for the focus groups involving Deaf participants. The same interpreter was used in an attempt to ensure clarity and reliability of data. She verbally interpreted all responses from Deaf participants and interpreted all my questions in SASL.

Analysis of qualitative data requires understanding so that one would make sense of the text. As indicated, Creswell (2008, p. 245) describes the above analysis as an iterative process, moving between phases of data collection and analysis and reading through data several times (for analysis used in this research, see Chapter 4.11).

Macmillan and Schumacher (2009, p. 368-369) emphasise that it is important for the researcher to be immersed in the data, a sort of "crystallization"[55], that allows the researcher more than just an in-depth experience, but almost as if they are reliving the field experience during intense reflexive analysis. The data from the focus groups was organised, transcribed into segments and inductively coded. The broad categories above yielded the following themes and sub-themes across all focus groups and the observations as recorded in Table 8.

[55] Crystallisations – An analytical style in which the researcher combines segmenting, categorizing, and pattern seeking into an extensive period of intuition-rich immersion in the data. (Schumacher and McMillan, 2009, p.486)

The next section outlines all participants' main concerns and comments which we experienced during the initial period of implementation. I have provided the findings and arranged the data according to the focus group questions which guided the discussions.

During the first six months of implementing SASL, we, the SMT, experienced several problems. During these sessions a great deal of discussion took place while the focus groups explored the initial teething problems as well as the possible strategies employed to alleviate the challenges experienced by educators and class assistants.

As stated previously, analysis of the focus groups through coding, comparing and contrasting and regrouping yielded themes and sub-themes. In the next section, I present the themes and sub-themes visually, followed by the interpretation thereof.

5.5.1. Discussion of themes and sub-themes- Phase 1

I report the findings as an integration of the views expressed by the three focus groups. Despite the focus being on the members of the SMT group and their transformational role for the implementation, the perceptions and views of the Deaf staff (educators and class assistants) are instrumental as they were an essential component of the plans of the SMT. There are three main themes with each theme further divided into sub-themes, based on the codes and categories (See Methodology, 4.11). These include: the SASL Curriculum, Quality Education for Deaf learners and Leadership and Change.

The analysis of all focus groups (SMT, DE and CAs) yielded the following themes and sub-themes.

Table 8: Phase 1 - Themes and Sub-themes.

Discussion Questions	**Questions: 1, 5, 2, 10**	**Questions: 4, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10**	**Questions: 7, 8, 10**
Themes	**SASL Curriculum SC**	**Quality Education for Deaf Learners QE**	**Leadership and Change LC**
Sub Themes	a) SASL as a Home Language	a) Literacy of Deaf Learners	a) On-going dialogue/ discussions
	b) SASL and the HOH learner	b) Language paradigm transformation (change).	b) Maintaining high expectations
	c) SASL and bilingualism	c) School Vision	
	d) SASL, LTSM and infrastructure		

5.5.2. The SASL Curriculum

(a) SASL as a Home Language

All the focus groups expressed their initial appreciation that SASL has finally been recognised with official status in schools; urgent appeals have been made by so many lobby groups leading up to this point (DeafSA, March 2003; Springate Court Case 2012; Minister's National Announcement in 2014). However, the implementation of the policy within the context for each school posed significant challenges. The first of these is that SASL is prescribed on a Home Language level only to parallel the process of attaining official language status (DBE, 2013, p.7). SASL as a Home Language in CAPS is similar to other Home Languages in terms of structure, content and sequence. The DBE requires schools to implement the policy and schools intend to implement the policy, but the way in which it is translated in all schools calls for a transformation in how SASL is viewed and implemented as a Home language, also as the LOLT, and in how this change translates into improved quality education.

The first question posed to all focus groups was what their views were regarding the implementation of SASL (See Appendix G1, 2, 3).

Although SMT # 3 was pleased that the Education Department had taken the decision to implement SASL, he voiced a concern that SASL was offered just as a Home Language and not as a First Additional Language (FAL). He felt strongly about this and stated *"that's actually taken something away like the 'education as a whole' for the Deaf child"* (SMT 1st focus group, p. 1) because now Deaf learners have to study the oral language as a First Additional language. SMT # 3 stated that the policy in its current form could not just be implemented as it was: it forced the SMT and Deaf staff to review several aspects such as notional time, Home Language and English and resources.

Similarly, CA #4, in response to this first question felt that the curriculum was different to what she was used to, and stated from the Deaf class assistant's perspective, "*You need to have a special curriculum for the Deaf assistants to be able to roll this out adequately in a Deaf school that in future it can progress well"* (CA1st focus group, p. 2).

CA#1, whose first language is Sign Language, in response to the first question, also felt that as a policy, it could not just be implemented, but rather required "…*that we as researchers have looked at SASL we need to manage and see how we make it more applicable to teach the learners*" (CA1st focus group, p. 1), but unlike SMT #3 who was speaking from a policy perspective, CA #1 was of the opinion that the Deaf assistants can be "*assisted to tell the educators how to manage it appropriately*…" Shields (2015, p. 8) advances transformative change through engaging in dialogue between individual accountability, the need to address inequitable distribution of power, the need to deconstruct and reconstruct knowledge frameworks that could be perpetuating situations of injustice; these are instances which should be demonstrated here, especially where the Deaf propose to take the lead in discussions.

In an unexpected response from CA #4, she found the SASL curriculum for the Deaf 'too difficult' and that it should be made "*very easy, you need to simplify it*" (CA 1st focus group, p.2) This statement from a deaf class assistant's view was rather profound. There is always an outcry when the curriculum is simplified for Deaf

learners, when perceived that it is too difficult (Parkin, Magongwa and Storbeck, 2009). As principal, I wanted to stop this participant and point out that we cannot go back to "dumbing down" the curriculum for our learners. Nonetheless, I did not interrupt, as it was important that participants felt they could express their honest opinions – or the perception of bias on the part of the researcher would cloud the outcome of the findings (Greene, 2014; Unluer, 2012). She qualified her statement then by stating her concerns about the different language backgrounds that Deaf learners came from, which impacted on lessons when one was teaching Sign Language: *"…they don't have any signing skills, you sign to them, they just don't grasp the concept you are trying to convey to them"* (CA 1st focus group, p.2). She felt that teaching Sign Language to the learners was a slow process, as the SASL formal curriculum poses higher academic demands than the previous usage of informal Sign Language which the learners had been learning.

SMT # 2, HOD of the phase, was equally concerned that, Deaf learners who already have huge linguistic backlogs upon entering schools, are now faced with having to complete two Home Languages. Her concern centred on the notional time available at school. She further stated that even though the DBE provided training in the SASL policy implementation, it did not focus on how the SASL subject fitted into the Foundation Phase with all the other subjects. She stated that what was required at schools was that *"the other teachers needed time to collaborate with each other….considering those aspects that are not part of FAL (English) …teachers must ensure that those aspects are covered"* (SMT 1st focus group, p. 2). For the SMT focus group, I find that the emphasis on compliance with policy was not just about implementing the SASL policy as it stands, but rather implied interrogating the policy and collaboration with others as to 'how' we make this policy work in our school. Burns (1978, p.21) puts forward transformational leadership that speaks about when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality.

SMT # 3, who reiterated that the Deaf learners have to become competent in the subject of SASL as well as their writing abilities, asserted that this was the task of management. But with the SASL curriculum, much more was required from teachers: it dealt with ensuring the learner is competent in SASL, and also ensuring that the learner is able to access other subjects (Mathematics, Life Skills, English) equally well.

This made me ponder what the best would be for the Deaf child, taking all the focus group discussions into consideration while keeping in mind that DE#1 is HOH, DE #2 is profoundly Deaf, while they are both equally competent in SASL and the written structure of English and how best they could accommodate all learners using SASL.

b) SASL and the HOH learner

As previously mentioned, SMT #3 stated the concern that there was no SASL on a FAL level, as one of the recommendations made by Reagan (2008, p. 61). For him, (SMT#3), oral deaf learners, who access the curriculum primarily through an oral medium, were denied the ability to freedom of choice, especially when hearing schools are not yet offering SASL. In his suggestions for the incorporation of SASL as a first language and as a First Additional language within the Language in Education policy framework, this would offer a 'language choice' for an oral deaf learner.

CA # 2 was also in agreement with the sentiment expressed by SMT #3: she saw that SASL "*can help and would benefit the children in an educational way"* but perceived a negative side of SASL in that it did not cater for the HOH learners.

DE #1 agreed that, *"I feel very sorry for the hard of hearing students because their receptive skills in Sign Language, they not very sure of sign"* (DE 1st focus group, p. 2) and said that a total sign environment did not accommodate those students. She made the following statement; *"…for myself, I've been there in that situation I totally understand the hard of hearing children and that exposure they are going through"* (DE 1st focus group, p. 3). DE #1 reiterated that it was very important to have both approaches and not to force the learners into any approach. DE # 2 (who is profoundly Deaf) agreed with this view and pointed out that when teaching English she used English structure but she also understood that HOH learners could not be forced; she indicated that:

> *You need to motivate them to learn Sign Language, and that you always can't depend on your voice, and maybe they (the learners) don't understand that as such no, but you need to introduce it a little at a time* (DE 1st focus group, p. 3)

The concern then remained for the SMT, how the HOH learners would be incorporated within a SASL HL curriculum. From a rights perspective, *White Paper 6* (DoE, 2001) acknowledges that all learners are different and have differing learning needs, which

should be equally valued. These needs have to be respected and acknowledged. Education structures, systems and learning methodologies need to meet the requirements of all learners (DoE, 1997: viii). As the process unfolded further, it highlighted how the HOH learners were accommodated.

c) Sign Bilingualism

In response to the question on sign bilingualism, SMT # 2 felt that it was a good strategy and that it could succeed, but once again reminded the group that SASL is on a HL level, and would require more time. She felt that sign bilingualism could work for the "*…the actual implementation, teaching children for understanding the content, I think it (Bilingualism) can work".* (SMT 1st focus group, p. 7)

SMT# 1, in response to the above, then highlighted an experiment which they (the Deaf educators and class assistants responsible for the ECD had started that year. They were teaching Sign Language, and the English word in GLOSS[56]:" *we want to show them from the beginning stages. We want them to be able to transfer from Sign Language the word to English and from English to Sign Language"* (SMT 1st focus group, p. 7.)

SMT #3 differed from SMT #1 with respect to sign bilingualism, and said that the bilingual approach could only work when "*there is competency in one language…it can't be introduced together because basically it dilutes and then children miss lots important things"* (SMT 1st focus group, p. 8.) This point was also the view of the Deaf staff. Upon further probing, SMT #3 indicated that the level of SASL at Grade 1 should be equivalent to the level of a spoken language and would therefore require a more intense vocabulary programme. He compared the vocabulary of a hearing learner 'with +/- "2000 words' and felt that a Deaf child at Grade 1 with SASL should also have the same amount of vocabulary.

As a researcher, I reflected on whether SASL would not have provided that start in vocabulary if intense SASL structures had been implemented. As principal, I was satisfied that there was a higher expectation in the academic demand from not only

[56] GLOSS – When a sign is translated into an English word, the word is written in capital letters.

the teachers' output but also from members in management in their academic expectations.

With the Deaf educator focus group in response to the question on bilingualism, DE #1 felt that it depended on the *"individual context*" of the learners and equated this individual context to whatever home language the learner was exposed to. Both participants considered Bilingualism and elaborated on the multilingual nature of the Deaf learners at the school. DE #2 stated that she had recently received a HOH girl from a hearing school. This girl could not speak a word of English and the parents indicated that the home language was Zulu. This girl steadily improved her English and SASL through encouragement and motivation. The parents were amazed at the progress made by their daughter.

DE #1 agreed and stated that she had similar students who had benefitted from having a grounding in an oral language and were now immersed in SASL.

Both Deaf educators did not view Bilingualism from a Deaf sign perspective, but rather from a multilingual one (Störbeck, Magongwa and Parkin, 2009). This sentiment was echoed in the focus group of the Deaf class assistants.

In the Deaf class assistants' focus group, I had to re-explain (through the SASL interpreter) the term Bilingualism before they could answer. In my explanation through the interpreter, I provided the participants with examples of oral learners using two or more languages to communicate, also mentioning that the regard for both or more languages becomes important. Only once there was conceptual clarity, did participants answer this question.

Once all assistants indicated that they understood the term 'bilingualism,' CA # 3 used herself as an example of a bilingual, where she signs at school, and lip-reads at home with her children. For CA #1 he felt that bilingualism complicated the language programme at school, when Deaf and HOH learners are separated. The Deaf learners communicate just by signing and written English while the HOH learners communicate with sign language, oral languages such as English, sometimes even a vernacular language, as well as written English. For him, he felt when the HOH learners were using sign and voice together, it confused the learners. CA #3 agreed and made the following point that she saw her role, teaching SASL as a subject, as crucial. She found that when she was able to express English concepts in SASL, also using SASL

structure, she was able to assist the learners to understand. Her main concern was that hearing teachers were unable to "role-shift" characters in stories using SASL while as Deaf assistants, they found it so easy. She stated, "I am a Deaf person and I do that naturally".

The Deaf staff (educators and class assistants) have a natural predisposition to a visual language, whereas for hearing staff members, it is a learnt process, but a process that is accompanied with a change in mind-set through transformation.

d) SASL, Infrastructure and LTSM

There was appreciation for management as regards the implementation of visual equipment from all focus groups. SMT #2 responded, *"From the point of management, it (implementation) went quite well, infrastructure is in place, class assistants is in place, teachers are in place. I think so far it is going okay"* (SMT 1st focus group, p. 3), similarly SMT #1 commented, "*The deputy principal has been very instrumental in a lot of things we needed for our classrooms"* (SMT 1st focus group, p. 3.)

DE #1 thanked the management responsible, but indicated that he still experienced other problems. This included "editing and drafting", as it is a visual mode, face-to-face communication that would often involve recording, editing, storage of recorded data, marking of recorded data and storage of all learners' work. That in itself created a change in how the daily content assessment of teaching and learning in Sign Language is conducted and kept safely for retrieval in the future. The SMT would need to ensure that storage, retrieval, editing and safety systems are in place.

CA #1 in the focus group stated that, *"They (SMT) explained the projectors and everything else that needs to be incorporated like resources and everything for the school…but the challenge is the filming …no one taught us that"* (CA 1st focus group, p. 3.) This statement does refer to the changes happening in the school in provisions of required resources as explained previously, but does not address specific training in the "what" and "how" of filming and recording of SASL content. As a principal at that point, I made a personal note that we should provide training in this regard. Fleish and Christie (2004) are of the opinion that schools' organisational structures must implement systems that promote teaching and learning. Providing all staff with the necessary training to make effective teaching and learning in SASL possible, is a management task. This will also be elaborated on, during the section on training.

Later in the discussion, CA #1 returned to the point about technology. He indicated that owing to the use of added technology and the immersion of the learners into those resources, he saw the additional number of responsibilities such as technological skills, setting up the camera and projector, video-recording and editing which came with teaching SASL as an opportunity to teach learners further technological skills. He felt that it would *"stimulate their technological skills"* and would enhance their visual ones.

To conclude this section, SASL, as a policy, cannot be taken and just implemented; persons in management have to come together and contextualise the implementation.

5.5.3. Quality education for Deaf learners

The transformation of schools to provide quality education remains a national priority, as contained in the founding statement regarding the roles of principals. *"The purpose of the transformation of any education system is to bring about sustainable school improvement and a profound change in the culture and practice of schools"* (*Government Gazette*, 39827, 2016, p. 8-9). As discussed in the literature review, the call for quality education for Deaf learners remains at the level of school transformation where schools must be able to set and expect higher standards from Deaf learners and equally from the teachers. In essence, this equates to moving from a Medical 'deficit' model, to a Social Cultural Model of Deafness where the regard and respect for Deaf language and culture is part of the vision of the school. Grosjean (2008, p. 167) advocates for the right to quality education for Deaf learners, to master the ability of two languages, Sign Language and a written/oral form of a spoken language.

a) Literacy of Deaf Learners

In the focus group the question was asked of all groups, through an interpreter for the Deaf groups, if they thought that SASL could contribute to the development of the literacy of learners. Even although this question does not directly address the focus of the research, the role of the SMT in the implementation of SASL, the question was posed as it seeks to establish teachers' existing attitudes and perceptions about SASL as a language to promote academic performance for learners.

In the SMT focus group, SMT # 3 stated that people should distinguish between SASL as a subject and SASL as a medium of instruction with regard to assessments. With

the implementation of SASL, the writing abilities of the learners cannot be ignored, but it (SASL as a new subject) should assist the learners. SMT #3 goes further, responding [that] *"in terms of management, you have to sit, you have to look at education holistically and not [at] Sign Language in a box"* (SMT 1st focus group, p. 5.)

SMT #2 shared her concern about management, timeframes and literacy and concurred with SMT #3, that the teacher will have to put systems in place, SMT#2 states, *"We* (SMT) *must try to make sure we include aspects of Home Language, but it means coming back to the table and looking at notional times, because requirements and the time frames are something we (management) have to manage."* (SMT 1st focus group, p.6) Within this focus group, the SMT members are cognisant of their responsibilities, but they would require the assistance of the Deaf staff to implement it.

The Deaf educator focus group focussed on searching for matching themes in the curriculums of SASL and English. DE #2 indicated that the learners were experiencing difficulty working through the curriculum. Both educators have focussed on visual stimuli for the themes, in an attempt to improve literacy and reinforce learner's receptive skills in SASL. DE #1 used an example of themes where 'role models' could be a theme, and where the SASL educator would use Deaf role models, while the English teacher would use those same role models and reinforce English content. DE #1 admitted that there were times when there were no overlapping themes, and that they still experienced difficulties. This strategy employed by the Deaf educators is similar to the sign bilingual model proposed by Storbeck (2000).The Bilingual aspect is discussed later in this chapter; however, DE #1 contends that some of the learners are becoming very confused, "*The curriculum is too much, it is too hefty [difficult]."* This suggests that Deaf staff members equally viewed the curriculum as difficult, which could be as a result of Deaf staff not having experience in teaching SASL as a formal language, and that learners have had little experience in SASL on a Home Language level.

From the focus group discussion with Deaf class assistants, they held a different view from that of the SMT participants emerged. For them, the Deaf class assistants adopting a transformational way to implement SASL HL, states that it is about improving the literacy of Deaf learners; both CA #1 and #3 nodded in agreement. CA

#3 motivated this by using the example of Reading in Grade R. Teachers held a book, showed the pictures to the learners, signed what the pictures represented; as learners progressed in their understanding through Sign language learning, later writing should be introduced. She stated *"So the first language you teach is sign language skill, the second language you teach is written English…so once you have the basis of sign language structure, then, it would be easier"* (CA 1st focus group, p. 6)

CA #1 stated that SASL can assist literacy if attained through Sign Language, but that the learners need to have Sign Language first as a basis in order to teach English written structure. He qualified his statement, "*if they are fast learners, or if they are slow learners"* For this participant, it is a process (introducing English) that could start as early as Grade R (if the Deaf learners are fast learners). Again, he said that it was important to teach Deaf learners the structure of SASL.

The Deaf teaching staff see the benefits of SASL, for assisting in literacy as well as in promoting fully bilingual learners, while the SMT members are still cautious as they have the responsibility and accountability for ensuring learners are competent in SASL and English.

b) Language paradigm transformation

The Deaf educators were asked if they were able to support the language paradigm shift from an "oral language" to a "sign language" approach; DE #2 (profoundly Deaf) emphasised her flexibility in indicating that she was able to work with both oral and sign approaches.

Both Deaf educators agreed that the change would not be easy but that it was going to be a gradual process and would be better structured as the curriculum unfolded. Important to note here is that the Deaf educators valued the option of choice for the Deaf learner to choose which language they are most comfortable with linguistically, while in the Management focus group, they saw their priority as ensuring competency and proficiency not only in SASL but also in the written language.

In response to the same question in the SMT focus group, SMT # 2, felt that with the added training many staff members would support the language change paradigm. She placed importance on good training, "*basically they (teachers) have been assessed on competency in SASL to make sure they don't disadvantage the learners"*

(SMT 1st focus group, p. 4) to ensure that all teachers and class assistants are competent in SASL.

Similarly the SMT #1 felt that there was a change of perceptions and awareness: several years ago many teachers could not sign very well and because of that, their role was much more one of interpreting; now all staff had to be completely familiar with the SASL curriculum demands. She stated that, *"So it* [language paradigm shift] *is a good thing, as it fostered respect for each other's ability and we try to develop each other's skill".* This sentiment was shared by the Deaf teacher assistants, as they began seeing the value of their contribution to the learning process of the hearing teachers and also the parents.

In contrast to the views expressed by the SMT focus group, CA #3 felt that teachers were not applying themselves adequately. She stated that teachers needed to *"…..motivate the learners…but teachers need to embrace this* (Sign Language), *they need to make it their own language because many of the teachers feels so confused"* (CA 1st focus group, p. 4) In her view, teachers should understand that SASL is a language just like any other and that there were different variants of it. As researcher, reflecting on the contrasting viewpoints above, the Deaf class assistants are transformative in their approach to changing the language paradigm at the school. Mertens (2009, p.49) refers to transformative change that occurs when it challenges conditions at schools that address issues of inequity. For Freire, (1978, p. 64) being critical is where deep and equitable change can start.

c) School Vision

In the SMT focus group, SMT #3 felt that the school's mission statement was very similar to the department's mission and that it addressed the learners' future:

> *…it speaks about getting them ready for the outside world and SASL is part of that process that takes place in the school…..it aims to develop their maximum potential.* (SMT 1st focus group, p.9)

He did not think that it was necessary to modify the vision and mission of the school as it was contained within the culture of the school. Both the other participants, SMT # 2 and # 1, agreed that the school's vision and mission was encompassing enough to incorporate the new SASL subject. SMT #1 stated, "*I think our school has always*

accommodated that…when it came to Sign Language, giving the children what they actually need, like you say, a culture at the school." (SMT 1st focus group, p.9.) However, being at the school, I can conclude that the change is not as simplistic as commented by SMT #3. Later dialogues highlighted the difficulties and included the changes experienced by all groups for this process.

SMT #3 stated that SASL was part of the culture of the school, "*… the other thing is the recognition and regard for Sign Language is an important thing that goes back to the culture of a school and sign language has also being recognised as a language of this school…"* (SMT 1st focus group, p. 4.) By equating the regard for SASL to the culture of the school, this remark showed that SASL was not just about a language subject being implemented; it concerned a cultural change, one that determined the future for Deaf learners.

The Deaf educator focus group answered from the perspective of the future of Deaf learners: for them the importance of Deaf students achieving their matric (Grade 12) or their level 4 or 5 (National Qualification Levels in Vocational Training) should be the vision of the school. DE#2 expressed her view, that while she was fully supportive of SASL as a formal language, she had never had SASL as a formal language yet still qualified as a teacher. Both Deaf educator participants referred to the difficulties encountered when the Deaf learners go out and search for employment, such as the barriers that they face when there is no interpreter. DE #1 felt that the SASL curriculum should have been communicated to the hearing schools. From her perspective, if greater numbers of hearing people are exposed to SASL this would make the hearing world more accessible to the benefit of the deaf community. Reflecting on this school that accommodates hearing learners as well, it is an important point to consider for next year.

The Deaf class assistants, similarly to the Deaf educators, interpreted the vision of the school as regards the future of Deaf learners. All of the Deaf class assistants agreed that SASL could contribute in making learners fully competent in society. CA #3 felt that, given 5-8 years, with the implementation of SASL formally, the school would be "a *perfect environment into mainstream society". CA* #1 agreed that the school is geared towards independent living for every student; when previously there was very little SASL, now he saw a future for the students where they are able to eventually go

out and live independently. For him, the last thing which he would want to see would be Deaf students who sit at home depressed with a *"'can't do' attitude".*

In concluding this section, the quality of the education of Deaf learners is not solely about implementing SASL, but it is also focussed on transformation within the school; holding constant dialogue between the experts (Deaf) and those in management positions. It is in this space for dialogue where the expectations of the department, the SMT and the Deaf experts at school are discussed in order to discover ways to implement SASL and change the culture at school.

5.5.4. Leadership and Change

a) Ongoing Dialogues

When asked if SMT#1 thought that management was prepared for SASL implementation, felt confident she could approach the principal, the deputy principal and any HOD of the staff. She replied that there was an open platform where there was a sharing of suggestions and ways in handling and dealing with South African Sign Language.*"*

Similarly, SMT #3 declared that he wanted to create a platform to allow for debate where issues could be discussed, which allowed people to air their views: "*We can either accept it in the form it is prescribed (the SASL HL Curriculum implementation as is) and we know we will be losing some aspects or we can be proactive and make sure we are still not losing our children while they (*DBE*) rectifying the problem".* (SMT 1st focus group, p. 14.) For SMT #3 aspects of the curriculum should be changed or reviewed by curriculum writers that would ultimately assist the learners.

In agreement that the SMT should be the initiators of allowing more platforms for Deaf class assistants for dialogue, SMT #3 noted, towards the end of the discussion, that all members involved in the curriculum should conduct open and honest discussion, having a closer look at how they manage the curriculum for the learners. This is based on the essence of Freire's theory of critical pedagogy, holding the important discussions that led to informed decisions on what was best for the learners. SMT#3 states:

> *"I'd like to think that in schools the policy is a guide and ultimately we do what is best for children at the end what the products are we know where we want*

our children to be and we know what we need to do to get them there. I think that is the important thing. So constantly changing is important (constant dialogue) from everybody, its creating that open space where everybody can say, if they disagree about certain things they must be allowed to say it so that you can consider it and think about it, that's important, it's not just about taking things that are given to you." (SMT 1st focus group, p.14)

However, in contrast to the views expressed by the SMT, CA #3 expressed a different opinion: she explained that the HODs held their meetings, the teachers theirs, and therefore Deaf class assistants should also have their meetings. CA #1 felt that class assistants and the HODs should work together as a team. This participant found it disconcerting when the HODs are constantly shifting them around (the class assistants being moved to different teachers) and they did not have sufficient time to grasp the essence of the lessons.

"You need specific timeframe to be able to get familiar with the content that you need to teach because they keep swapping you around …I think the HOD needs to give adequate time to a Deaf assistant and to make sure the children understand us." (CA 1st focus group, p10)

CA#1 motivated for the need to have a *"fully fledged sign language educator"* in Foundation Phase, as the influence of English and oralism constitutes a problem in that Phase. He felt that the learners' "receptive skills were delayed because of Sign Language and stated that he was able to see that *"…you can see the difference when a child is confident in signing in Foundation Phase but that confidence disappears when it comes to other subjects…"* (CA 1st focus group, p. 4) This happens when the other subjects require that educators use strategies for teaching Mathematics, English FAL and Life Skills, English text-based subjects through a first language without a written form. (Storbeck, 2000, p.52)

Although CA # 3 felt pleased that the learners were learning Sign Language at the school in their move to a Sign Language environment, in comparison with when she was a pupil at that school, at which stage it was purely an oral institution, she agreed with CA# 1 regarding the English influence and asserted that …

"We need to have a mind shift in this understanding that this is no longer English, this is a different language we are dealing with…these are two

language structures and this is where we are experiencing a challenge" (CA 1st focus group, p.3).

In line with Freire's theme on *'conscientization'* he (Freire) states, "[T]he more educators and the people investigate the people's thinking, and are thus jointly educated, the more they continue to investigate" (Freire, 1972, p.81). This show a deepening awareness for the need to change because of the SASL implementation.

b) Having higher expectations

For the SMT focus group, there was a feeling that the school and the learners should meet the standards as set out in the SASL curriculum and that the institution should assist the Deaf learners to achieve. The whole concept of management having higher expectations of the Deaf learners should be considered the start of how HODs manage their phases. Interestingly enough, for management, this question related to keeping and improving standards by HODs working closely with teachers.

For SMT #3, having higher expectations meant that

"standards have to automatically kick-up a notch…it (the curriculum) has forced us to look at it from a different point of view, it's even given schools for the Deaf the opportunity to compete equally now because there's always been that in lieu that SASL was not a first language[57]." (SMT 1st focus group, p. 11)

The SMT members, specifically SMT#3, are evidently focussed on the improvement of the quality of education for Deaf learners, and expecting much more from the learners using this curriculum.

For SMT#3 the transformation of the roles of the SMT lies in the "*management's role"* to maintain standards and that the HODs should be working much more closely with the teachers in this department. By 'this' he meant maintaining high standards and expectations of Deaf students):

"HODs …they need to make sure that those standards are in place …that means constant supervision, constant guidance constant support for all to get

[57] Previously schools for the Deaf had the liberty to replace the language subject with any other subject from the Approved list of NCS subject for Grade 12. With the introduction of SASL, Deaf learners will have two approved language subjects.

a better understanding because there is a lot of confusion." (SMT 1st focus group, p. 10)

SMT #1 agreed with SMT #2 and added that there should be more collaborative training, because she felt the roles of the Deaf class assistants should be clearly defined and not just regarded as support for the teacher. She wanted to see the Deaf class assistants play a leading role in the curriculum implementation.

With the SMT focus group, SMT #2 remarked that there was not much change in perceptions of SASL amongst the staff; most members were in agreement that SASL should be the first language. SMT#1 said she had noticed a difference amongst the Deaf assistant teachers; they took on much more ownership of school programmes that involved Sign Language awareness.

However, CA # 3 in their focus group disagreed and did not think the SMT was ready, her reasons including that *"hearing people are managing this process and they are dominating to say you MUST but Deaf people are not inclusive of this, that's why I think the structure needs to change"* (CA 1st focus group, p. 3) She felt that Deaf staff have a better understanding and more able to relate to the Deaf learner's learning experiences than the hearing teachers. For CA #3 hearing people were unable to make the adaptation to the learner's abilities. I was satisfied about the freedom experienced by CA #3, that she felt confident enough to be critical in her responses. Her criticism here is not only valid but instrumental if changes are to be effected. Furthermore, this ensures that at this school a Deaf person should be integral to the management decisions regarding the SASL. CA#3 views SASL perceptions from the perspective that hearing teachers should change. She stated,

> *You need to adapt the way that you sign to that child, to change to your level of sign, how you sign when a hearing person come, they (hearing teachers) cannot do that language properly between the child and the teacher and there is that communication challenge you understand.* (CA 1st focus group, p. 9)

However, for CA# 4, who initially came across as reluctant to participate and negative towards SASL as previously she had viewed the curriculum as "too" difficult. For her, SASL HL was not easy for the learners to understand, *"[T]hey know* (referring to the learners) they *have these things in Sign Language, and now that we are giving it more*

meaning, showing them different ways, they finding it very difficult." (CA 1st focus group, p. 2)

In agreement to CA#4, CA#2 added that the influence of English was affecting the learner's ability to learn Sign Language naturally, her stance being that:

> "*The only way to solve this is the natural process for the children to socialise themselves outside the school environment because if you do have classes focussing on Signing and Sign Language only that is the difference…but outside of the school environment, on the playground for example. They need to learn it naturally."* (CA 1st Focus group, p. 4)

With the Deaf assistants' focus group, in response to this open-ended question, they raised several issues, which addressed working relationships directly. This open-ended question encouraged the participants to speak more freely about their concerns regarding their working relationship with their HOD and how that affected their teaching and the learners learning SASL. As researcher, I made a mental note of this point that it would be extremely helpful during the implementation phase**.** With the Deaf assistants' focus discussions, CA #2 stated briefly, *"…I think HOD and Deaf assistants must work together to assist SASL to improve. If you work alone, there is no way it can improve"* (CA 1st focus group, p.12)

5.6. Conclusion

In concluding this section on the first focus group discussions, I note how many of the findings demonstrated that participants are grappling with the day-to-day structure of the implementation. At the time of these focus group discussions, all participants had only been involved in the implementation for less than six months.

In Phase 1, the data from participants revealed many frustrations in implementation coupled with a sense of negativity from the Deaf class assistants. For Freire (1972, p. 56) 'problem-posing' education happens when people (participants), see their reality not as static, but rather a reality in a process of change, in a process of transformation (1972, p. 56).

In Phase 2, the general mood of the staff was less of the frustration expressed by all participants but more of an acceptance that the school and the curriculum must change to accommodate SASL. This included the SMT in collaboration with the Deaf

staff making the changes to SASL HL through constant discussions of what needs to done. Several implementation changes were brought about in phase 2, Chapter 6, see (table 10, p.130), where the role of the SMT is highlighted.

The next chapter in Phase 2 will focus on the latter part of the year, once the first year of Foundation implementation is complete, and on the transformational leadership practices experienced by all participants.

Chapter Six

Data Presentation, Interpretation and Analysis

Phase 2

> *"With that discussion also comes new planning, new strategies that also develop you intellectually. You are forced to think about it, is it working. This person said this, maybe we should try that way, it forces you to plan differently and think of new ways to plan."* (SMT 2nd focus group, p. 4)

6.1. Introduction

This chapter considers the findings from the final focus group discussions and the survey conducted at the end of the year. As indicated, SASL has been implemented as a formal Home Language subject for grades R to grades 3 at this research site for 2015. It outlines these perceptions and also highlights the specific strategies in implementing SASL that were applied by this school. At the end of the year, there were changes in the perceptions of all participants about the role of SASL with regard to the implementation.

The same participants were interviewed in both phases. This was done to maintain continuity and assess whether there were changes in the participants' experience of SASL. Furthermore, the same participants had the responsibility of teaching, assessing and monitoring SASL, which made sampling convenient. Their accessibility assisted me as the researcher.

In the previous chapter, (Phase 1) a baseline understanding of perceptions, fears and expectations of the SASL Curriculum from the participants was outlined. The inductive data analysis process revealed three broad themes: the SASL Curriculum, Quality Education for Deaf learners and Leadership and Change. In this chapter, two themes were inductively derived during data analysis as presented in Table 9 below. A similar process of data analysis[58] was conducted to that of the first round in Phase 1.

[58] Data Analysis – Discussed in detail in Methodology Chapter: 4.8.

Table 9: Phase 2 -Themes and Sub-themes

Discussions / Question	**Appendix: G1 – G3** **SMT: Questions: 2,3,4** **Deaf Staff Questions: 1,2,3,5,7,8,**	**Appendix: G1 –G3** **SMT: Questions: 1,5** **Deaf Staff Questions: 4,6,9**
Broad Themes	**Leadership and Change** **LC**	**SASL Curriculum** **SC**
Sub Themes	a) Good working relationships	a) SASL as a Home Language
	b) SASL and team-teaching model	b) SASL and the HOH learner
	c) Change within the school	c) SASL and assessments
		d) SASL and the rights of Deaf learners

6.2. Focus Groups

The focus group interviews were all conducted in the same venue as the first round, the school board room. Similar processes were followed; all focus groups were video-recorded, with the same interpreter who was used in the first round focus group discussions. This was to ensure that there was continuity in understanding the interpretations of the discussions, for both the participants and the researcher. Once again the participants watched the focus groups and verified the transcripts that these reflected their views correctly. Transcriptions and a video copy of all the focus group interviews were made available to the participants for verification.

6.2.1. Discussion of themes and sub-themes

This discussion began by focussing on the theme of leadership and change. The reason was that the main focus question of the research looks at the role of SMT for the implementation of SASL in the Foundation Phase

6.2.1.2. Theme: leadership and change

a) Sub-theme: Good working relationships

The question asked whether all assistants felt they were supported, stimulated and challenged by their HODs, as all the participants were working with SMT #1 and SMT

#2. The participants focussed on how they were supported, although neither indicated that they were challenged. This implied that the assistants were more at ease with the processes of the SASL implementation.

CA # 1 referred to the 'good relationships' between himself and his HOD who is SMT #1:

"I feel that it is a consultative process. If there is a problem that comes up we do solve it internally especially with the curriculum e.g. If there was something to do with structure for foundation phase, like a metaphor, there's an example for a metaphor that comes up, we'll go to the internet and we research on American Sign Language." (CA 2nd focus group, p. 3)

It is interesting to note that CA # 1 refers to "we" as a partnership, which he saw as a shared responsibility in making aspects within the SASL accessible for the learners.

He continued, describing their working relationship which he found very supportive:

> *"We copy what they (ASL) have and we copy what we (SASL) have here and we build it in to understanding how we do it here. So it's very important. My HOD has really supported me and advised me on this."* (CA 2nd focus group, p. 3)

CA #3 alluded to the support she received, but she referred specifically to how they, the class assistants, worked with the concerns raised by the HOD regarding the assessments outcomes in SASL CAPS:

> *"If there is something that is misunderstood my HOD tries to explain it to me and when it's time for examination and we think about how to do assessments, how to do whatever, and the HOD would explain it to me, word by word, phrase by phrase and then we would throw around ideas and brainstorm on how best we can do assessment."* (CA 2nd focus group, p.3)

CA# 2 stated that the HODs (SMT #1 and #2) supported all class assistants, as indicated by the other participants:

> *"They (HODs) want to see us (Deaf class Assistants) follow the CAPS curriculum but they know they need the support of SA Sign Language deaf assistants so they really support us"* (CA 2nd focus group, p. 3)

Ndou (2009) emphasises the importance of educators and members of the SMT understanding their respective roles to provide meaningful support, create opportunities for meaningful discussions and reflections to bring about improved conditions within the school. In the focus group with the Deaf educators and in response to the question regarding if they felt they were supported, challenged and stimulated by their HODs, DE #1 indicated that she was overseen by two HODs, and she felt she could approach her HOD with any issue, positive or negative:

> *"I have good relationships with both of them, I don't have any problems, perfect relationship, if there is anything that I need or if they need to fix something, they accept that yes they accept that."* (DE 2nd focus group, p.2)

DE #2 did not focus on the support from the HOD, but rather on the support which she provided to DE #1. She refers to a *"community of support that we build"* that she felt was critical when fellow staff members continually needed each other.

In the SMT focus group, during a discussion about the leadership role of members in the SMT who assisted in the first year of implementation, SMT #3 reiterated that management should be approachable, but also needs to heed the advice from members within their teams:

> *"As SMT we still look at the opinions of the people on the ground actually teaching sign language and they came to us and we try and accommodate as far as possible to deal with those issues"* (SMT 2nd focus group, p.1)

According to Hallinger (2003, p.15) transformational leadership is enacted when there is a renewed commitment of followers to organisational goals. It becomes important that the leaders strive for the help and support of teachers, to develop their capabilities to contribute to the school goals, rather than the specific outcomes.

It is my opinion that for SASL to succeed in our schools, there has to be a platform where Deaf staff know they have the liberty to raise issues with the dominant hearing staff, and furthermore that SMT management would maintain an environment where Deaf staff can share their concerns and find solutions together with members on the SMT.

Further in the discussion, Question 4 asked if they (SMT Participants) thought that the staff had gained more understanding about SASL implementation under their

leadership. None of the participants answered 'yes', but rather answered from a shared responsibility that occurs through much debate and planning, similar to the sentiments of CA #1 expressed in that focus group. SMT #3 stated,

> *"So we are dealing with this in SASL curriculum; there are lots of challenges and if we don't debate and if we don't discuss and we don't get input from those people faced with those challenges daily, you can't really effect any positive change and that makes people think about not only SASL but other subjects as well and there should be some sort of intellectual growth that takes place that you learn from the people."* (SMT2nd focus group, p. 5)

SMT #3 refers to discussions that take place continuously in an effort to find strategies that are successful. All participants made reference to the ongoing discussions that are constantly occurring. Freire (1978) argues that the dialogue must be about 'real issues', about issues of change, and cannot be a 'banking style' education, where implementation of the curriculum occurs uncritically.

b) Sub-theme: SASL and the team-teaching model

The DBE (2013, p. 17) makes the recommendation that schools must adopt a "Team-teaching approach" to offer SASL as a subject. This approach entails the learner having access to an educator and class assistant and offering SASL as a Home language. This would mean that learners are afforded access to both a Deaf and a hearing staff member.

At this research site, with the additional class assistants that were appointed by the school management, the team-teaching model (Ibid, p. 17-18) assisted the implementation process significantly. Several discussions on the working relationship and roles of both individuals assisted the learners in the class.

For SMT #1, she reinforced the value of the Deaf teaching/class-assistant to the learning process of the Deaf learners, especially at the Foundation level. Her reasons included that class assistants are more proficient in SASL than the hearing teachers. This same sentiment was expressed by CA #3 in a different focus group discussion. She said,

> *"I am sure that SASL is going to improve because the teacher focusses on English and we convert whatever is taught in English structure when they*

teach…. we have contributed to changing the structure to make sure that the children understand the difference between the spoken aspect and the visual aspect of expression." (CA 2nd focus group, p. 2)

SMT #2 indicated that a Deaf class assistant was provided to most of the class groups in Foundation Phase. This was one[59] of the recommendations of the SASL curriculum, and she mentioned the following reasons:

"So when it comes to the actual teaching, the actual teaching of the curriculum and to comment on the assessment because even while the assessment is taking place it is a bit of a time challenge but a teacher can continue because there is somebody else to also assist with the recording of assessments and that has helped quite a bit." (SMT 2nd focus group, p. 2).

The team-teaching model was proven to be effective when due respect for the Sign Language abilities of the Deaf class assistant was demonstrated there.

c) Sub-Theme: Change within the school

Freire (1978, p. 65) postulates that

> "Only dialogue which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue, there is no communication, and without no communication, there can be no true education."

All participants were asked their opinion about the changes within the school since the implementation of SASL. SMT #3 responded:

"*Anything new requires transformation. When something new is implemented and SASL was implemented in 2015 so it did require a lot of transformation…. The department did do a lot of the training but it was also up to the SMT at schools to ensure that as many people as possible were trained. Also in terms of bonding the staff, getting new assistants on board, teachers came from the department, SMT obviously had to pick the right people for the job and then train them accordingly. That was done".* (SMT 2nd focus group, p.3)

[59] Recommendations for the human resourcing at schools for SASL are found in Chapter 3, p. 14, and also in the SASL CMR 2012, p. 10-12.

SMT #2 saw changes in focussing the staff members' abilities in using Sign Language and looking at their proficiency levels. She contributed,

> *"Now it (SASL Curriculum) was more structured so that you felt a bit more confident to say ok I think I'm here I need a little more support to get there, whether you teach sign language or not. It just allowed you that opportunity to feel in the space of where now it's acceptable, whether it's right or wrong or whether I need to improve myself in terms of sign language."* (SMT 2nd focus group, p. 5)

A sense of awareness about one's sign language abilities allows one to undertake reflection, which becomes important as a point of 'praxis' (Freire, 1978, p.143) where after much dialogue there should be informed action following after reflection. Schools should not implement SASL as a CAPS subject without a real dialogue/discussion and reflections about the sign language abilities of the educators. Educators should be exposed to CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency) abilities according to Cummins (1984b) and Störbeck (2000), and strive to achieve a deep academic command of the language. This also calls for the SMT to prioritise the SASL proficiency of hearing educators and put in place support strategies that will assist educators who are unable to communicate effectively with the learners. In this respect, the transformation deals with asking the really hard questions, and teachers honestly reflecting on their abilities. If a teacher is not at a level where his/her command of SASL is not accessible to the learners, then the SMT should ensure that appropriate training is offered for such educators. This includes new and old teachers, irrespective of the amount of years within Deaf Education.

SMT #1 further emphasised this point,

> *Yes, are you signing correctly? Because this SASL has brought that to our attention there are certain ways in which we sign certain things, or we need to relay a message in a certain way. For me I have done a lot of that. And then also mind-sets of people have changed. I've seen change in a lot of teachers. So those Tuesdays and Thursdays morning classes do help the teachers, they're comfortable in their groups and they are signing. That's one of the best things that could happen in the school. That every teacher knows how to sign so that our learners are not left in isolation, especially in the other classes. But*

with the deaf assistants, it's sort of empowered them, it has given them 'this is my language, I know my language, I can teach it to others." (SMT 2ND focus group, p. 3).

The above discussion is an example of the kind of critical dialogue that is needed in schools when implementing SASL. Such dialogue allows for reflection, which should be ongoing (iterative) and must be carried out in an honest acknowledgement of which practices can make a difference for our Deaf learners. Probing questions must be asked to open up this dialogue, reflect on the questions, and explore actions for improvement.

6.2.1.3. Theme: SASL curriculum

The first year of implementing SASL as a formal subject within the Foundation Phase was not straightforward as the SMT had to spend time with the teaching staff to establish joint methods regarding how the school was going to implement it.

Several strategies were employed by the collective efforts of SMT #1 and SMT #2 with the Deaf educators and class assistants responsible for SASL. The focus of this research was placed on the leadership role of the SMT in the implementation of SASL; however, the strategies as underlined below highlight the impact of the role played by the SMT in this process. See table 10 below.

Table 10: Phase 2 - Specific strategies implemented by the SMT

SASL Curriculum	Theme	Strategies Identified	Role of the SMT
SASL HL and English FAL	SASL Curriculum	Linking themes Linking content, visual stimuli Language teachers working together Plan together	Works collaboratively with Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants in linking aspects of the two language re content, themes, structure of the curriculum.
Assessments	Quality of education	Recording entire class Extra time for practising before recording Group editing Learner views and edits own work Making use of the Deaf assistant	HOD has to pre-moderate and post-moderate SASL Assessments in conjunction with the Deaf staff for quality assurance Enlist the assistance of the Deaf staff, going online finding rubrics that will assist the assessment tasks
Team Teaching Model	SASL Curriculum	Hearing teacher focusing mostly on content, Deaf assistant on SASL, assisting with rubrics for assessments, researching with teacher on internet for better ways to offer certain content Having Deaf assistant in class a resource for Deaf learners Bilingual approach in the classroom	Regard and respect for the role of the Deaf assistant Entrusting the Deaf assistant to take on more responsibilities, working towards academic command of SASL. Identifying additional training for both educators and class assistants in working together
Literacy –	SASL Curriculum	Include HL aspects of English in the FAL Curriculum SASL straddled the grades to provide weaker learners with time to catch up.	HOD of Foundation Phase and HOD SASL worked with Deaf educators and the curriculums of SASL and English FAL. HOD, Deaf assistants would all provide assistance, identifying Grade 1 and Grade 2 work in SASL, which the Grade 2 and Grade 3 Deaf learners may not have mastered. That would mean, certain learners being taught at different levels in the SASL curriculum.
Open Communication	Leadership and change	SMT willingness to listen, open platform, Deaf staff take the lead in implementing the curriculum, employ more Deaf staff, Willingness to take advice from Deaf staff Having Deaf staff speak up when they see better ways of implementing SASL Collaborative working relationship between Deaf staff, class assistants and Teachers/ SMT.	Open up platforms of discussion for Deaf staff, provide Deaf staff with leadership positions in implementing several aspects of the curriculum. Making SASL an important aspect of management discussions as suggested by a Deaf staff member
Ongoing training	Leadership and change	Training by Deaf teachers and Deaf class assistants – Tuesdays and Thursday classes – all staff must attend – training led by Deaf staff members	Identify additional training for Deaf and hearing staff for the improvement of SASL, but also for the integration of SASL into the comprehensive academic curriculum of the school

Language paradigm change	Quality of Education	People reflecting on their signing, rethinking if they are signing in the correct structure and if the learners are able to access the learning content being communicated.	SMT identifying strongest signers (Deaf and hearing) and prioritising SASL and language subjects
Bilingual Education	Quality of Education	Establishing a strong SASL foundation before learner starts Grade R. Introduce English in Grade R. Ensure that in Foundation Phase, all Deaf assistants are used in all the grades to strengthen learners access to SASL and exposure to Deaf role models	Ensure respect and regard equally for SASL and English. Ensure that access to SASL promotes literacy and that quality education is ensured through using a language accessible to the learner.

a) Sub-theme: 'SASL curriculum as a Home Language'

Reagan (2008, p.168) places priority on the Sign Language used as the Home Language for Deaf learners. The HODs, SMT #2 and #3, together with the Deaf staff (educators and assistants) designed a way of implementing SASL as a Home Language, without compromising the notional time as prescribed in the SASL CAPS Policy. However, they found that the time to complete all tasks was very tight. From the first focus group, where the SMT participants were sceptical how the implementation would affect the literacy levels, or that the notional time would not be sufficient, participants' discussions now were more positive, better focussed on finding approaches to make SASL as a Home Language more accessible.

In the Deaf Educator focus group discussion DE #2 stated:

> "*We are trying to do as best as we can in terms of linking, where possible, the South African Sign Language Curriculum and the English curriculum, we have tried to link the themes where possible."* (DE 2nd focus group. p. 2)

She highlighted aspects to improve SASL implementation, including the fact that teachers should ensure learners know the difference between English and SASL structures, constantly highlighting the different modalities. Further, she advised: a) introduce Deaf role models continuously to expose learners to Deaf culture; b) the use of SASL resources to understand the SASL subject and c) reading, drawing and discussions in SASL.

In conjunction with the activities by DE#2, DE #1 stated that teachers would discuss briefly their lesson plans for both language subjects (SASL and English FAL), looking at common aspects in the themes such as vocabulary and story content, making use of DVDs related to the theme in SASL, which would also be used in an English lesson, as the visual stimulation assisted concept building for both SASL as a language and literacy in English. DE #1 further emphasised the use of reading books and holding discussions with the learners, where learners would role-play or dramatize the story. She stressed the importance of SASL implementation by focussing on development in language structure, facial expressions, visual communications and handshapes.

The Deaf educators, in their concern for the learners' ability in SASL in the Foundation Phase, grouped the learners according to their abilities in SASL. This was done in collaboration with the HOD, and where learners' actual grade was different to their grade and level in SASL at which the learner was taught. DE #1 made the point:

> *"The goal of SASL is not about just teaching SASL, no it is the children must understand it clearly. The signs must be understood properly, you can't just go around and 'what did you say, what did you do?' we need to have clarity"* (DE 2nd focus group, p.4)

In the work of Swanwick and Gregory (2007) the Bilingualism framework[60] becomes a guide for schools when implementing Sign Language. This framework emphasises language usage in the classroom, language support, assessment, resources and staffing which should all focus on promoting, developing and teaching Sign language.

Sign bilingualism in the context of SASL implementation is important and DE #2 shared the discussions she had with learners about their experiences in English and SASL, where learners indicated they are enjoying SASL, but experienced problems with structure. She complimented them on their English structure and told the learners that they were fortunate to be learning SASL as a formal language. This participant believed in allowing the learner the choice as to the language they are most comfortable to communicate in. Marshie (1997, p. 8) citing Erting, (1994) states that, "one preschool teacher at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School in Washington, D.C. put it:

[60] Sign Bilingualism Framework discussed in Chapter 3.5

> "When it comes to language, kids will eventually show you where their strengths and weaknesses lie. If you're really watching them, they're going to let you know what they need and what they can and can't do" (L. Erting, personal communication, July 22, 1994).

At the end DE #2 stated, that even though there was progress in how SASL was being implemented at the school, one of her concerns was that when she compared the levels of English with the levels of SASL, the learners attempted to use the same structure which they had for English and cognitively tried to do the same for SASL. The learners indicated to DE #2 that they were enjoying SASL, but the structure confused them.

In the Deaf class assistants' focus group discussion, CA #3 reiterated their initial uncertainty in implementing the curriculum, followed by the class assistants who made a conscious decision to implement the curriculum with the focus on the visual aspect of the language, ensuring that it was not implemented from an English perspective. She felt that too much emphasis was placed on English compared with Sign Language from the HODs.

In support, CA #1 also referred to several planning meetings that were held, changes that were made for implementation of the curriculum and the discussion groups that existed amongst the Deaf staff:

> *"We made a lot of changes, we didn't follow the curriculum to the core but we made sure we had discussions…we made sure there were some things we needed to focus on more, we had this discussion groups, together with advisory teams on how we should implement, and what we are still going to change."* (CA 2nd focus group, p.3)

CA#1's reference to 'we' and 'change' is significant for the process of critical engagement as regards the curriculum within a group. Freire (1982, p. 64) contends,

> Finally, true dialogue cannot exist unless it involves critical thinking – thinking which discerns an indivisible solidarity between the world and people admitting of no dichotomy between them – thinking which perceives reality as process and transformation…thinking which does not separate itself from action.

For CA #1, as a Deaf class assistant, he has not only accepted SASL implementation as his responsibility together with a 'group' to make the changes, but also expressed the freedom in making changes to the curriculum for implementation while he worked in a group. In this respect, Taylor (1993, p. 58), who studied the work of Freire (1972), argues that when individuals use the term 'I' or 'We', not in the normative sense of type of grammarian, but as subjects, the word has a flavour of independence…".

In the context of the SASL curriculum, and the work of Steyn (2015, p.124) she highlighted the important role of the Deaf assistants and their role in SASL exposure to grammatically correct structure as well as idiomatic use and sentence structures. This research proposes that Deaf assistants be given more responsibility in planning and implementing this curriculum.

b) Sub-theme: SASL and the HOH learner

During the first round of focus group discussions, all participants were concerned that the HOH learners were not benefitting from the SASL curriculum as a Home language subject. Many Deaf learners within the school use voice or lip-reading to communicate and would only use Sign Language when in the SASL class.

In this regard SMT #1 stated when she had HOH learners in her class:

> *"Although they say that voices are switched off in SASL for some learners we did not do that because they needed to catch up. We didn't do that, we didn't stick by that hard and fast rule. We adjusted that so that, that learner could benefit from hearing from our voices and picking up from the vocabulary that we were using."* (SMT 2nd focus group, p. 6)

SMT #1 was of the opinion that assessment criteria should be added to the assessment rubrics that did not disadvantage the HOH learners. She found that the hearing learners who had started at this school during the year needed to be separated from the other learners so that they could catch up with the rest of the class; therefore separate programmes had to be implemented for the HOH learners to follow.

This view was not shared by the Deaf class assistants who adopted a different approach to the HOH learners. CA #1 started the discussion and admitted that there had been an improvement in the Deaf learners with regards to their signing, but

referred back to the difficulties experienced by the HOH students, and the constant reliance on voice during Sign Language classes. He asserted that the SASL Curriculum was not suited to these learners and that they found it extremely difficult to make this mental shift, to Deaf culture and embracing SASL. But he was not going to change and use his voice, and felt that the students would improve the following year. Interesting to note here is that one of Reagan's recommendations (2008, p.181), made for the provisions of SASL within the Language in Education policy framework, was that SASL should also be developed as a second language (FAL) to cater for hearing parents of Deaf learners, and also hearing learners in other government schools.

CA #4, also referred to the HOH students upon admission to the school, where learners would be largely dependent on voice for communication, but later would start using more signed communication in class. She remarked:

> "*They first depend on the audio but then they develop their visual receptor skills and then later on they can actually identify the signs so I explain to them what this is about, we watch videos, I see an improvement in them, it's very difficult."* (CA 2nd focus group, p. 4)

As principal, I observed how CA #4 commented more positively about SASL in the second round, specifically as it related to the HOH learners. In the first, she had felt that the curriculum was too difficult and the learners needed an 'easier' curriculum. This meant that this participant initially experienced the SASL Curriculum as very demanding but she shared her concerns; she teaches full time in the Foundation Phase.

Likewise, CA #1 experienced a challenge with the HOH students, stating that the HOH students signed differently from profoundly deaf students. For him it was an issue of the structure of the language. From his observations it appeared that the two groups were using a different structure and he felt the only way to bridge that gap was for the learners to socialise more. By socialising, CA #3 meant socialising with other Deaf friends at school, being introduced to Deaf role models and also that Deaf class assistants immerse these learners in SASL. However that solution, he said, was not provided in the SASL CAPS curriculum. *"The curriculum doesn't say socialise to bridge this gap, they just say just teach, the problem, that is how we can solve the problem*

by socialising." (CA 2nd focus group, p. 6) I concur with CA#3, the transformational change in implementing SASL successfully is not policy prescriptive, but rather through the way there is social interaction between the, the Deaf and HOH staff and learners and also between SMT and Deaf teaching staff members, providing suggestion and possible solutions from their life experiences.

c) Sub-theme: SASL and assessments

The assessments for SASL posed a problem for the SASL teachers. Apart from the long time that it took to record all learners, assess them and moderate accordingly, the teachers needed a standard of measurement to ensure that assessments are marked and moderated correctly.

SMT #1, the SASL HOD, clarified that certain strategies have been applied, which included (SMT 2nd focus group, p.1):

1. Learners are given sufficient time to practise to ensure they are sure of themselves before they start recording for assessment purposes,
2. Recording the entire class for assessments with the help of the class assistants
3. Videos are edited, to provide learners with opportunities to view their work and edit it,
4. All video-recorded assessment must have an appropriate rubric catering for the specific assessment standards as found in the curriculum.

SMT #1 also confirmed that the assessment process followed a pre- and post-moderation process at school level, involving the Deaf staff significantly where they viewed the level and standard at which the learners were functioning. This process of moderation also assisted the school in assessing the standard that SASL was offered, and if needed, improving it where necessary. Deaf assistants, who were trained in the SASL Curriculum, also read through/ viewed the assessments so that none of the Deaf learners were disadvantaged by assessments which were not visually relevant or inaccessible, while still maintaining the SASL curriculum standard which was expected. Rubrics were used in most assessments where both the teacher (DE #1) and assistant were required to mark these. The HOD checked the recordings of the learners as well, to moderate whether the marks allocated matched the assessment viewed. SMT #1 asserted that even though these

measures had been put in place by the school, assessments and the time for the tasks were still a problem. She said:

> *"I think when they were doing this curriculum, that part (assessments), they need to rethink because everything has to be recorded - every assessment, your observing and signing, your recording itself for that particular task, your exams, paper 1, 2, 3 and 4, everything needs to be recorded. I think we can do a little bit less with the technology."* (SMT 2nd focus group discussion, p.1)

The same sentiment was expressed by the DE #1, being responsible for SASL in Foundation Phase; she confirmed that assessments for SASL are not easy and provided the following reasons:

- Teachers need to do formal assessment from the CAPS Curriculum and work on devising the rubrics according to the different grades, 1, 2 and 3;
- Teachers need to search for sample rubrics from the internet most of the time as well as for the resources;
- These could be formal and informal assessments;
- Formal assessments are all recorded, with each assessment having its own rubric;
- This is time-consuming.

The SASL CAPS Policy document does not specify how schools conduct assessments (Table 11 below), but prescribes just the number of formal assessment tasks per term, per grade. It is still the responsibility of the school to ensure that assessments are performed in a credible way and that they are valid; this is the same for other subjects, in a manner similar to English, but using SASL.

The CAPS document (NCS, SASL CAPS Gr. R – 3, 2013, 10) stipulates the number of tasks for formal assessment as required per grade.

Table 11: SASL Assessment Requirements for Foundation Phase

Grade	Subject	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Total
1	SASL HL	1	2	2	2	7
2	SASL HL	1	2	2	2	7
3	SASL HL	1	3	3	2	9

My observation as principal and researcher is that schools have to work around the matter of assessments in the SASL Curriculum, but it also becomes incumbent on the SMT to ensure quality assurance through moderation is in place. At this site, pre- and post-moderation of assessments are done between the HOD and Deaf staff, as explained above. Assessments must be of a good standard as is expected from all the subjects, at the appropriate level.

d) SASL and the rights of Deaf learners

The question was put to all participants whether the SMT promoted the rights of Deaf learners at school, as this is indicative of a transformative change (Mertens 2009, Shields 2012).

DE #1 responded that she perceived the SMT as promoting Deaf rights by employing many more Deaf people, sending the Deaf staff for specialist training in SASL and also allowing SASL as a Home Language. DE #2 concurred, her reasons being based on the SASL classes for parents on weekends, additional SASL classes for the staff, and where management has tried to accommodate the Deaf and HOH within SASL.

The Deaf class assistants were more critical and commented that hearing staff members should do more to embrace SASL as their own language, as they did not notice much change amongst the staff members. CA #1 felt the strongest in this regard; even though there were Sign Language classes for the staff on Tuesdays and Thursdays, for him the changes amongst them were very slow:

> *"There is only the Tuesday and Thursday sign staff that we teach but you know there isn't that passion, I can't see that passion, that internal motivation….we can't make sure they change, they need to change their attitude."* (CA 2nd focus group, 6).

CA#1 is calling for transformative change and this is emphasised by CA #4. She made this profound statement which is linked to transformative and a mind-shift change, "*we can't make sure they change, they need to change their attitude".* The socio-cultural perspective entails a regard and respect for SASL and Deaf culture in programmes, learning content, in perceptions and attitudes, as propounded in Störbeck and Magongwa (2006):

> "For schools to become culturally inclusive, a host of changes needs to occur, such as 'changes in the curriculum, teaching materials, teaching and learning materials, the attitudes, behaviours and perceptions of teachers, administrators and the goals, norms and culture of the school', Banks (1994, p.4) as cited in Storbeck and Magongwa" (2006, p.113).

For CA #4, she compared this site to a school with a Deaf principal, as she felt that the other school had a more "c*onducive environment"* towards Sign Language and Deaf staff. Being the principal of this site, it was rather disheartening to hear this participant's views, yet I had to remind myself as an insider researcher that this participant felt comfortable enough to express these views. CA #2 agreed with CA #4 from the perspective of more hearing staff changing their attitude to the SASL:

> *"When you learn sign language you need to have a positive attitude to develop the children because your attitude then spreads over to the children and the children become positive and then if the children say 'the teachers are not signing' then they also feel like 'sign language is rubbish.'"* (CA 2nd focus group, p. 6)

I observed during the second interview that the class assistants expected more from hearing educators, compared to the first focus group discussion. More specifically, CA #2, who agreed with #1, her reasons being based on the attitude of the staff when they were learning SASL; she felt that there should have been a more positive attitude towards signing, which would have encouraged the learners, as she mentioned above. However, CA #3 felt that several persons had changed and improved: *"I believe there will be an improvement, some change because you have some teachers here that have really improved".*

For CA #1, he indicated that the time had come for a Deaf person to serve on the management team. He felt that the lack of a Deaf person made it difficult for the school

to “breach this gap”, whereas with a Deaf person on the SMT, many aspects would have been easier to implement. This is in line with Shields (2010) and Mertens (2009) who call for transformative leadership within an organisation to address issues of inequality, while West (2002) proposes transformative leadership that engages in critical discourse about the different dynamics within the various roles of all individuals within a school.

In concluding this section on the 2nd round of focus groups, as a researcher I was satisfied that all of the participants had contributed to the discussions. Some of the contributions were difficult to hear since I was the principal, but were a true reflection of participants’ experiences with the leadership roles they experience and what they have done in implementing SASL. The Deaf class assistants want to see more transformative leadership from the SMT to promote the change in the social conditions of the Deaf learners.

As principal, I have also taken note of strategies that will have to be changed as SASL is implemented for the other grades. This will be elaborated on briefly during the concluding remarks in Chapter seven.

The observations discussed below took place during SASL classes held for staff members, also in SASL classes conducted by Deaf class assistants at the school.

6.3. Observations

The SASL classes from Wits Language School (WLS) have effected a transformative change within the staff. I am personally a part of this group of 18 staff members, including eight staff members from the SMT. There were classes on Fridays and Saturdays for Level 2B[61] during the month of August. The Level 2B was the start of an intermediate module in SASL, where SASL was practised with an increase in the academic understanding of SASL classes. Eighteen staff members, including myself as principal, two deputy principals, and four HODs were part of the SASL Wits training group conducted over a period of 26 weeks. It was not compulsory for the deputy principals or myself to complete the externally accredited NQF Level 5 SASL Wits training. Nevertheless, by completing it and learning with fellow staff members,

[61] SASL Level 2B – Wits Language School was the accredited service provider for SASL Levels 1A and B, Level 2A and B and level 3A and B at schools across the province of Gauteng.

including fellow Deaf class assistants, indicated that the SMT had an equal responsibility to acquire SASL. It also emphasises the need for more transformative leadership change within schools, where SMT, Deaf educator and Deaf class assistant held to same standard with SASL.

Besides being in intensive classes where we had never devoted so much time to SASL, the training was transformative in nature because the SASL classes and teaching were unifying the group. For the first time discussions and debates between staff members dealt with, *"What is best for the Deaf learners, how do we structure this in SASL?"*, also *"Do the learners really understand what I sign"* a profound statement made by one of the acting HOD members. For the first time, this emphasis on SASL has forced many staff members to question their own abilities in Sign Language, especially when members were asked to GLOSS certain presentations.

The above observations and experiences were confirmed during the analysis of the surveys. This was evident in the ratings of the survey, discussed later, that were achieved for this statement: (4/9) for 'sometimes', (4/9) for 'frequent and' (1/9) for 'always'. My engaging in learning with all other educators and Deaf class assistants, reinforced Burns' concept of transformational leadership (1978), where one or more persons engage each other in such a way, that leaders and followers raise one another to a higher level of accountability.

6.3.1. Observation – third term.

Term Three (from July to September) included Deaf Awareness month in September. Unlike other years, that year had been marked by the Deaf class assistants' video-recording conversations in Sign Language, encouraging hearing staff members to receive what is being signed. This was the first time that Deaf class assistants made additional recordings for the month and asked hearing staff to interpret without the assistance of an interpreter.

On Wednesday, 9th September, a Grade 3 Deaf boy came to my office. He had been given a SASL assignment where he was required to interview a professional person. (Video footage is available at school.) What stood out for me, as the principal, was the confidence portrayed by the learner, especially when the interview was concluded. He asked if he could see the footage, climbed onto the chair and was able to understand

the video-camera. This is a skill that had been taught incidentally. It represents an amazing achievement in the Sign Language curriculum.

On Tuesday 21st September CA #1, a Deaf class assistant, projected a short story about a Deaf man buying a new vehicle, relating his experiences as he takes the vehicle on the road, with other cars sounding their hooters, as well as the different role-shifts when the man tries to race against other drivers. Normally, many hearing staff members would have left the staff room, but since most staff members are now engaged in Sign Language classes, this has created an awareness of Sign Language.

What was inspiring to see was that the entire hearing staff (of 34) watched and were totally engrossed in the story.

The final section of this chapter examines the results of the last survey completed by all the participants.

6.4. Survey Questionnaire

Similar to the first survey, I report the results in two tables. The first table presents the ratings from the members of the SMT group, as they evaluated their role looking back at 2015. The second table records the results of the Deaf staff members (Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants) who worked closely with the SMT members. Participants completed the survey and stated their level of agreement with the scale provided (See Appendix G4-6). It was completed by all participants: similar to the first survey earlier in the year, statements 1-10 required a rating, while statement 11 asked for an opinion from participants regarding how well the SMT had led the transformation of the SASL implementation.

Table 12: Phase 2 - SMT Participants - Questionnaire Survey Results

State	Second Round Participants	SMT #1 HOD Foundation	SMT #2 HOD SASL Sub	SMT #3 Deputy
1	You assisted others to try new projects with learners in SASL	4	4	4
2	You were open to advice from Deaf staff members with regard to curriculum strategies for the learners	4	3	5
3	You played a leading role to bring about changes in the classrooms for the teaching of SASL	4	4	4
4	SMT had set goals and challenges for fellow staff to reach to improve Sign Language for the staff and learners.	5	4	3
5	You felt confident that you were able to discuss your concerns about SASL and Literacy with Deaf staff members.	5	4	4
6	As SMT you were constantly providing opportunities for growth in understanding and knowledge of SASL	4	3	4
7	You noticed that more staff members are using SASL and feeling confident in their communication skills.	3	3	4
8	You could see that the Deaf learners are improving in SASL as well as English written language. (Bilingualism)	3	3	3
9	Through collaborative work with fellow staff, you took a lead role to design and create learning materials in SASL for the staff and the learners.	3	2	3
10	Through SASL you felt that the SMT created opportunities for Deaf learners to reach their full potential. (School Vision and Mission)	3	3	3

Grid

1=Almost Never

2=Seldom

3=Sometimes

4 =Frequently

5= Always

11	Your opinion, how well did SMT lead the transformation in the school, to create an awareness and an acceptance of SASL for the learners	*The SMT (HOD) went for workshops held by the department, gave feedback to principal and deputy. There were changes made in reports. Learner classrooms were made up to accommodate the SASL curriculum. All teachers are encouraged to sign to Deaf learners. Classes were created for teachers to learn SASL.	*SMT created the physical infra-structure to cater for the needs of teaching SASL. Equipment, resources were prioritized for SASL, the teachers and the subject. The school also supported teachers who attended SASL workshops/ conferences. In phases the notional time for SASL is in accordance with policy. SMT supports Sign Language classes for teachers, thus ensuring SASL is delivered to learners as appropriate as possible.	*Sign Language as a subject allows Deaf learners to learn in a language that is more accessible. The full benefit of the curriculum must still be fully evaluated.

*Statement 11 – All quotes taken as verbatim statements with no edited changes to responses.

Table 13: Phase 2 - Individual Survey Questionnaires – Deaf educator and Deaf class assistants.

	Participants	DE #1:	DE #2:	CA #1	CA #2	CA #3	CA #4
1	SMT assisted you to try new projects with learners in SASL	4	3	3	3	3	2
2	SMT was prepared to take your advice with curriculum strategies for the learners	4	3	3	3	4	1
3	SMT played a leading role to bring about changes in the classrooms for the teaching of SASL	5	3	4	3	3	3
4	SMT had set goals and challenges for you to reach to improve Sign Language for the staff and learners.	4	4	3	4	3	2
5	You felt confident that you were able to discuss your concerns about SASL and Literacy with the SMT or your HOD	3	3	5	3	2	2
6	Through the SMT you were given opportunities for growth in understanding and knowledge with the implementation of SASL	5	4	4	3	3	3
7	You noticed that more staff members were using SASL and feeling confident in their communication skills.	4	3	2	4	5	2
8	You could see that the Deaf learners are improving in SASL as well as English written language. (Bilingualism)	4	3	3	3	4	3
9	Through collaborative work with your HOD, you felt empowered to design and create learning materials in SASL for the staff and the learners.	4	3	4	4	3	2
10	Through SASL you felt that the SMT created opportunities for Deaf learners to reach their full potential.	4	3	4	3	3	1
11	Your opinion, how well SMT was leading transformation in the school, to create an awareness and an acceptance of SASL for the learners	*Through workshops, meetings and conferences (teacher development) . SASL meetings with Educators/ HODs and develop SASL to our learners Provide SASL resources and equipment	*They (SMT) give chairperson of Deaf Affairs (HOD) an opportunity to establish SASL in MCK school by giving extra lessons, guidance and moulding their skills. We, deaf adults, are expecting	*It is important SMT to "lead" more time for SASL for the learner, will be a challenge, SASL curriculum and test a schedule. This is not easy SASL teaching Gr 1-9, Some pupils Deaf have made the level. SMT need to check the SASL support advice, so what is	*Need more children to have another class for SASL, because in one class, have different subjects like English and Sign Language, they are confused, they need to be separated, my proposal.	*I would like to encourage parents to learn SASL for communication with Deaf children. Because Deaf children do not have confidence to read and to have their own aim in their future.	*I do not feel good because the children does not improve greatly in SASL. I believe there is a need for proper training and more time to show them how to use NMF (non- manual features) Facial expressions and SASL structure.

		Need to have an SASL teacher. Learners can focus the SASL and English separately when teaching in the class.	good results from learners and showing how to use it every day. The learners find SASL curriculum difficult as they are learning new signs and structure.	needed to improve SASL			

*Statement 11 – All quotes taken as verbatim statements with no edited changes to responses.

6.4.1. Analysis of Individual Survey Questionnaires

Although 10 statements were given to the participants, I have highlighted specific results by participants, as there were similar findings in the other statements. I have included the responses to the open-ended question, no. 11.

One of the findings which I noted upon receiving all forms back was that of the Deaf class assistants: unlike in the first surveys, all of them had completed full comments for the open-ended question. It is my opinion that the exposure to their role in assisting the implementation and the confidence gained during that process, with the additional leadership responsibilities for SASL could be the reason for more comments to the open-ended question (See table 13 above).

Table 14: Phase 2 - Participants' Responses per statements on their perceptions of SASL and SMT Assistance.

The Role of the SMT and SASL: Statements	Total Responses	%	S1: SASL Projects to Assist the learners	S2: SMT take advice from Deaf staff	S3: Brings changes in classrooms for SASL	S4: Sets goals to improve SASL	S5: Feel comfortable to discuss SASL concerns	S6: Opportunities given to grow in SASL	S7: Staff improving in SASL	S8: Learners are improving in SASL and English	S9: Deaf staff create LTSM for SASL	S10: SASL assists Deaf learners to reach full potential
1=ALMOST NEVER	2	2%		1								1
2= SELDOM	7	8%	1				2		2		2	
3=SOMETIMES	43	48%	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	7	4	6
4=FREQUENTLY	31	35%	4	3	4	4	2	4	3	2	3	2
5=ALMOST ALWAYS	7	8%		1	1	1	2	1	1			

6.4.2. Discussion of Questionnaire Survey Responses.

Creswell (2010, p. 391) affirms that longitudinal survey design involves a procedure of collecting data about trends with the same population, changes in a cohort group or changes in a panel group of the same individuals over time. This research utilised survey-questionnaires at the end of the year, to obtain a follow-up of participant's perceptions. Creswell (2010) refers to this type of longitudinal survey as a trend survey where changes are examined over time.

With the concerns raised by all the participant groups around SASL as a Home language, the HOH learners and literacy, this research had set out to explore how the role of management had dealt with those concerns.

All participants completed and handed back all questionnaires. Being at the research site, was an advantage in obtaining information from participants.

The next section is a discussion of certain statements and what the responses meant for this research.

Statement 1: SMT assisted staff to try new projects with learners in SASL

This statement was utilised after SASL had been implemented formally for a year, and the Deaf staff had played an integral role in the formalisation of the curriculum in the classrooms; it was important to determine the level of responsibility that the SMT had entrusted to the Deaf staff.

From the responses of the participants for this statement, other than participant #4 ('seldom') rating, there is a general feeling (8/9) responses of ('sometimes' and 'frequently') that the Deaf staff are trusted to try new projects. Except for one participant, CA #4, all participants were comfortable with new projects entrusted to the Deaf staff. This was evident when the HODs entrusted Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants with creating links between themes in FAL (English) and SASL. Another example was the technical tasks (Recording, editing, saving, marking) which were also expected from Deaf staff. During my observations (September 2015) CA #1 produced many video-clips to use as examples for training with hearing educators.

Statement 2: The SMT was open to advice from Deaf staff members to try new strategies for the learners.

There is a general agreement in 'sometimes' to 'always' responses (8/9) amongst all the participant groups that the SMT, through discussions and ongoing meetings, would heed the advice of the Deaf staff at school. This was evident when Deaf staff would raise their concerns about HOH learners, or different language backgrounds when learners enter the Foundation phase. Strategies implemented by Deaf staff included their focussing more on SASL communicative skills, reception skills, and Deaf culture for the learners.

This is an example of the concept of "problem-posing" education by Freire (1978), where the learner (in this case, the class assistants) and the teacher (in this case, members from management) came together and decided on solutions for strategies to make SASL accessible, and in doing so, accord learners (class assistants) more authority in effecting strategies.

Statement 3: The SMT played a lead role in classrooms to bring about changes for the teaching of SASL.

There were (4/9) 'frequent' and (4/9) 'sometimes', with (1/9) 'always' responses to the above statement. Transactional leadership is part of management systems to create conditions within classrooms for teaching and learning. (Christie, 2010) Teaching in classes required changes in infrastructure and LTSM, all of which was mentioned previously and which demonstrated that management has put systems in place for teaching to continue.

Providing time-tables adhering to notional time of SASL as a Home Language, and hiring additional Deaf staff members to assist hearing teachers to roll out the curriculum, was SMT's responsibility, in ensuring teaching systems are in place. Transactional leadership tasks such as the above are required before any teaching and learning can commence.

Statement 7: More staff are using SASL and feeling confident in their communication skills.

The responses to this statement reinforce the evidence from the focus group discussions: not all participants share the view that staff members are improving in their SASL communicative abilities.

With ratings of (2/9) 'seldom', (3/9) for 'sometimes' and (3/9) for 'frequently', from participants, it is clear that there remains much more to do in transforming the school to a socio-cultural model. (Reagan, 2008)

What has also emerged from the focus group discussions was the realisation that teaching SASL as a CAPS subject with the concomitant academic demand was not an easy task (See CA 1st and 2nd focus group discussions). It required much from all staff, including the Deaf staff, for most of whom SASL is their home language. Staff at schools for the Deaf are held to a higher standard of language proficiency, and it is the responsibility of the management with the assistance of the Deaf staff to ensure all hearing teachers become proficient and use SASL confidently.

Statement 10: Through SASL, the SMT created opportunities for Deaf learners to reach their full potential.

For this statement there was a 'sometimes' (6/9) rating. I believe that this is indicative of the reflection of the first year of implementation, where it was very difficult to judge whether learners were reaching their full potential.

For the SMT members, Deaf learners reaching their full potential means achieving literacy in both SASL and English subjects (see 1st and 2nd SMT Focus group discussions). One of the aims of this research is to draw attention to the role of SMTs in the realisation of creating opportunities for Deaf learners to reach their full potential. In the work of Quantz, Rogers and Dantley (1991, p. 98-112) as cited in Shields (2009, p.7), they see schools as organisations that must be based on democratic relationships, and that transformative leaders in schools must use their powers to transform the present social relations, through various groups. Their groups begin dialogues that require a language of critique and possibility.

6.4.4. Summary of findings of the questionnaire

In this section I performed an analysis the combined questionnaire responses of all participants.

The findings of the questionnaire revealed that there are similarities amongst the findings of the focus group interviews. This indicates that there is an overall appreciation for the role of the SMT in implementing SASL, but Deaf staff members are not convinced that all staff have made the mind-shift change to the socio-cultural paradigm of SASL**.** While the Deaf class assistants are calling for transformative leadership, the SMT is implementing SASL through transactional and transformational leadership practices. Through the focus groups, it was also revealed that the SMT has been addressing the concerns of Deaf learners, literacy, expecting higher standards, but that more opportunities needed to be created for Deaf learners to improve using SASL.

6.4.5. Open-ended question

With regard to the open-ended question*, "Discuss how well do you think the SMT is leading the transformation to create an awareness and an acceptance of SASL for the learners?"* the following findings were made:

Comparing the open-ended responses to the above statement, the hearing staff members (the SMT participants) view their leading of the transformation as creating awareness regarding what has been achieved; this includes training, infrastructure, workshops and notional time requirements from a policy perspective. The Deaf educators requested additional classes for SASL training and an additional teacher specifically trained in SASL. The Deaf assistants requested more SASL classes for the parents, more time for SASL and added that learners should be properly trained in SASL language aspects such as non-manual features (NMF), facial expressions and SASL structure. The three focus groups had different expectations of the implementation of SASL: while the SMT group focused on policy requirements as expected from the department, the Deaf staff members looked at specific conditions for the improvement of SASL within this school.

Compared to the first survey conducted during the year, the SMT appears to still operate from a transactional leadership perspective, while the Deaf staff (educators and assistants) are operating from a transformational perspective. (Shields, 2009)[62]

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter, referred to as Phase 2, focussed on the latter part of the year 2015, when SASL was fully implemented in the Foundation Phase. The findings indicate that the SASL curriculum, as the policy is presented, cannot be applied without making changes in how the curriculum is addressed. This entails identifying where ongoing discussions between SMT teams and staff responsible for SASL need to take place concerning the context of the transformation of a school, changing mind-sets and perceptions.

In Phase 2, specific interventions with regard to the 'process' of implementation were conducted. This has been highlighted in Table 10, highlighting specific implementation strategies with information. SASL as a curriculum has brought about this change of focus in the roles of Deaf staff and their value in voicing their strategies for management.

The next chapter contains the findings of the year-long research into SASL implementation, the roles of the SMT and the Deaf staff, and of teachers/class

[62] See Chapter 3.2.3.

assistants. It also provides general findings from the data, offers my personal reflections, and articulates the strengths and limitations of the research. Recommendations are made for further research and a final conclusion is offered.

Chapter Seven

Findings and Conclusions – The role of leadership

7.1. Introduction

The unfolding role of leadership, transformational and transformative and the critical dialogue that ensued arising from the implementation of SASL in Foundation phase was explored.

Three members from the SMT, two Deaf educators teaching in the Foundation phase and four Deaf class assistants, volunteered to participate in this study which focused on how the SMT facilitated the process of implementing SASL CAPS as a Home Language within the Foundation Phase.

In this chapter the findings and conclusions of the data are discussed in line with the objectives of this case study. This chapter starts with the general findings about the need for dialogue and the changing role of leadership within schools. It is then followed by specific findings as highlighted within the themes discussed in Phase 1 and 2. This chapter concludes with personal reflections, the strengths and limitations of the research with recommendations for further research.

7.2. Summary of Research

This dissertation was based a one particular school site, over a year-long study depicting the experiences of leadership, the concerns and practical implementation strategies of members of the SMT in collaboration with Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants. Although the study aimed for transformational leadership to be for-grounded, the complexities of the implementation of SASL overshadowed the dialogues.

7.3. General findings from the data

One of the main findings revealed that changes brought about to the school by SASL in the Foundation phase included an increased focus on the need for dialogue between the SMT, the educators and the class assistants. Previously, not much attention in the curriculum had been afforded to SASL, as it was an ‘unofficial school subject’, even though SASL was offered at school. With the current SASL HL CAPS

policy, the roles of transformational and transformative leadership on the part of the SMT and Deaf participants have necessitated ongoing dialogue. This study has revealed the adjustment that has started and is ongoing to promote change in the social conditions and academic demands as expected from this implementation.

This study has revealed that during these dialogue discussions the roles as demonstrated by the SMT, often looked at SASL from a Transactional and a transformational leadership perspective by focusing on the imperatives of the policy. This included the way in which the curriculum would be suited to the Deaf and HOH learner in the class that the quality of education through SASL implementation should improve if clear roles and collaboration between SMT and Deaf staff is made clearer. The SMT had to ensure that transformation within the curriculum for the incorporation of additional notional time is filtered in through the adaptation of English (FAL) and incorporating a writing component which is not part of the English FAL curriculum. SMT members made the changes for the policy imperatives, (see Table 10, on specific strategies by the SMT) to ensure that Deaf learners are not disadvantaged academically. Through the dialogues of the SMTs, the realisation that the Deaf teaching staff should be the leaders of this curriculum showed the transformation within the SMT.

Furthermore, to add to the ongoing dialogue between the Deaf educators and the class assistants, this study revealed the change was much more transformational: they (Deaf educators) saw their roles as different to SMT. They (Deaf educators) were learner-focussed, they shared a personal understanding related to the Deaf learners (Humphrey, 2013) in that the teachers looked at the abilities of the learner's SASL in the class, taking note of assessments and daily language programmes as well as drawing comparisons between SASL and English. Likewise, the Deaf class assistants focussed on the skills required to teach SASL, the visual aspects of the language, and the bilingual framing of the learners. In these ongoing dialogues with deaf educators, Deaf class assistants and the SMT members responsible for SASL at school, it was found that transformational and transactional leadership changes occurred during the dialogues between SMT members and dialogues of Deaf educators, but that the nature of the discussions between the class assistants was much more in line with transformative leadership focus coming from the Deaf class assistants on issues of

social justice, improving the lives of the minority groups and addressing social rights, as noted by Shields (2004, 2010). The Deaf class assistants applied a more critical view of the implementation, from a human rights perspective. They were more critical in their role and in their expectations of the SMT, of the teachers in teaching the learners and of the teachers' abilities in SASL. Therefore, the SMT needs to be cognisant of this perspective, understand and anticipate the reasons for a transformative change and engage in critical dialogue for socio-cultural change within the school.

What is required and what this study addressed is the need for an ongoing dialogue between SMT and Deaf teaching staff to review the importance to the educational benefits of Deaf learners using SASL for learning and teaching and also to make the changes stipulated in the curriculum. These changes include Deaf teaching staff taking a transformative role in ensuring educators are proficiently competent in SASL teaching, ensuring that the curriculum is linguistically accessible for learners who are able to use SASL as their Home Language, but also to have diverse access to assessments, should learners choose to complete in SASL, oral or written format.

7.4. Specific findings

7.3.1 SMT focus group

a) Theme: SASL Curriculum

One of the main findings in this section revealed the insight and acceptance by the SMT of the changes in its leadership role. It was imperative for SASL, because hearing persons would not instinctively understand the communication needs of the Deaf learners. This understanding by SMT participants assisted the ongoing dialogue that supported the implementation process. SMT #3 stated that:

> *"We* (SMT) *facilitate that* [the dialogue on implementation], *it's not a 'this is how you are supposed to do this', because none of us have the 'magic bullet', you facilitate that discussion, you allow it to happen, you don't say 'curriculum say this', you allow people to bring challenges to the table."* (SMT 2nd focus group, p. 5)

Open and ongoing discussion by the SMT members remains central to the changes brought about by implementing SASL, firstly as a CAPS Home Language Subject and

later, fully integrated as the LOLT of the school. Freire's concept of Praxis (Freire, 1978, 2011), which means conscious action, "includes the dialectical movement from action to idea and from thinking on action to new action" as noted in Durakoglu (2013, 102-107) and links the ongoing dialogue about roles and language when the SMT looks at the implementation of SASL. This is specifically when SMT members asked critical questions such as: '*how does SASL benefit the HOH learner*?', or '*Why is it important to maintain higher expectations from the Deaf learners as SASL is introduced into the curriculum?'* The ongoing discussion of questions, such as the above, was useful for creating a platform for asking ongoing critical questions, one that seeks to address the changing roles of SMTs towards SASL in our school. This is also the turning point where a regard for and awareness for Sign Language were brought about through the implementation of the SASL Curriculum. This transformation highlighted an awareness in Sign Language abilities, in altering the academic expectations of the learners and expecting greater proficiencies from teachers of the Deaf.

b) Theme: Quality of Education

One of the core functions of the principal in conjunction with the SMT is to manage teaching and learning (Standards of Principalship, 2016) and through this core function, monitor the quality of assessments. Assessments in SASL remain a challenge with regard to time, quality assurance and formulating rubrics to mark all the work. The collaboration between the HOD responsible for pre- and post-moderation and the Deaf staff members is vital to ensuring that ongoing assessments are of a good standard. During the year assessments were shared and compared with other schools for the Deaf.

At this site, collaboration occurred through dialogues, where the official barriers between management positions are replaced with respect for SASL experience and competence in carrying out the assessments. This was evident when both HODs expressed that the Deaf staff have a responsibility in going through the assessments and monitoring the marking thereof. This change in roles, where persons might not have positional authority, e.g. being a HOD, but possess language authority in Sign Language, afforded evidence of transformational shifts in leadership. Shields (2010,

p. 6) in her comparison[63] between transformational, transactional and transformative leadership looks at the "Understanding of organizational culture and developing people" as transformational, similar to Leithwood's (1994) model of transformational leadership, which focussed on developing people within the organisation through understanding school culture. This forms part of the transformational changes that are taking place and links with Hellinger's view (2003, p.15), which describes transformational changes as stemming from *"the school administrators or leaders who pursue to engage the support of others in their vision in changing the school through enhancing their capabilities to contribute to goal achievement".*

To achieve transformation and contributing to the academic goals of the school, the SMT felt strongly that the SASL curriculum, if implemented correctly, placed a major responsibility on all staff members teaching Deaf learners. This is an important finding because SASL is offered on a Home Language level, thus expecting outcomes equal to those of other oral languages on HL level within the CAPS curriculum. Therefore, the changing vision is an ongoing process which can be transformed through a willingness for critical dialogue.

Theme: Leadership and Change

The SMT did not impose an authoritarian or bureaucratic stance, a 'top-down approach' enforcing that policy should be implemented as it was provided to schools (Freire's *Banking Style of Education*, 1978). Instead, the SMT was accorded the 'freedom' from the DBE to implement policy. The ongoing dialogues, which allowed different aspects of the policy to be examined and changed where necessary (See Table, 12 Chapter 6) is an initiative and a change how the SMT saw their role for SASL, providing more leadership opportunities for Deaf staff, therein lies the ongoing transformation. This was evident where both Deaf teachers and class assistants stated that they were required to make changes as they implemented the policy and made the curriculum relevant to the context of the school.

The Deaf participants said that the SMT must be willing to change and attempt a new bilingual framing, different from the traditional bilingual approaches. This was due to the multilingual nature of the learners entering the Foundation phase, where

[63] Leadership Comparison Table, see Chapter 3.

Humphrey proposes (2013, p. 27) a bilingual approach that operates across modalities; a visual language (SASL in our context) and a spoken language (several languages in our context) in an environment of emergent language literacy. Many of our Deaf teaching staff, in an effort to incorporate the HOH learner into the SASL curriculum fully, were required to modify their content and style of teaching, and unknowingly, within a transformed social pedagogy, were able to use some of the learner's existing language abilities for accessing SASL.

In conclusion, findings from the SMT participant group revealed that dialogue and collaboration between persons in management and Deaf staff (educators and class assistants) is necessary for the implementation of the SASL CAPS policy. This was particularly relevant in this study, where all the SMT members are hearing and where an understanding from Deaf staff members about SASL would assist schools in making the curriculum relevant to the learners. Humphrey states (2013, p.7) that previously Deaf people were excluded from "the 'construction and organization of their own education". It now becomes imperative to have Deaf staff members (Deaf educators and deaf class assistants) that must form an integral part of this discussion in shaping their education.

7.4.2. Findings – Deaf Educators

This study also revealed that SASL could be implemented successfully if the Deaf educators and Deaf class assistants are at the forefront in demonstrating how Deaf learners would best achieve the outcomes as set out in the SASL CAPS Curriculum. Deaf educators and class assistants are able to guide other hearing educators as to how SASL fits into the curriculum through a mode of sign bilingualism that caters for the HOH learner, the oral-deaf learner and the profoundly Deaf learner. In understanding this 'inclusive' emerging dynamic/sign bilingualism, it should be recalled, Humphrey (2013) states that Deaf educators are the best placed in schools for the Deaf, in understanding and teaching all Deaf learners, irrespective of their communicative mode. According to Humphrey (2013) this is due to recent changes to the narrative within Deaf Education to one of bilingual education and also visual learning (Humphrey, 2013, p.10-11). In the South African context, through the Deaf staff (educators and teaching assistants), the ongoing dialogue of SASL implementation presents the aspect of multilingualism. What this means is that schools

are faced with Deaf learners from diverse oral and cultural backgrounds when entering the Foundation Phase. In implementing SASL in this critical phase, where children have little or no language and teachers are faced with a double cognitive learning process, i.e. the process of learning and using a new language which takes place simultaneously, here the Deaf educators and class assistants are able to understand and communicate and teach these learners entering into this phase, through bilingual language approaches but also through visual language.

a) Theme: 'SASL Curriculum'

Findings from the Deaf educators reveal that as L1 users of SASL, they have an innate ability to apply the bilingual methodology within their class, and are able to teach the Deaf and HOH learners (Humphrey, 2013). Both educators felt that the learners must not be forced to use SASL, or forced to 'switch-off' voice, as they would learn it naturally. They would teach SASL, use SASL as a LOLT, but would want learners to become literate in both the languages of the school, SASL and the written component of English. Humphries (2013) looked at Deaf children from Deaf families, where Deaf adults practised Sign Language and were able to teach good literacy skills to their children; he declared that:

> "This line of research (Deaf families) suggests that Deaf teachers who go into classrooms to teach deaf and hard-of hearing children may intuitively create curricula and learning environments that are strategically compatible with these children's specific learning needs (Humphries & MacDougall, 2000). It suggests also that fluency in ASL, experience in the Deaf community, and pedagogical training are desired elements for training both Deaf and hearing teachers of deaf students." (2013, p. 12)

The instinctive communicative ability of Deaf educators to provide input regarding the best learning strategies and the best way how Deaf learners learn remains a valuable resource for the SMT, as described by Humphries (2013). This creates new platforms for how the SMT should implement SASL at schools by optimally using the Deaf educator/class assistant's knowledge to create 'schooling in SASL'.

b) Theme: 'Quality of Education'

The Deaf educators stated their different expectations and perspectives from this curriculum, compared to those of the SMT members. They expected SASL to assist

learners, not just in their current grades or schooling, but also that it should provide improvement in their academic ability after school. They compared their experience of not having SASL as a formal subject when they were at school, and commented how 'lucky' the current learners were. This was in contrast to the SMT members who approached this implementation of SASL, expecting the academic standards of the Deaf learners to improve. (See comments from the SMT focus group discussions.)

Another finding from the Deaf educators is their acknowledgement of their own learning stemming from the implementation of SASL, DE #1 states that she had learnt much during that period: "*For me as an educator, I've learnt a lot, I have a lot of experience, I have learnt more than before".* This educator was responsible for the training of the staff in SASL, and also for the SASL HL, for grades 1-3. This acknowledgement from a Deaf educator, as regards learning more and gaining further experience, shows the shift in perspectives on SASL.

c) Theme: 'Leadership and Change'

The Deaf educators were tasked with moderations of SASL assessments, evaluating the LTSM for SASL as well as setting training programmes to improve SASL for staff and learners. The afore-mentioned tasks are generally part of the core duties of the HODs. Deaf educators took a leadership role for the implementation processes; these were evident when they took on tasks for training and guiding educators in SASL teaching, vocabulary training, assessment discussions and assisted with moderation of SASL assessments. Most Deaf educators would have the necessary expertise and could play a more active role in leading the implementation of SASL.

7.4.3. Findings – Deaf Class Assistants

Findings from the class assistants reveal that they demonstrated a Transformative Leadership approach to the implementation of SASL.

a) Theme: 'SASL Curriculum'

The class assistants raised concerns such as the inability of hearing teachers to sign proficiently, or the inability of hearing teachers to connect with the Deaf learners, and therefore felt that Deaf educators/class assistants are the persons best equipped to teach SASL to the learners. Their concerns were accepted and understood by myself

as a researcher since they have different expectations of this curriculum. Initially, during the first focus group discussions, they expressed their concern that the SASL curriculum was 'too difficult', and because of this, that 'Deaf class assistants needed their own programme to implement this curriculum'. This initial apprehensiveness towards SASL CAPS was not evident by the time of the second focus group discussions at the end of the year, when the Deaf class assistants expressed the concern that their role should encompass being the 'custodians' of this curriculum and being at the forefront of implementing it at school; however, the hearing members felt officially responsible for the curriculum. This highlighted a new approach, of the Deaf and hearing members coming together to discover how the SASL is unfolding. This finding indicates a progressive change in the ownership of the SASL curriculum amongst the Deaf staff and the understanding of how it should unfold at this research site. In providing a broader collaboration (see implementation strategies in Chapter 6) between SMT members and Deaf staff for SASL, there was an expectation that transformational and transformative changes should accompany the implementation changes.

b) Theme: 'Leadership and Change'

Deaf class assistants have higher expectations of the hearing teachers, including the SMT, with respect to SASL: they insist on competency and proficiency from hearing teachers and expect that the SMT should prioritise the creation of a platform where Deaf staff members have a voice to raise their concerns. As mentioned, these expectations were brought about by the implementation of SASL. The DBE expects that schools should prioritise SASL for academic teaching, have higher expectations of the learners but also have regard and respect for SASL as the primary language for the Deaf. It is the way in which these expectations are realised that is directly related to the leadership roles of the SMT. In the work of Shields (2010, p.11) who investigates leadership theories and the divergence between Transformative and transformational leadership theories, she posits that what is reflected in the broader social and political sphere should "recognize the inequities and struggles experienced in the wider society to effect one's ability to succeed within an organization" (Shields, 2010, p. 11). For the Deaf teaching staff, specifically the Deaf class assistants, and their experience of SASL learning is brought to the schooling context in which the majority of teachers are hearing. The creation of a platform for the Deaf staff to raise their concerns around

SASL issues needs to be part of the SASL implementation process. In this way, this transformative change has proved to be extremely beneficial at this school.

In conclusion, as the Deaf class assistants indicated during the final focus group discussions that there was need for a Deaf perspective amongst the SMT, when they asserted that it was time to have a Deaf staff member on this SMT. This signified a change in their expectations of the role played by the SMT and also a new awareness of the paradigm shift at school. It also showed that even though there might be good working relations between the Deaf and hearing members regarding implementation, there was a general need to see more Deaf at the decision making level.

7.5. Personal Reflections

The focus of this research was on the Foundation phase but also on how the implementation of SASL has changed SMT and Deaf staff members' perceptions about their leadership roles. Undertaking this study has shown me the importance of ongoing dialogue and of recognising the 'voices' of Deaf staff members who have essential insider knowledge and first language fluency from their personal experience as signers.

From my view as principal, and from what I have experienced with hearing and Deaf teachers who have attended training offered by the DoE in preparation for SASL, not enough emphasis has been placed on the changing roles of leadership for SASL implementation at school level. Training has largely focussed on the SASL curriculum imperatives, but the changing roles which could be as a result of the changing mind-sets, have been left untouched. I strongly feel that as a hearing principal we should use our positions to engage in more robust debate with Deaf staff members who have extensive language experience.

This study has shown me that the role of the SMT has altered through critical reflection on the complexities of implementing SASL and the acceptance that Deaf staff have invaluable lived experience as deaf persons, which places them at the forefront in understanding the changes needed for implementation. From the dialogues, the three points that stood out were that Deaf class assistants wanted hearing educators to learn

to sign proficiently, they wished to see changes in the way that learners were accessing SASL and they desired to see more Deaf staff take the lead in decision-making regarding the SASL Curriculum. It is in reaching this understanding that I reiterate that schools should be giving more leadership roles to Deaf staff for this curriculum. This can only be achieved through an acceptance of the changing role of the SMT, more transactional than previously, ensuring there is policy compliance as regards SASL and envisaging how the process would be developed in the future.

As a hearing principal, I rely on the Deaf teaching staff for their guidance in what would improve SASL access to our learners. At times, I felt vulnerable in relinquishing the management of SASL, and of such an important process, to Deaf experts. However I have learnt to trust the dialogue and the decisions reached between Deaf teachers and class assistants and the SMT members who, together, provide guidance how SASL would be rolled out not only in the classroom but also within the school, but also in keeping with the official requirements from the DBE.

The DBE has not provided an implementation policy or plan for school managements to follow. The expectation from DBE is that that there would be sufficient resources available for the implementation of the curriculum, which includes enough LTSM (visually accessible materials), but these are inadequate. We have found that resources which are contextually relevant are not available and have started producing our own materials to which the learners are able to relate. This is done by the Deaf class assistants who have taken this as their initiative. I believe that more opportunities for the empowerment of Deaf staff must be created, providing leadership opportunities within the school.

At this study site, and as reported in the study carried out by Steyn (2015) on the implementation of SASL, schools (via their SMTs) have to start designing additional teaching and learning visual materials. Here leadership in SASL and SASL subject knowledge does not necessarily lie with the SMT members, but rather with Deaf staff members. It is exactly this change in roles that forms the basis for change within the school, moving from a Medical to a Social model of implementation which situates due regard and respect for the role of SASL in the school. My opinion as principal of this institution is that to relinquish our roles of leadership, is not relinquishing our

management role or responsibility for the SASL curriculum, it is merely an acknowledgment for the regard and respect for the Deaf and Sign Language within this institution.

From this study, I have highlighted the power of dialogue in implementation; we have to talk, but we also need to be clear on the roles of staff in talking and possibly change the rigid roles to allow more talk to happen, i.e. to accord more power to Deaf teachers as to leaders of the dialogue of transformation.

7.6. Strengths of the Research

The strength of this research was the availability of participants and their willingness to participate in a project such as this. Looking at leadership from a different perspective and including the 'voices' of several members of staff, both Deaf and hearing, added to the value and richness of this research.

Being the principal and researcher of this school was an advantage in being able to implement changes needed for sufficient planning, resources and training for SASL to implement this curriculum. Having insider knowledge of the school, the participants, the roles of the SMT members, the educators and class assistants provided a deeper sense of understanding and first-hand experience of the impact of the SASL curriculum within the school.

7.7. Limitations of the Research

Initially, being the principal and researcher was a limitation in how participants viewed my role because they were hesitant to speak frankly about their concerns with the SASL curriculum. As the research progressed, the apprehension changed and with the surveys and final discussions, participants spoke more freely.

The research was conducted over a 12 month period which did not provide an extended period of time to assess the long term outcomes on how the roles of the SMT, the Deaf educators and the Deaf class assistants had changed.

7.8. Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations could be considered for future research:

- A more comprehensive comparative study involving larger numbers of schools and their approaches to the implementation of SASL;
- A study based on the classroom interaction between learners and educators when schools are in transition from the medical to the social model;
- A comparative study conducted on the multilingual approach, incorporating dynamic bilingualism for the Deaf and HOH learner in specific grades at different schools for the Deaf;
- A study on the bilingual practices of the HOH learner and their experiences of the SASL curriculum;
- A study based on the literacy outcomes when more leadership roles are given to Deaf teaching staff for the implementation of SASL.

7.9. Concluding remark.

The primary purpose for this case study was to explore the implementation of SASL by members of the SMT through their dialogue with deaf educators and deaf class assistants in Foundation Phase. The implementation of SASL allowed the SMT to attempt different leadership approaches. The transformative approach was adopted because it utilised the expertise of the Deaf staff, to establish what works well in learners accessing the SASL curriculum. The SMT adopted a transactional approach for the implementation of SASL to yield improved academic performance by means of SMT members working closely with all members of staff. To sum up this research in the words of SMT #3:

> *The other thing is it is important to maintain standards and I think that's one of the main things that school management has to make sure has to happen. It's that SASL is there in its form, it's been worked out in this form for Deaf learners, there is a certain standard that needs to be maintained, we need to make sure that that standard is there, so in terms of working with HODs who are working on the ground and working with Deaf staff, they need to make sure those standards are in place, those standards are met and that means constant supervision constant guidance support, meetings where issues are discussed and people get a better understanding of SASL because there is a lot of confusion and if we cut the confusion that makes it easier for us to manage it to implement it better. So there is a lot of different strategies that have to be*

pulled together to ensure that this goes off, it is not separate from the school. (SMT #3, 1st focus group, p. 8-9)

Foster (1986) as cited in Shields (2010) states that his belief in transformative leadership is that it should be a leadership approach that is considered by schools for implementing SASL as it "is critically educative; it can not only look at the conditions in which we live, but it must also decide how to change them" (p. 185). In changing our schools for the Deaf, school leadership (principal and SMT) need to become more aware about our actions and transform our institutions through dialogue, between Deaf and hearing staff members and between persons in management (SMT) and also those who are not in management.

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Appendix A (1): Invitation to Participate (School management team members)

Michelle Batchelor
P.O. Box 189
Florida 1710
October 2014
Tel: 011 075 3822/ Fax: 086 6921493
rbatchelor@absamail.co.za/ 8809201D@students.wits.ac.za

Dear Participant (SMT Member)

RE: **A Case Study of Transformational leadership for the implementation of South African Sign Language.**

This study is conducted as fulfilment of the M. Ed degree in Deaf Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I am doing research on the implementation of the new South African Sign Language to start in Foundation Phase in 2015.

This research explores transformational leadership practices in the change from an oral-centred perspective to a sign-language perspective. Your understanding of utilising and critiquing this leadership processes for implementing SASL will be of great value to this research.

I would like you to know that your participation in this research study is voluntary and that you may withdraw from the study at any time. Furthermore, as principal of this school and also as a participant in this research, your participation or non-participation, in no way compromises the professional position/relation as a SMT member of this school.

Your participation would involve:

- Completing a questionnaire once a term for three terms, that will take 10 -15 minutes,
- Participate in 3 filmed quarterly focus group interviews, 45-60 minutes focusing on positive and negative aspects of transformation leadership practices for the SASL implementation.

All data from this study will be confidential and will be used for research and implementation purposes. I will endeavour at all times to ensure that your privacy is respected.

Once my research has been completed a copy of my research will be available to you, if you wish.

If you feel that the questions or your participation would compromise you in any way, please feel free to decline from participation in this study at any time.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely

……..

Researcher:

Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057
083 674 4196/ 082 561 6691

Supervisors: Guy Mcilroy 083 7933787
Guy.mcilroy@wits.ac.za
Prof Claudine Storbeck 083 324 1588
Claudine.storbeck@wits.ac.za

Appendix A (2): Invitation to Participate (Deaf Educators)

Michelle Batchelor
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October 2014
Tel: 011 075 3822/ Fax: 086 6921493
rbatchelor@absamail.co.za/ 8809201D@students.wits.ac.za

Dear Participant (Deaf Educator)

RE: **A Case Study of Transformational leadership for the implementation of South African Sign Language.**
This study is conducted as fulfilment of the M. Ed degree in Deaf Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I am doing research on the implementation of the new South African Sign Language to start in Foundation Phase in 2015.

This research explores transformational leadership practices in the change from an oral-centred perspective to a sign-language perspective. Your understanding of utilising and critiquing this leadership processes for implementing SASL will be of great value to this research.

I would like you to know that your participation in this research study is voluntary and that you may withdraw from the study at any time. Furthermore, as principal of this school and also as a participant in this research, your participation or non-participation, in no way compromises your professional position as a Deaf educator of this school.

I will be making use of several instruments as described below. An interpreter will be available for all discussions. Your participation would involve:

- Completing a questionnaire once a term for three terms, that will take 10-15 minutes,
- Participate in 3 filmed quarterly focus group interviews, 45-60 minutes focussing on positive and negative aspects of transformation leadership practices for the SASL implementation.

All data from this study will be confidential and will be used for research and implementation purposes. I will endeavour at all times to ensure that your privacy is respected.

Once my research has been completed a copy of it will be available to you, if you wish.

If you feel that the questions or your participation would compromise you in any way, please feel free to decline from participation in this study at any time.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely

……..

Researcher:

Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057
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Appendix A (3): Invitation to Participate Deaf Class Assistants

Michelle Batchelor
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October 2014
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rbatchelor@absamail.co.za/ 8809201D@students.wits.ac.za

Dear Participant: Deaf Class Assistant

RE: **A Case Study of Transformational leadership for the implementation of South African Sign Language.**
This study is conducted as fulfilment of the M Ed degree in Deaf Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I am doing research on the implementation of the new South African Sign Language curriculum to start in Foundation Phase in 2015.

This research explores transformational leadership practices for the facilitation of the difficulties when changing from an oral-centred perspective to a more sign-language perspective. Your understanding and experiences of implementing SASL in the Foundation Phase will be of great value to strengthening the school leadership.

I would like you to know that your participation in this research study is voluntary and that you may withdraw from the study at any time.

Furthermore, as principal of this school and also participant researcher, your participation or non-participation, in no way compromises your core function as class assistant within the Foundation Phase of this school.

Your participation would involve: A SASL interpreter will be available for all discussions.

- Completing a questionnaire once a term for three terms, that will take 10-15 minutes,
- Participate in 3 filmed (quarterly) focus group interviews, of about 45-60 minutes focusing on positive and negative aspects of the transformation of the school to SASL CAPS.

All data from this study will be confidential and will be used for research and school leadership purposes. I endeavour at all times to ensure that your privacy is respected.

Once my research has been completed, I would be happy to provide you with a copy of my research, if you wish.

If you feel that the questions or your participation would compromise you in any way, please feel free to withdraw from participation in this study at any time.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely

……..

Researcher:
Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057
083 674 4196/ 082 561 6691

Supervisors: Guy Mcilroy 083 7933787
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Appendix B

Informed Consent for Participation in Research Study

This study explores transformational leadership practices for implementation of the new South African Sign Language to start in Foundation Phase in 2015.

It is conducted as fulfilment of the requirements for the researcher's Master's in Education degree (M Ed) by dissertation in Deaf Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

There are no foreseeable risks with this research. The main potential benefit is in changing the language paradigm from an oral perspective to a SASL perspective, which could facilitate successful implementation of this language and encourage good communication skills. No costs or payment are associated with participating in this study. **Should any discomfort arise regarding your current position within this school or questions addressed in the interview session, participants can contact me or my supervisor through the details provided.**

Participant's informed consent I …… …… (Name of Participant, please print) _____ agree to participate in this research study and I understand that:

1. The nature of my participation includes completing a questionnaire once a term for three terms
2. The time expected for the questionnaire is 20 minutes.
3. My participation is entirely voluntary. I may terminate my participation at any time without penalty.
4. I give my consent for the group focus group interviews to be filmed which will take place once a term.
5. I give my consent for a SA Sign Language Interpreter to interpret during the filming of the interview and group session.
6. All my data are confidential. All research data and instruments and analyses will be stored in Deaf Education (locked storeroom) and primary data will be destroyed (5) five years after completion of the study.
7. All data are for research purposes only.

8. Data may be used confidentially presented in research related conferences.
9. If I have any questions about this research, or if I would like to receive a copy of the findings of the completed study, I can contact the researcher using the address on this letterhead.

Name of Researcher: Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057
Address of Researcher: 49 Milner Road
Kensington B
Randburg

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: Place: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____

Date Place:_____

Supervisors: Guy Mcilroy 083 7933787

Guy.mcilroy@wits.ac.za

Prof Claudine Storbeck 083 324 1588

Claudine.storbeck@wits.ac.za

Appendix C (1): Letter of Consent to conduct a study at the school.

20th February 2015

RE: Request to conduct research at MC Kharbai School for the Deaf.

This letter is to inform you that South African Sign Language will be implemented as a Home Language subject within the Foundation Phase in 2015. In light of this, a research study into transformational leadership practices for the implementation and facilitation of this topic will be conducted at the school by myself as a master's student.

This study is conducted in fulfilment of the M Ed degree in Deaf Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. The participants for this research will include members of the SMT, two Deaf educators and two Deaf class assistants from the Foundation Phase.

As the principal of the school and as an insider practitioner-researcher, I am acutely aware of the need to balance the research strategies for implementation with the intended purposes of the curriculum as well as my roles and functions as principal of this school. Therefore, participation or non-participation of my colleagues, will in no way compromise the professional relationships or the professional employment that exists. (As SMT member, educator or class assistant.)

The interviews will be conducted between February and August 2015.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely

……..

Researcher:

Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057
083 674 4196/ 082 561 6691

Student no: 8809201D
Supervisors: Mr. G. Mcilroy and Professor C Storbeck

Appendix C1: Letter of approval to conduct a study at the research site

M.C KHARBAI SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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P. O. Box 404 ,Lenasia 1820
Tel: 011 852-7827

19.03.2015

M.C. KHARBAI SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

To whom it may concern,

Letter to authorize research study in to transformational leadership practices at: M.C. Kharbai School for the Deaf.

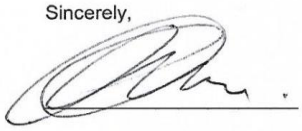
I, Ernest Mhlongo, the undersigned current chairperson of School Governing Body at MC Kharbai School for the Deaf, hereby consent & authorize Michelle Batchelor, Student no:

8809201D, to conduct the research study as outlined in your proposal, with the understanding that it will not involve leaners.

This authorization is valid until further written notice from M.C. Kharbai School Governing Body.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Ernest Mhlongo
SGB CHAIRPERSON

0832123474
Email ernest@inetsim.co.za

Appendix D: Consent to be video-recorded.

I, ----------, consent to film the focus interviews for this research, by researcher and principal, Michelle Batchelor on transformational leadership strategies for implementing SASL to be video-recorded.

I understand that:

- The tapes/memory cards and transcripts are for the purpose of this study.
- The videotape/card on which my interview is recorded will be handled securely and destroyed five years after the completion of the research.
- No identifying feature will be used in the transcript.
- I have been briefed on the reasons for being videotaped.
- I consent to the filming of the interview/focus group

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: Place: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____

Date Place:

_____

Researcher:

Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057
083 674 4196/ 082 561 6691

Student no: 8809201D
Supervisors: Mr. G. Mcilroy and Professor C Storbeck

Appendix E: Consent to be audio-taped (SMT Members)

I, ----------, consent for the focus groups and interviews for this research, with researcher and principal, Michelle Batchelor on transformational strategies for SASL to be audio-taped.

I understand that:

- The tapes and transcripts are for the purpose of this study.
- The audio-tapes of the focus groups and interviews is recorded will be handled securely and destroyed five years after the completion of the research.
- No identifying feature will be used in the transcript.
- I have been briefed on the reasons for being audio-taped.

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: Place: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____

Date Place:_____

Researcher:

Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057
083 674 4196/ 082 561 6691

Student no: 8809201D
Supervisors: Mr. G. Mcilroy and Professor C Storbeck

Appendix F: Consent for data to be used within and outside of the school.

I, ----------, consent that the data obtained from this study, "School Management in a school for Deaf learners: A case study on transformational leadership and the new SASL curriculum" could be used in the following ways:

- Data would be used to inform policy on SASL policy implementation at school,
- Data could be used as reference in conference papers,
- Data would be used as reference when reviewing implementation concerns,
- Data would be used and be available for the focus group for open discussion when looking at leadership support
- I have been briefed on the reasons for the data usage and concede that data can be used as above.

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: Place: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____

Date Place:_____

Researcher:

Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057
083 674 4196/ 082 561 6691

Student no: 8809201D
Supervisors: Mr. G. Mcilroy and Professor C Storbeck

Phase 1.

Appendix G (1): First Phase

Schedule of Interview Questions for Focus group: SMT members.

This is an internal focus group interview restricted to the school and only selected members of the SMT, Deaf educators and Deaf Assistants. Information discussed and decided upon here will be used to inform implementation procedures for the SMT at the school

1. How do you feel about the new SASL HL being implemented in 2015?

2. Explain how you think that the School Management is prepared, or can be prepared for the changes required by this curriculum, SASL and the recognition and regard for Sign Language within the school, please elaborate?

3. What is your opinion as a member of management, do you feel able to support the language paradigm shift as well as support for fellow staff members?

4. What is your opinion about SASL as a Home language contributing to the improved literacy of the learners, please elaborate?

5. What is your understanding about bilingualism and how it should be implemented within the Foundation phase?

6. How would the School Vision and Mission school goals in the context of SASL change to accommodate the language needs?

7. How do you envisage your leadership strategies will improve the implementation of SASL within the Foundation Phase?

8. Tell us about your experiences, working with fellow staff members, about their perceptions of SASL as the primary language of the Deaf, have there been any changes?

9. What support can you provide to fellow educators, parents and learners to facilitate SASL implementation?

10. Is there anything that you would like to share with the group that is linked to your leadership practices or related to bilingualism and SASL?

Phase 2.

Appendix G (2): 2nd Focus group Interview.

Schedule of Interview Questions for Focus group: SMT GROUP

This is the second internal focus group interview restricted to the school and only for the SMT members. Information discussed here will be used for research purposes and could be used for the implementation processes of SASL in the other Phases.

1. As pointed out in the first focus group study, SASL implementation comes with many challenges. This includes the HOH learners, literacy, the teaching time for SASL and English, LTSM and assessments. As a SMT member, what have you done to alleviate the first year of implementation process?

2. Transformational Leadership is about broad school changes, individual support, influencing individuals and changing mind-sets of people. Would you categorise your leadership for 2015, specifically for SASL implementation as Transformational, please elaborate?

3. What changes have you seen with learners, educators or class assistants since SASL HL implemented in 2015? Please elaborate.

4. In your opinion did any staff members gain intellectually by your leadership in implementing this curriculum, if yes, what do you think are the gains, if no, elaborate?

5. Is there anything that you would like to share with the group that is linked to your leadership practices related to SASL, literacy, Sign Bilingualism and changes moving forward for the school?

I thank you for your time and your willingness to participate in this study.

Phase 1.

Appendix G (3): First Interview

Schedule of Interview Questions for Focus group: Deaf Educators

This is an internal focus group interview restricted to the school and only selected members of the SMT, Deaf educators and Deaf Assistants. Information discussed and decided upon here will be used to inform implementation procedures for the SMT at the school.

1. How do you feel about the new SASL HL being implemented in 2015?

2. Explain how you think that the School Management is prepared, or can be prepared for the changes required by this curriculum, SASL and the recognition and regard for Sign Language within the school, please elaborate?

3. What is your opinion as a Deaf educator, do you feel able to support the language paradigm shift as well as support for fellow staff members?

4. What is your opinion about SASL as a Home language contributing to the improved literacy of the learners, please elaborate?

5. What is your understanding about bilingualism and how it should be implemented within the Foundation phase?

6. How would the School Vision and Mission school goals in the context of SASL change to accommodate the language needs?

7. How do you envisage your role to improve the implementation of SASL within the Foundation Phase?

8. Tell us about your experiences, working with fellow staff members, about their perceptions of SASL as the primary language of the Deaf, have there been any changes?

9. What support can you provide to fellow educators, parents and learners to facilitate SASL implementation?

10. Is there anything that you would like to share with the group that is linked to your teaching practices or related to bilingualism and SASL?

Phase 2.

Appendix G (4): Second Focus Group Interview

Schedule of Interview Questions for Focus group: Deaf class assistants.

This is an internal focus group interview restricted to the school and only selected members from the Foundation Phase, Deaf educators and Deaf Assistants. The use of an interpreter as well as the video-recorded Information discussed and decided upon here will be used to inform implementation procedures for the SMT at the school.

1. How do you feel about the new SASL HL being implemented in 2015?

2. Do you think that the Management is prepared for the changes required by this curriculum, SASL and the recognition and regard for Sign Language within the school, please elaborate?

3. Do you, as a member at Foundation level, feel able to support the language paradigm shift as well as support management staff members in understanding the change moving from an oral school to a sign language school?

4. Do you feel that SASL as a Home language can contribute to the improved literacy of the learners, please elaborate?

5. What is your understanding about bilingualism and how it should be implemented within the Foundation phase?

6. Do you think that the school Vision and school goals in the context of SASL need to change?

7. How do you envisage your role as Deaf staff members can contribute to improve the implementation of SASL within the Foundation Phase?

8. Tell us about your experiences, working with fellow staff members, about their perceptions of SASL as the primary language of the Deaf, have there been any changes?

9. What support can you provide to fellow educators, parents and learners to facilitate SASL implementation?

10. Is there anything that you would like to share with the group that is linked to your leadership practices or related to bilingualism and SASL?

Phase 2.

Appendix G (5): 2ND INTERVIEW

Schedule of Interview Questions for Focus group. (Deaf Educators)

This is an internal focus group interview restricted to the school and only for Deaf educators within the Foundation Phase. Information discussed here will review the implementation of SASL, as well as the leadership roles in this process by the SMT.

1. How do you feel about SASL HL since it was implemented in 2015?

2. What changes, if any, did you effect for SASL as a formal language CAPS subject for 2015, please elaborate?

3. Do you, as an educator in Foundation Phase, feel that you were supported, stimulated and challenged by the HOD when implementing the SASL this year?

4. Have you seen any changes in the learners since the SASL formal inception, please elaborate?

5. Since the implementation of SASL, has the school vision and school culture changed, please elaborate?

6. How did you accommodate HOH learners within the SASL HL curriculum during this implementation year?

7. Did you provide any individualised support to any members of staff or individual learners specifically for SASL CAPS implementation, please elaborate?

8. In your opinion did any staff members gain intellectually by implementing this curriculum, if Yes, what do you think are the gains, if No, why not?

9. Is there anything you feel that was not addressed that the SMT could have done when looking back to SASL and the implementation?

Phase 2

Appendix G (6): 2ND INTERVIEW

Schedule of Interview Questions for Focus group. (Deaf Class Assistants)

This is an internal focus group interview restricted to the school and only for Deaf class assistants within the Foundation Phase. Information discussed here will review the implementation of SASL, as well as the leadership roles in this process by the SMT.

1. How do you feel about SASL HL since it was implemented in 2015?

2. What changes, if any, did you effect for SASL as a formal language CAPS subject for 2015, please elaborate?

3. Do you, as a class assistant in Foundation Phase, feel that you were supported, stimulated and challenged by the HOD/ Deaf educator when implementing the SASL this year?

4. Have you seen any changes in the learners since the SASL formal inception, please elaborate?

5. Since the implementation of SASL, has the school vision and school culture changed, please elaborate?

6. How did you accommodate HOH learners within the SASL HL curriculum during this implementation year?

7. Did you provide any individualised support to any members of staff or individual learners specifically for SASL CAPS implementation? Please elaborate.

8. In your opinion did any staff members gain intellectually by implementing this curriculum, if Yes, what do you think are the gains, if No, why not?

9. Is there anything you feel that was not addressed that the SMT could have done when looking back to SASL and the implementation?

Phase 1

Appendix H: Schedule of the confidential Questionnaire for Deaf participants

This questionnaire is designed to provide a profile of school leadership practices. It consists of leadership practice statements based on the model of transformational Leadership.

Section A:

PART I: Please provide the following information about yourself:

1. Years, at the end of this school year, that you have worked with the current management within the school:
    1. 1-2 years
    2. 3-5 years
    3. 5-10 years
    4. More than 10 years

2. Years' experience as an SMT member/ teacher/ class assistant at the school:
    1. 1-2 years
    2. 3-5 years
    3. 5-10 years
    4. More than 10 years

Section B

PART II:

Read each statement carefully. Then circle the number that best fits the specific practice evident in the school for that specific term during the SASL implementation.

5 represents *Almost Always*

4 represents *Frequently*

3 represents *Sometimes*

2 represents *Seldom*

1 represents *Almost Never*

Please circle only one number per question. Try to answer every question.

To what extent does the school management team (SMT) assist with the following?

1. Discuss the linguistic needs of the Deaf learners 1 2 3 4 5
2. Discuss the school's vision in-line with SASL HL 1 2 3 4 5
3. Develop goals that are easily understood and used for SASL HL by teachers in the school 1 2 3 4 5
4. Communicate effectively the school's mission with regard to SASL to members of the school community 1 2 3 4 5
5. Refer to the school's academic goals when making SASL HL curricular decisions with teachers 1 2 3 4 5
6. Point out specific strengths in teacher's communicative practices in and outside of the classroom 1 2 3 4 5
7. Participate actively in the review of curricular materials for SASL HL 1 2 3 4 5
8. Meet individually with teachers to discuss student progress in SASL HL 1 2 3 4 5
9. Take time to talk informally with staff during administration periods and breaks about their perspectives of Sign Bilingualism 1 2 3 4 5
10. Create professional growth opportunities for teachers to develop their SASL structure on a social and academic level. 1 2 3 4 5

Open-ended Question.

Discuss how well do you think the SMT is leading the transformation of the school in its implementation of the SASL curriculum?

Thank you for your participation in answering this questionnaire.

Researcher:

Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057
083 674 4196/ 082 561 6691

Student no: 8809201D
Supervisors: Mr. G. Mcilroy and Professor C Storbeck

Phase 2

Appendix I (1) : Confidential Questionnaire for SMT members.

This questionnaire is designed to follow-up on the implementation of SASL and school leadership practices.

NAME:……Signature:…….

Section B

PART II:

Read each statement carefully. Then circle the number that best fits the specific practice evident in the school for that specific term during the SASL implementation.

5 represents *Almost Always*

4 represents *Frequently*

3 represents *Sometimes*

2 represents *Seldom*

1 represents *Almost Never*

Please circle only one number per question. Try to answer every question.

To what extent did the school management team (SMT) assist with the following?

1. As SMT you assist fellow-staff members to try new projects with the learners in SASL 1 2 3 4 5

2. You are open to advice from Deaf staff members with regards to SASL curriculum strategies for the learners 1 2 3 4 5

3. As an SMT member, you play a leading role to bring about changes in the classrooms for the teaching of SASL 1 2 3 4 5

4. The SMT sets goals and challenges for fellow staff and learners to reach and improve Sign Language at school 1 2 3 4 5

5. You feel confident that you are able to discuss your concerns about SASL and literacy to fellow SMT members as well as Deaf staff members 1 2 3 4 5

6. As the SMT, you are constantly providing opportunities for growth in understanding and knowledge for SASL 1 2 3 4 5

7. You notice that more staff members are using SASL and feeling more confident while gaining an awareness of their communication skills 1 2 3 4 5

8. You can see that the Deaf learners are improving in SASL as well as English written language (Bilingualism) 1 2 3 4 5

9. Through collaborative work with fellow staff, you feel confident in the expertise of Deaf staff members to design and create learning materials in SASL for the staff and learners 1 2 3 4 5

10. Through SASL, you feel that the SMT is creating opportunities for Deaf learners to reach their full potential. (School Vision and Mission.) 1 2 3 4 5

Open-ended Question.

Discuss how well you think SASL as a subject and curriculum, is creating an awareness as well as an acceptance of Sign Language practices at the school.

Thank you for your participation in answering this questionnaire.

……..

Researcher:

Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057M
083 674 4196/ 082 561 6691
rbatchelor@absamail.co.za

Supervisors: Guy Mcilroy 083 7933787
Guy.mcilroy@wits.ac.za
Prof Claudine Storbeck 083 324 1588
Claudine.storbeck@wits.ac.za

Phase 2

Appendix I (2): Confidential Questionnaire for Deaf participants - teachers and class assistants.

This questionnaire is designed as a follow-up on the implementation of SASL and school leadership practices.

Name of Participant: _____

Signature:_____

Read each statement carefully. Circle the number that best fits the implementation practices for SASL.

5 represents	***Always***
4 represents	***Frequently***
3 represents	***Sometimes***
2 represents	***Seldom***
1 represents	***Never***

Please circle only one number per question. Try to answer every question.

To what extent does the school management team (SMT) assist with the following?

1. The SMT assists you to try new projects with the learners in SASL 1 2 3 4 5
2. The SMT is prepared to take your advice with SASL curriculum strategies for the learners 1 2 3 4 5
3. The SMT plays a leading role to bring about changes in the classrooms for the teaching of SASL 1 2 3 4 5
4. The SMT sets goals and challenges for you to reach to improve Sign Language for the staff and learners 1 2 3 4 5

5. You feel confident that you are able to discuss your concerns about SASL and literacy with SMT or your HOD 1 2 3 4 5

6. Through the SMT, you are given opportunities for growth in understanding and knowledge with the implementation of SASL 1 2 3 4 5

7. You notice that more staff members are using SASL and feeling confident in their communication skills 1 2 3 4 5

8. You can see that the Deaf learners are improving in SASL as well as English written language (Bilingualism) 1 2 3 4 5

9. Through collaboration (working together) with your HOD, you feel empowered to design and create learning materials in SASL for the staff and learners. 1 2 3 4 5

10. Through SASL, you feel that the SMT creates opportunities for Deaf learners to reach their full potential. (School Vision and Mission.) 1 2 3 4 5

Open-ended Question.

Discuss how the SMT is leading the transformation (changes) in the school, to create an awareness and an acceptance of SASL for the learners.

Thank you for your participation in answering this questionnaire.

……
Researcher:
Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057M
083 674 4196/ 082 561 6691
rbatchelor@absamail.co.za

Supervisors: Guy Mcilroy 083 7933787
Guy.mcilroy@wits.ac.za
Prof Claudine Storbeck 083 324 1588
Claudine.storbeck@wits.ac.za

Appendix J: Ethics Clearance letter

Wits School of Education

27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa. Tel: +27 11 717-3064 Fax: +27 11 717-3100 E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za Website: www.wits.ac.za

25 November 2014

Student Number: 8809201D

Protocol Number: 2014ECE057M

Dear Michelle Batchelor

Application for Ethics Clearance: Master of Education by Dissertation

Thank you very much for your ethics application. The Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate, has considered your application for ethics clearance for your proposal entitled:

School Management in a school for Deaf learners: A case study of transformational leadership and the new SASL curriculum

The committee recently met and I am pleased to inform you that **clearance was granted**.

Please use the above protocol number in all correspondence to the relevant research parties (schools, parents, learners etc.) and include it in your research report or project on the title page.

The Protocol Number above should be submitted to the Graduate Studies in Education Committee upon submission of your final research report.

All the best with your research project.

Yours sincerely,

M Mabetha

Wits School of Education

011 717-3416

Cc Supervisor: Mr G McIlroy

Appendix K: GDE Consent Form

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

For administrative use:
Reference no: D2015 / 357

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	**3 December 2014**
Validity of Research Approval:	**9 February 2015 to 2 October 2015**
Name of Researcher:	**Batchelor M.C.**
Address of Researcher:	**P.O. Box 189**
	Florida
	1710
Telephone Number:	**011 075 3822; 083 674 4196; 082 561 6691**
Fax Number:	**096 692 1492**
Email address:	**rbatchelor@absamail.co.za; 8809201@students.wits.ac.za**
Research Topic:	**School Management in a School for Deaf Learners: A case study on Transformational Leadership and then implementation of a new SASL (South African Sign Language) Curriculum**
Number and type of schools:	**ONE LSEN School**
District/s/HO	**Johannesburg South**

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. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to the Principal, SGB and the relevant District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted. However participation is VOLUNTARY.

Makhado
2014/12/04

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) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

Appendix L: Confidential and Ethical Documentation for Interpreters

Michelle Batchelor
P.O. Box 189
Florida 1710
Tel: 011 075 3822/ Fax: 086 6921493
rbatchelor@absamail.co.za/ 8809201D@students.wits.ac.za

Dear Interpreter/ Transcriber

RE: **Implementation of SASL in the Foundation Phase: A Case Study about transformational and Transformative Leadership**

This study is conducted as fulfilment of the M. Ed degree in Deaf Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I am doing research on the implementation of the new South African Sign Language to start in Foundation Phase in 2015.

This research explores transformational leadership practices in the change from an oral-centred perspective to a sign-language perspective. Your understanding of utilising and critiquing this leadership processes for implementing SASL will be of great value to this research.

Deaf participants will be interviewed through focus group interviews

For Deaf participants to maintain complete access to the study, your services as SASL interpreter and 'voice-over' is required on a stipulated time and date for the interviews that will be communicated to you, also cognisant of your availability.

In the interests of protecting the identity of the participants, the identity of the research site or the nature of the individual focus group discussions, I would need you to complete the form below.

Should you agree to provide your interpreting services for the above study, would you kindly complete the ethical and confidentiality agreement by completing the form below
Thank you.

Researcher:
Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057M
083 674 4196/ 082 561 6691
rbatchelor@absamail.co.za

Supervisors: Guy Mcilroy 083 7933787
Guy.mcilroy@wits.ac.za
Prof Claudine Storbeck 083 324 1588
Claudine.storbeck@wits.ac.za

****

Interpreter Agreement.

I……..(name of Interpreter), registered with (Interpreting Association)…… hereby adhere to the ethical considerations as stipulated above.

Signature:…….. Date: ……..

Appendix M: Confidential and Ethical Documentation for Transcribers

Michelle Batchelor
P.O. Box 189
Florida 1710
Tel: 011 075 3822/ Fax: 086 6921493
rbatchelor@absamail.co.za/ 8809201D@students.wits.ac.za

Dear Transcriber

RE: **Implementation of SASL in the Foundation Phase: A Case Study about transformational and transformative Leadership**

This study is conducted as fulfilment of the M. Ed degree in Deaf Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I am doing research on the implementation of the new South African Sign Language to start in Foundation Phase in 2015.

This research explores transformational leadership practices in the change from an oral-centred perspective to a sign-language perspective. Your understanding of utilising and critiquing this leadership processes for implementing SASL will be of great value to this research.

Deaf participants will be interviewed through focus group interviews and A SASL interpreter will used to voice-over all their answers and discussions points.

Your services is required where you are asked to watch the video-recorded focus group discussions with Deaf and hearing participants. Thereafter, to transcribe all of the recorded interviews during the research period.

In the interests of protecting the identity of the participants, the identity of the research site or the nature of the individual focus group discussions, I would need you to complete the form below.

Should you agree to provide your transcribing services for the above study, would you kindly complete the ethical and confidentiality agreement by completing the form below
Thank you.

Researcher:
Michelle Batchelor
Ethics Protocol Number: 2014ECE057M
083 674 4196/ 082 561 6691
rbatchelor@absamail.co.za

Supervisors: Guy Mcilroy 083 7933787
Guy.mcilroy@wits.ac.za
Prof Claudine Storbeck 083 324 1588
Claudine.storbeck@wits.ac.za

****

Transcriber Agreement.

I……..(name of transcriber), registered as an independent transcriber or with (transcribing Association) …… hereby adhere to the ethical considerations as stipulated above.

Signature:…….. Date:……