From conception to consumption: an examination of the intellectual process of producing textbooks for Foundation Phase in South Africa.

Hannchen Koornhof
7306620

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Supervisor: Professor Brahm Fleisch

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Abstract

This study examines the factors that shape decision-making in relation to the development of Learner Teacher Support Materials (LTSMs) in South Africa by focusing on the processes that govern the development of Foundation Phase LTSMs, and on how publishers understand the educational nature of LTSMs that will lead to effective literacy acquisition. Findings are based on elite interviews with members of senior management in the publishing industry, and triangulated with interviews with authors and academic specialists of Foundation Phase. It was found that the close alignment between government directives and processes and the publishing industry form the core of all LTSM development and production, creating some symbiosis as well as restraints. Factors that shape the production of LTSMs include full compliance with the specific outcomes of the curriculum; producing LTSMs that are affordable in terms of set criteria by selection committees; selection committees that, determine acceptance of LTSMs for placement on approved lists; time frames that preclude in-depth research and trialling, a market that is deeply stratified and where this stratification is reinforced by curriculum imperatives relating to language; and the monitoring of classroom productivity through the filling in of Learner Book worksheets. Best practice strategies for literacy acquisition requires materials considerably beyond what the industry is producing for South Africa's most disadvantaged markets, namely the English First Additional Language market. Teacher training done by both publishers and the Department of Basic Education suggest a different conceptualisation of Teachers' Guides are required in order for professional development to take place through LTSMs.

Key words:

Textbook publishing, Learner Teacher Support Materials;
Foundation Phase; literacy acquisition; English First Additional Language; Teachers' Guides

Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of master of Education from the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

HANNCHEN ELIZABETH KOURNHOF

Name of candidate

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ACRONYMYS

AS	Assessment Standard
CAPS	The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DOE	Department of Education
FAL	First Additional Language
FP	Foundation Phase
HL	Home Language
HoDs	Heads of Department
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
LB	Learners' Book
LO	Learning Outcome
LoLT	Language of Teaching and Learning
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Materials
MML	Maskew Miller Longman
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
OUP	Oxford University Press
NCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
TG	Teachers' Guide
WB	Work Book

FROM CONCEPTION TO CONSUMPTION: AN EXAMINATION OF THE INTELLECTUAL PROCESS OF PRODUCING TEXTBOOKS FOR FOUNDATION PHASE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and context

In an educational situation that abounds with deeply problematic issues, strategies for remediation and improvement of teacher practices and learner achievement are the order of the day. One of these centres on textbooks for more effective mediation of the curriculum, to provide a degree of learner independence as well as a tool for teacher development.

Post-1994, as South Africa entered into a democratic dispensation, the textbook industry resolved to be at the forefront of change in the education sphere. Apartheid-style textbooks needed to disappear from classrooms with immediate effect, and in their place, new books, representative of a new order, in line with a new and progressive curriculum had to be devised (Engelbrecht, 2006). This process needed to happen at enormous speed for a variety of reasons, and new thinkers, writers and producers of textbooks had to be brought on board. The industry was awash with frenetic, but exhilarating activity. Additionally, new procedures for textbook approval were put in place, creating space for new players – both big and small.

From 1995 to date a plethora of materials has been produced. These were produced in an environment of uncertainty, with regular amendments to the curriculum, and tight deadlines for submission procedures, requiring constant and often radical revisions of materials. Inevitably, materials produced vary greatly in terms of quality, as well as suitability for the various target markets of South African teachers and learners, but a greater variety of materials exist currently in South Africa, than ever before. The

catalogue of 'approved' textbooks produced by the Gauteng Education Department, for Foundation Phase alone, spans 619 pages of about 30 titles per page and the education publishing industry itself ran to R1 848 202 000 in 2008 (Galloway & Struik, 2009).

Statistics on the literacy levels of learners in South Africa make for disheartening reading. The PIRL (Progress in Reading Literacy) study (Howie, et al, 2008) had South Africa as the poorest performing country out of 45 for grades 4 and 5 literacy. Publishers and textbook submission committees assume that teachers who follow the Teachers' Guide (together with the rest of the programme materials) at Foundation Phase can and will produce literate learners. In addition, there is the assumption that the internal coherence of such a programme requires that teachers work with a single programme, rather than a variety of sources drawn from various programmes, as evidenced from Literacy LTSM [Learner Teacher Support Materials[1]] Evaluation Instruments – reports used by submission committees for approval of textbooks. According to the PIRLS summary report (Howie, et al, 2008), "textbooks were the reading materials most often used by language teachers for reading purposes in both grades 4 and 5" (p 46)[2]. Internationally, PILRS reported that 77% of participating countries "used textbooks as a basis for reading instruction" (ibid, p 46).

Whilst acknowledging that textbooks are a single element in the learning process, these nevertheless occupy a central role in providing structure, guidance, a variety of strategies and content knowledge – to both teacher and learners (and sometimes parents or caregivers) in the learning process.

a. The role of textbooks

Ball & Cohen (1996) argue that textbooks in some form or another have been used since early times to shape how teachers teach and learners learn. The integral part that

[1] This is the term used by the National Department of Education for textbooks and supplementary materials that are used by teachers and learners in the classroom, and will be the term used to refer to the various textbook programmes and materials in this study.

[2] However, higher scores were achieved by learners who reported that textbooks were "never, or almost never" used, whilst the frequent use of a reading series suggested higher scores.

textbooks play in teaching and learning means that they are not only part of daily classroom routines, but that they have 'reach' and that textbooks provide a measure of uniformity across diverse settings (ibid:6).

And yet, in recent decades with the advance of constructivism (Duckworth, 1987) and debates about what professionalism (and by implication autonomy and freedom to construct their own teaching time-table and input) means for the teaching profession (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994), criticisms have been levelled at the use of textbooks. Apple's (1986) exposition of class and power relations in education traces the impact textbooks may have on the deskilling of teachers when these are backed by a multi-layered system that require compliant implementation of a curriculum that aims to reproduce the status quo and has control mechanisms that make such compliance advisable to teachers. However, he revises this position somewhat by acknowledging that schools are equally sites of resistance that takes the form of class, race and gender conflict (1995, p 152)

Kampol (1998) makes a distinction between the 'schooled' teacher and the 'educated' teacher and claims that a schooled teacher is deskilled – one that lacks autonomy over teaching and decision making processes. "By making teachers accountable for state-mandated curriculum (such as basal reading materials) and by promoting competency based education, system management, and employing rigid and dehumanizing forms of evaluation along with numerical rating scales, teachers are controlled and simply march to the tune of the state" (p 6). He suggests that deskilling takes place unless reflective practice becomes the norm. Educationists like Baumann (1992) pronounce on the 'oversimplification', 'lack of empirical evidence' and 'failure to credit teachers with the intelligence and decision-making capabilities they possess' (p 390) of the deskilling argument. Hand in hand with the deskilling debate goes that of 'reskilling through textbooks', namely textbooks as 'educative' materials (Davis and Krajcik, 2005). By this they mean the way in which teachers are 'educated', or perhaps rather how teaching practices are shaped, by the materials that are used.

Ball & Cohen (1996) discuss the conservatism of textbook-boundedness, and how this falls into the realm of conformism as compliance to the underlying commercial and political considerations that are instrumental both in textbook production and textbook selection takes hold. However, they suggest that textbooks would regain their status as pivotal instruments of teacher development and education change, if these were conceptualised in more thoughtful and imaginative ways. They coin the term 'curriculum enactment' (ibid, 7) sketching out five intersecting domains where such enactment takes place: teachers are influenced by what they think about their students; teachers work with their own understanding of curriculum content; teachers refashion the curriculum through selectivity and preference as a result of context as well as personal style; the intellectual and social environment of the composition of classes; the broader community and political contexts within which curriculum has to be implemented.

Ways in which textbook programmes could assist such enactment, they argue, are through teachers' guides that could construct possible student responses which would help teachers to listen, interpret and anticipate these responses; support teachers' learning of content; provide overarching frameworks that create continual awareness of longer-term goals and teaching events; and finally, a conscious explanation of its own design principles and pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of various instruction designs in general. Not only do the pedagogical judgements of material developers become transparent, but options become available to teachers (ibid, 7).

Hutchinson and Torres (1994) comment on the increasingly structured nature of modern textbooks, some of which define to the last letter how time could/should be spent, how content should be approached, what kinds of reinforcement may be used for different purposes for different levels of learner, etc. They suggest that textbook sales are a clear indicator of the need these textbooks fill, and claim that the convenience textbooks produce leads to the kind of freedom that teachers require for progressive and constructive interaction with the text – and with learners. Because the learner-teacher process requires a map (one that is available to learners also and not embedded in the mind of the teacher only), textbooks provide a framework and important structure to

classroom routine. Especially when curriculum change takes place, they argue, textbooks create security from which teachers can develop knowledge and confidence.

The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) provides the following formidable list of requirements for the development of Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSMs) expected of South African publishers and states that these need to:

- "Support and enrich classroom-based activities
- Address the individual needs of learners
- Reinforce learner-centeredness in the classroom
- Provide expanded opportunities for enrichment as well as remediation
- Assist teachers and learners in accessing the NCS
- Clearly indicate the educational paradigm and how this has influenced the selection of topics
- Encourage the teacher to be an innovative thinker and practitioner
- Be applicable to a range of learning contexts (i.e. rural, urban and peri-urban areas)
- Capture and maintain the interest of learners and motivate them
- Take account of learners varying levels of abilities within a single grade
- Provide for differentiation so that each individual learner can be supported to experience success and develop to his/her full potential
- Be appropriate to the age, interests and diverse needs of learners
- Encourage respect for diversity by reflecting all aspects of diversity in appropriate, sensitive and positive ways. This includes diversity regarding gender, level of ability, beliefs, etc.
- Stimulate active participation in and enjoyment of learning, teaching and assessment.
- Support teachers in the systematic development of appropriate Lesson Plans
- Ensure that assessment is systematic, inclusive and ongoing
- Be flexible/adaptable to a range of contexts and needs
- Provide a range of suggestions for teachers to be innovative and creative in developing their own resources" (DoE, 2003a, p 37).

From the point of view of curriculum developers it is clear that textbooks can and should provide enormous support and input to both teachers and learners – both in an educative and in a resource-rich way.

b. Questions of methodologies in literacy acquisition

Walp & Walmsley (in Allington and Walmsley, 1995) define 'genuine literacy' as evidence that learners "enjoy reading and writing and choose to do so on a regular basis". They add that such reading is wide and deep and that the oral and aural abilities of such readers indicate a constant growth of knowledge of the world in all spheres. In formulating their definition, they emphasise that test scores which generally examine "a narrow range of reading and editing skills" are misleading of genuine literacy proficiency (Allington and Walmsley, 1995, p 179, 180). This definition coincides closely with the definitions used by both the PIRLS report (Howie, et al, 2008, p 11) and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (DoE, 2003b, p 41)

The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) on learning programmes for Foundation Phase, issued in 2003, has high aspirations that attempts to provide for a broad, all encompassing approach that might accommodate the entire spectrum of learners that exists in South Africa. In line with literacy acquisition strategies in developed countries, the curriculum proposes an approach that combines whole language and phonics, recommending print rich classrooms and referring to the reading recovery (RR) strategies of Marie Clay (1991) in the curriculum itself (DoE, 2003c, p 45). RR strategies require intensive (usually one-on one) lessons with learners who are underperforming based on sequences of "reading and writing experiences with gradually diminishing contributions of the teacher and growing contributions of the students" (Allington and Walmsley, 1995, p 118). Moats (1999) identifies the following as the requisite skills to be transferred for effective literacy acquisition in English – but applicable to other languages that rely on the same phonetic and alphabetic systems as English:

> direct teaching of decoding, comprehension, and literature appreciation; phoneme awareness instruction; systematic and explicit instruction in the code system of written English; daily exposure to a variety of texts, as well as incentives for children to reading independently and with others; vocabulary instruction that includes a variety of complementary methods designed to explore the relationship among words and the relationships among word structure, origin, and meaning; comprehension strategies that include prediction of outcomes, summarizing, clarification,

> questioning, and visualization; and frequent writing of prose to enable a deeper understanding of what is read. (Moats, 1999, p 7, 8)

Allington and Walmsley (1995) arrive at a framework for addressing literacy acquisition problems in the light of a substantial number of remediation case studies in U.S. schools[3]. Their framework includes the expansion of the quantity of literacy instruction, far greater collaboration between teachers (ibid, p 259-262) and that reading and writing activity become the basis for instruction, rather than discrete skill and drill exercises. They argue that instead of slower and more graduated teaching of increasingly more complex sets of skills, learners need to "spend large parts of the school day engaged in reading and writing" (ibid, p 11). However, Moats (1999) cautions against a belief that reading a lot is the best way to overcome reading problems and that skills must always be taught in the context of literature. She explains that language proficiency differentiate good and poor readers and appeals for instruction that develops awareness of phonology:

> "The language skills that most reliably distinguish good and poor readers are specific to the phonological or speech sound processing system. Those skills include awareness of linguistic units that lie within a word (consonants, vowels, syllables, grammatical endings, meaningful parts, and the spelling units that represent them) and fluency in recognition and recall of letters and spelling patterns that make up words. Thus, skilled reading presents a paradox: Those who can most easily make sense of text are also those who can most easily read nonsense (Moats, 1999. p 18).

South African educationists – from curriculum developers, to publishers and authors of textbooks, to teachers – would need to have some consensus on literacy acquisition methodologies and have a strategy in place to implement these methodologies in the classroom.

1.2 Research problem

What is indisputable is there is a problem with reading achievement in South Africa. The assumptions made by the NCS, the PIRL study, and certain researchers have suggested that LTSMs are a key element towards reversing this problem. Other researchers question this assumption on the basis that factors outside the textbook are far more determining in

[3] These include Reading Recovery case studies, 'Four blocks' Programme, Early intervention programme, and accelerated schools programme, with a number of variations on these.

learner achievement (Fuller, 1991; Glewwe, Kremer & Moulin, 2007; Goodman, 1984; Davis and Krajcik, 2005). However, there is general agreement on the inevitability and centrality of LTSMs – whether produced by government departments, publishers or teachers themselves. Although there are various definitions of what constitute 'good' materials, there can be no question that if LTSMs are to be used as part of a strategy for improving reading achievement in South Africa, these need to be designed on best practice principles.

The general questions that this study will address are:

1. What factors or dynamics shape decision-making in relation to the development of LTSMs?
2. How do publishers develop textbooks?
    a. In contemporary South Africa, how have the large corporate publishers conceptualised the development of Foundation Phase (FP) First Additional Language (FAL) literacy materials
    b. How do publishers understand the educational nature of LTSMs?
    c. Which literacy acquisition strategies are considered in devising FP LTSMs?

This study will focus specifically on how the above questions are manifest in FP in FAL in South Africa. It will take cognisance of the issues relating to multilingualism and how mother-tongue instruction, where it takes place, or where it is abandoned in favour of English, has an impact on the design and use of materials.

1.3 Rationale

Poor literacy acquisition at Foundation Phase is the most reliable predictor of poor performance at school and for remaining or sliding into a social situation of either unemployability or unskilled employment post-school (Moats, 1999; Allington & Walmsley, 1995). Current research in literacy acquisition suggests that all but the most severely learning disabled child ought to become literate at a level that ensures that the school curriculum is accessible and reading good literature for pleasure is likely (Moats,

1999). Within the many factors that make up the acquisition process, that of textbooks is an important one – one that has the possibility of containing and supporting a host of elements required by teachers for effective transmission of skills (Ball and Cohen, 1996). There is almost no academic research on the publishing industry in South Africa. The studies that have been done on textbooks in South Africa have focussed mainly on ideological questions[4]. This study will examine whether there are links between textbooks and effective literacy acquisition within a South African context at Foundation Phase level, and if not, whether such links may become possible.

[4] Ideological questions inform LTSMs as a matter of course. However, this study will focus specifically on pedagogical issues.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Studies on the way instructional materials are designed by publishers and used by teachers have taken largely two forms: that of the interaction between teachers and materials and that of the role of materials in underdeveloped countries. These two trends are not entirely distinct. However, the first tends to focus on well-resourced classrooms, well-trained teachers with degrees, and both teacher and student access to a wide range of materials from which to choose. It also assumes a curriculum that is subject to a variety of implementation strategies, and a high level of awareness on the part of the teacher in terms of the role of pedagogy, curriculum content and learner audience dynamics. The latter is fundamentally concerned with investment strategies for reaching greater numbers of learners, so that the curriculum is accessible to more than teachers, improving learner performance, and increasing teacher knowledge – both of curriculum content and pedagogical strategies. Textbooks are perceived as instruments for compensating for lack of resources, (reading materials, parental and/or community academic support in any form), and to complement (usually sketchy) teacher input.

2.2 Overview of literature

Lockheed, Verspoor & associates (1991) quotes Altbach (1983, p315) as claiming: "Nothing has ever replaced the printed word as the key element in the educational process, and as a result, textbooks are central to schooling at all levels". It suggests that the effective use of textbooks lies at the heart of effective learning. As the first introduction learners have to formal curriculum materials and the way these operate in the learning environment, how these are mediated by the teacher is often fundamental to

the way learners will understand and approach learning through text in years to come. (Jager Adams, 2000; Goodman,1984; Allington & Walmsey, 1995, Moats, 1999)

The report by Lockheed, Verspoor & associates (1996) on their four-year "research on effectiveness and efficiency of primary school education in developing countries" lists curriculum, materials, learning time and teaching as the elements that govern in-school learning. Educative curriculum materials attempt to include not only the curriculum content, but also enormous teacher support, that would specify teaching time as well as teaching methodology, in other words everything necessary for effective school inputs within Lockheed, Verspoor & associates's framework. However, in developing countries, teachers often rely on government department worksheets to copy on the board for learners to use and donors and governments are hard pressed to supply even half the learners in a class with textbooks (Lockheed, Verspoor & associates, 1991, p 52, 53; Fuller, 1991, p 116). Empirical evidence through studies in Nicaragua, the Philippines, Brazil, Fiji, Ghana, Guinea showed consistent improvement in student performance when sufficient textbooks were supplied, giving rise to impassioned pleas from those in the education sectors of developing countries to consider investment in textbooks for every student and resources for teachers (ibid, pp 49-57; Abadzi, 2006, p 89,90). Fuller (1991) expresses scepticism about the use of test scores as a measure for the effective use of textbooks or effective teaching, citing the technicist approach to assessment and his observations of recitation as the primary method of learning in developing countries. In a nuanced analysis of what happens in classrooms (he refers specifically to Malawi and Botswana in his analysis) he discusses the pressure developing countries experience to implement Western forms of education for the purposes of trade, industry and participation in religious practices, often creating an uneasy alliance between state's agenda for a modern, Western-style school with learners being prepared to compete in the global market, where there is an emphasis on individuality and enterprise, and schools with traditional values of hierarchical structures, a valuing of traditional culture, language, and symbols (Fuller,1991, p 2-62). This alliance takes the form of technical remedies – standardised testing, teacher evaluation, highly structured curriculum materials which schools implement through having available accounts, registers,

portfolios, lesson plans and strictly routinised processes (ibid, p 63, 64) and reducing educative tasks into discrete and largely meaningless processes (ibid: p 69). This appears to be a reflection of much that happens in many South African schools, according to Bloch (2009, p 114, 115) in his discussion of a "fixed and fragmented theory of knowledge and learning" that underpins much of Outcomes-Based Education. Furthermore, he claims that "teachers simply do not know how to use a textbook and are even less adept at knowing how to get students to engage with books" (ibid. p 102).

Fuller (1991) is not alone with his doubts about the effectiveness of the provision of textbooks. Glewwe, Kremer & Moulin (2007) discuss the failure of textbooks to increase student performance. Instead, analysis of the correlation between textbook availability and students' achievement indicated the students who were academically strong regardless of textbook availability, increased their performance levels substantially with the use of textbooks, but that those students who were average or weak showed no substantial gains through textbooks use. Glewwe, Kremer & Moulin (2007, p 34-36) ascribe the problem to a curriculum that "does not match typical students' needs" and which results in "many students left behind". They suggest remedial education built into the school programme (citing success of such a measure in India) and/or programmes that would allow for the teaching of the curriculum at different speeds, as is done in Singapore.

Abadzi (2006) describing the attributes that textbooks should have in order to counter the kind of practices observed by Fuller (1991) and Glewwe, Kremer & Moulin (2007, p 91) suggest: "rich, extensive explanations and elaboration of concepts with complex sentences; pictures and drawings for the important concepts for dual coding; lots of practice, exercises for elaboration; emphasis on meaning, applications and utility for efficient categorization; linkages with material covered earlier; and sufficient volume for practice and complex language use". They place particular emphasis on additional reading practise in order to provide students with 'different permutations' of words. However, Heyneman & White (1986) warn that there are no generalisable rules regarding textbook design and production and that context-specific programmes seem to be most

effective. They found that a multi-stage approach to textbook development worked best, setting aside about a decade to develop new programmes and implementing changes gradually and side by side with existing materials.

The argument is made that the availability of textbooks dramatically reduces wasted instructional time (Lockheed, Verspoor & associates, 1991, p 48), but that a number of important factors need to be considered: textbooks need to be good (defined as "pedagogically sound, culturally relevant and physically durable" (ibid, p 57)), that teachers need to be trained in the use of textbooks for effective use in classrooms, and that students need to be able to take textbooks home – and that donor agencies and/or government supplies take into account the resultant wastage and replacement costs. Certain warnings are made about the dangers of viewing textbooks as the solution to poor teaching and poor student achievement, namely that the availability of textbooks does not guarantee their use (or their effective use); that other resources like dictionaries, globes, maps, charts, labels, games, etc. are necessary complements to instructional materials; and that the social complexities and political sensitivities of the environment may have a dramatic influence on both the ways in which textbooks are designed and how they are used (ibid, p 49 – 57).

A discussion on the language chosen for the introduction of literacy reveals that the general practice in developing countries is to divide instructional time (about 56 percent devoted to literacy) between a mother-tongue language and an international language – effectively halving instructional time and substantially decreasing the rate at which learners acquire literacy (ibid p 46).

Goodman (1984) and Zwed (1981) discuss the overwhelming importance of context and broader literacy events as part of the acquisition process, leading Goodman to conclude that "no published programme has ever produced the generalisations and concepts that people must develop to read and write. A highly structured instructional system that focuses on mastery of one rule or skill before another loses sight of the complexity of learning written language" (p 324). Learners bring to the acquisition process, varying

degrees of knowledge of phonology, syntax, semantics and linguistic pragmatism, and what they encounter as new are graphophonic and orthographic systems (Goodman, 1984, p322). Consummate skill is required to bring together these spheres in order to coherently develop literacy. Zwed (1981) comments on declining literacy levels in developed countries and the struggle for literacy in developing countries, ascribing this to limited recognition by theorists, teachers, and a host of social institutions of a coherent notion of what constitutes literacy within the social context within which it is pursued (p 421). He outlines five elements as crucial for the understanding of what acquisition requires: text, context, function, participants and motivation (p 423).

Ball & Cohen (1996) take up this challenge and makes the argument that for instructional materials to become a 'site for teachers' learning" (p 8), the social context within which instruction is taking place – incorporating not only the socio-economic and political factors at play in the community that the school serves, but also those elements as they play themselves out within the school as an institution – needs to be understood; additionally, the function of the curriculum content contained in the materials as well as the text itself must be clear; also heightened self-awareness, as well as a sophisticated awareness of possible learner response (in the case of literacy materials through a knowledge of the psycho-linguistic dimensions at work, amongst other elements) is important; and finally the motivation for concentrating on a specific pedagogical technique, and/or use of specific materials must all come together, and be embedded in an understanding of how the learning fits into the curriculum continuum. This, they suggest is possible through the way in which instructional materials might be designed to anticipate and incorporate these issues. Ball and Cohen (1996) place a strong emphasis on teachers' guides and how these may be instrumental in promoting teacher development.

Davis and Krajcik (2005) maintain that existing materials fall far short of the desired concept and design that would create a "terrain for teachers' learning". In studies that examine the way in which teachers engage with instructional materials, what becomes clear is that there are few predictors of the kind of 'shaping' that might happen. Hutchinson & Torres (1994) discuss the liberating effect that textbooks have on teachers

when they have a clear 'map' and that such security comes from highly structured materials (p 324). Hutchinson & Torres (1994) find that far from de-skilling teachers, textbooks become "a means for 're-skilling' [teachers]" (p 325). However, they caution against an idealistic perception of the power of textbooks and make it categorically clear that "a textbook can never be more than a workable compromise" (p p325) – just as everything else in education is a workable compromise. They argue for the recognition of the potential for textbooks to enhance teacher practices, and that teacher development should be built into textbook design (p 326) and quote Prabhu (1992) in suggesting that teachers need to become " 'theorists' who understand not only how, but also why something is done" (p 327).

In an ethnographic study on how two teachers, working in very similar classrooms, with similar training and experience, use materials to implement a new approach, Collopy (2003) observed very divergent patterns of textbook engagement. The teachers, who were required to change their practices through engagement with the materials, manifested almost opposite ways of implementing and using materials, with both 'studying' the materials intensely. She concluded that issues of personal identity (especially, but not exclusively in relation to identity-as-educator) were greatly influential in the way teachers interact and internalise educative materials. Essentially, as Davis and Krajcik (2005, p 4) point out, teachers "have much greater agency over their learning", and are in a position to constantly 'test' their new learning in a situation which requires of them multiple modes of connection with their own learning, making teacher learning "more complex than […] student learning". Davis and Krajcik (2005) make the following five suggestions for inclusion in educative curriculum materials: analogies, models and diagrams that indicate how learners might think or respond to new content; extension of teachers' knowledge of the subject matter, assistance with how to relate units in the overall programme for the year, transparency on the part of publishers of curriculum developers about their pedagogical standpoints – and in this way help teachers "make connections between theory and practice" (p 5), and finally indications of ways in which teachers might want to adapt materials using personal and other resources. Through thoughtful design, Davis and Krajcik (2005) are hopeful that "teachers make changes that

remain true to the essence of the original curriculum materials or decide deliberately to move away from that essence […] rather than inadvertently making changes that act as a 'lethal mutation'" (p 6); the authors stress that materials are more effective if used "in conjunction with other forms of support" (p 9). Additionally designers need to find the fine line between over-prescription and too little guidance in the design of materials and do detailed research into what teachers "want, need and are willing to use" (p 10).

a. Materials specific to literacy acquisition

Four major approaches to literacy acquisition have dominated in the US according to Hall, Prevatte and Cunningham: phonics, basal, literature and language experience/writing (Allinton & Walmsley 1995, p 139). Jager Adams (2000) refers to George Farnham, a 'New York educator', who popularised the notion that "the natural unit of thought and expression was the sentence" (ibid, p 311). Through a process of reading sentences, learners would gradually understand the role of words, and from there the role of letters and sounds. Graded reading schemes had already been produced in the 1920s, and it was Frank Smith's theory that meaning was lost in the discrete learning of words but gained in text, and that through a focus on semantics and syntax, greater reading efficiency was achieved (ibid, p 313). Graded reading schemes (or basal reading materials) form the foundation of literacy teaching in schools in developed countries Shannon, 1989). In examining the debates concerning the effectiveness of basals, Shannon (1989) sketches out three paradigms within which arguments are generally forwarded: the empirical/analytic paradigm (which understands reading and writing as part of a physiological process that can be disassembled, analysed and re-assembled, and which suggests that step-by step instruction through Teachers' Guides make the graded reading methodology manageable and implementable as a result of its scientific basis); the symbolic paradigm (which concentrates on the human interaction that is required for such programmes to work, and where the effectiveness relies on teacher mediation and student engagement within a classroom environment); and the critical paradigm (which examines the socio-economic, as well as power relations that underlie any programme from the profits made by publishers, to the education department's definition of literacy

to the dependency relationships between students and teachers and the specific social backgrounds that govern the various interactions). It is within the critical paradigm that Apple (1986) first suggested that basal programmes had the effect of deskilling teachers – a position that no longer appears to hold much sway and one that has been studied extensively by a number of researchers. Baumann & Heubach's national survey in the US (1996) concluded that "… rather than supporting the hypothesis that basal materials deskill teachers, our findings suggest that most teachers are discriminating consumers who view basal readers as just one instructional tool available to them as they plan literacy lessons" (p 522). This conclusion is endorsed by case studies of teachers building and supplementing basal programmes to accommodate the specific needs of their students (Fawson & Reutzel, 2000).

Reading texts at foundation level are designed to be used in three distinct ways: for the purposes of shared reading (where all students read, together with the teacher, a shared text though they may be on different levels independently), guided reading (small group reading instruction based on appropriately levelled reading books) and independent reading (the final stage of literacy acquisition). Such programmes are the culmination of decades of research into literacy acquisition strategies and combine the various theoretical approaches to reading instruction. (Jager Adams, 2000) sets out the historical progression from learning to read through letters – first the alphabet gradually transforming to a phonics approach – to whole words, which later became phrases or sentences, in order to be meaningful and which eventually resulted in the Whole Language Movement, to current understandings of the described processes as being "simultaneously active and interactive" (p 314) and which requires both a phonics and whole word approach). Scheckle (2009, p 135) describes this as the approach used by "many teachers in the Foundation Phase" in South African classrooms.

And yet, Moats (1999) feels that the majority of curriculum materials (used in the US) neglect the systematic teaching of "speech sounds, the spelling system, or how to read words by sounding them out" (ibid, p.21). She goes on to state that although there is an abundance of texts that provide a variety of stories and cross-genre input, usually well

illustrated, and interesting to children, these books are "very weak or simply wrong when it comes to the structure of English and how children actually learn to read the words on the page" (ibid, p 22) and that "few texts explain with depth, accuracy, or clarity why many children have trouble learning to read or what to do about it. Teachers are often given inaccurate and misleading information based on unsupported ideas" (ibid, p 14). These sentiments are echoed by Taylor, Short, Shearer and Frye in Allington and Walmsley (1995, p 161) and they refer to a host of further research that confirm the link between low phonemic awareness and poor reading progress.

In their assessment of "the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction", the U S National Reading Panel (Langenberg, 2000) studied three areas pertaining to literacy acquisition: alphabetics (sub-divided into phonemic awareness and phonics instruction); fluency; and comprehension (subdivided into vocabulary - , text comprehension - , and teacher preparation and comprehension instruction). Their goal was to establish the value of the various areas and depending on the value, how instruction might best be provided in all of the above areas. Their findings were that phonemic awareness instruction was very important – with learners across a broad spectrum and at a variety of levels, and that it provided "an essential foundational knowledge" (ibid, p 8), but that it needs to be integrated with a full programme that included systematic phonics instruction. A significant finding, and one that would be applicable to most South African learners, was that "systematic synthetic phonics instruction [defined as the explicit teaching of letter-sound conversion and then the blending into words] was significantly more effective in improving low socioeconomic status (SES) children's alphabetic knowledge and word reading skills than approaches that were less focussed on these initial reading skills" (ibid, p 9). With regard to fluency, it was found that a guided oral reading had a 'significant and positive impact on word recognition, fluency and comprehension across a range of grade levels" (ibid, p 12). For the purposes of comprehension, vocabulary instruction is valuable if taught appropriately. A variety of strategies need to be employed that synchronise with student needs. Additionally, the study recommended the teaching of reading comprehension techniques, but found that teacher skill was the overriding component in the successful transference

of such techniques. The techniques isolated as the most important ones were the teaching of students of how to monitor their own comprehension, using cooperative learning, using mind maps, answering questions, generating questions, using story structure for orientation and summarising (ibid, p 15).

As far as South African learners are concerned, Bloch (2009) claims that at Foundation Phase, basic pedagogical principles are lacking. He records "an absence of reading aloud, of continuous writing practice by learners, and use of techniques that would ensure the foundations of literacy and numeracy can be put in place" (ibid, p 102), a finding underscored by the analysis of South Africa's scores in the PIRLS study (Howie, et al, 2008).

2.3 Discussion

No theorist in the field of education would argue that LTSMs are a substitute for poor teaching or a remedy in and of itself for poor student achievement. Neither would anyone suggest that LTSMs stand alone as the instruments that mediate curriculum content or skills acquisition. It also needs to be noted that the existing debates and research in this field have taken place in mainly developed countries that are largely monolingual. Much of these debates and research is relevant and applicable in oblique ways to South Africa, but much of it is not.

The literature does however suggest that not only can and do LTSMs make a difference to the immediate needs of teachers and learners in accessing the curriculum (and in the case of Foundation Phase learners of gaining valuable opportunities for the practice of requisite skills for literacy acquisition), but also that the effective use of sound LTSMs has a long-term impact on learning (Jager Adams, 2000; Goodman, 1984; Allington & Walmsey, 1995, Moats, 1999). Additionally, educative LTSMs, as conceived by Davis and Krajcik (2005) have the potential to fulfil a range of functions, notably in creating access to curriculum content and providing extensive teacher support that would detail teaching time as well as teaching methodology, showing how discrete elements of the curriculum fit together in the larger scheme and how to anticipate future lessons. In short,

LTSMs can become a base from which teachers and learners can negotiate the learning process. Where teachers are receptive and reflective practitioners, educative materials have the potential to facilitate professional development. Teachers who engage constructively with teachers' guides especially, have an opportunity for 'reskilling' themselves, and experimenting with new ideas and alternative methodological strategies (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Prabhu, 1992)

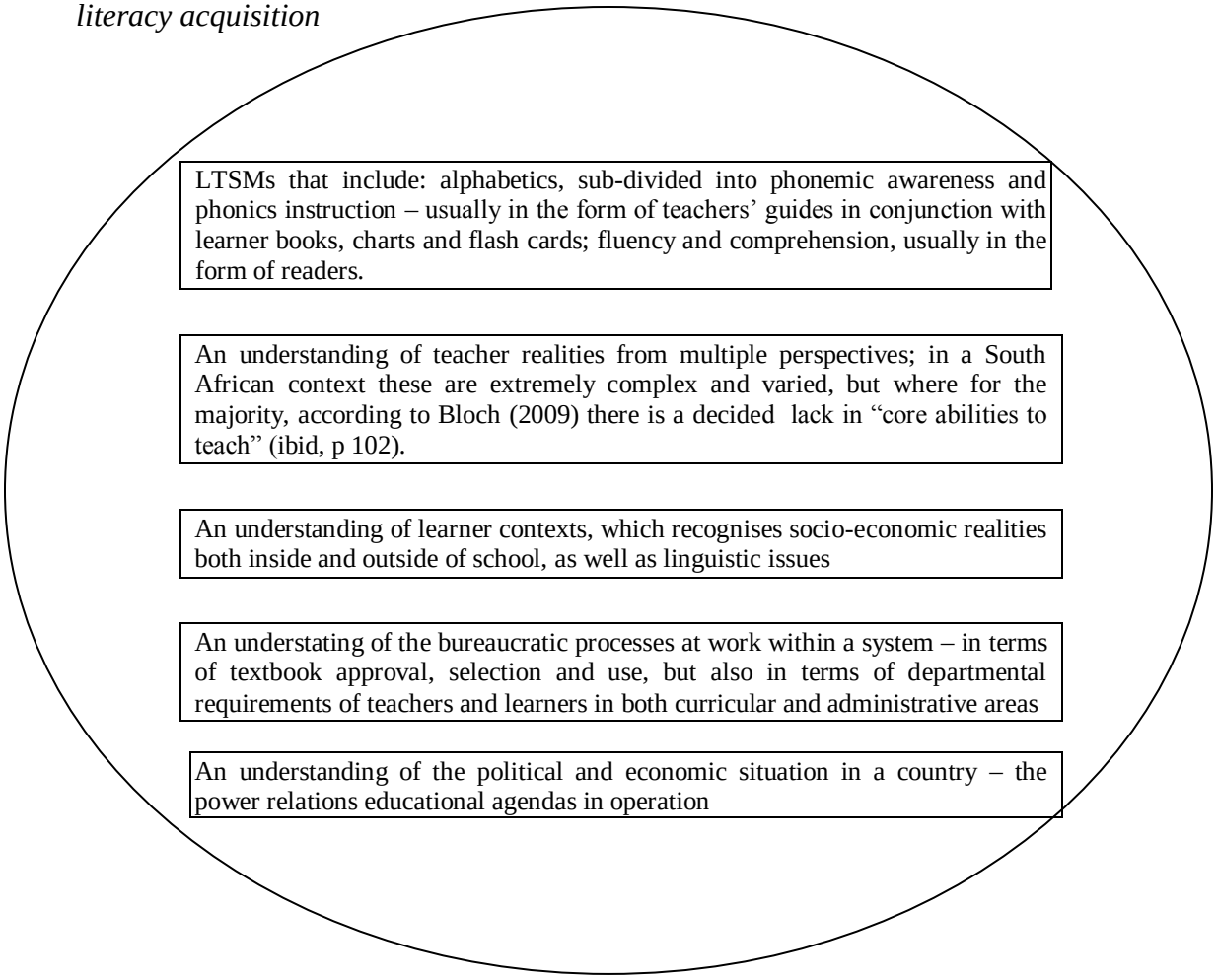
However, underlying the potential benefits of LTSMs is a number of fundamental conditions: the repeated reference to the importance of context cannot be denied. Understanding of demographics, teacher attitudes and preferred approaches, the social and economic environment from which both learners and teachers are drawn is necessary and requires sensitive and skilful representation and management in LTSMs. Not only is intimate and clear knowledge of target markets essential, but strategies by LTSMs designers for embracing and working with those realities are demanded (Ball & Cohen, 1996; Goodman, 1984 and Zwed, 1981). Neither can the obvious and crucial point of implementation being dependent on teacher skill and mediation strategies be ignored. What is clear is the unpredictability of how LTSMs are received and delivered. Fuller (1991) sounds a strong warning of the technicist ways in which LTSMs find form in the hands of inept teachers, and Collopy (2003) shows how even in the hands of skilled and experienced teachers, different interpretations make for very different delivery of materials. However, where materials have been designed in line with the stringent criteria set by those who propose educative LTSMs, at least the possibility for greater teacher competence and better learner reception arises.

In relation to current thinking on literacy acquisition strategies, it is clear that an approach that has a strong focus on phonemic awareness, combined with a systematic synthetic phonics instruction programme is fundamental (Moats, 1999), the National Reading Panel, 2000; Scheckle, 2009; Allington & Walmsley,1995). This needs to be combined with extensive (and intensive) reading, employing all three approaches to reading, namely shared reading, guided reading and independent reading. This would require a variety of LTSMs that have different functions: texts for shared reading, graded

reading programmes for guided reading and a large variety of books that span several genres for independent reading. In order to facilitate fluency, as well as comprehension, teachers need to be guided by programmes that clearly explain the links between activities and the competencies these are intended to teach. These activities need to be varied and employ several strategies for teaching the same competency (National Reading Panel, Langenberg, 2000). Such careful guidance and the availability of substantial texts in Foundation Phase classrooms in South Africa may go some way in addressing the concerns of Bloch (2009) and Howie, et al, (2008) that teachers lack the skills and techniques for teaching literacy acquisition. Additionally, constant awareness of the role of multilingualism needs to be considered in trying to understand problems and issues arising form literacy acquisition practices and the design of LTSMs (Bloch, 2009, p 130,131).

At Foundation Phase level, several components have to be integrated in a holistic programme that recognises the relative importance of each one as well as the ways in which these intersect. The following diagram provides a summary of these components.

Figure 1: Components that need to be considered in the understanding and analysis of literacy acquisition



(Based on Moats, 1999; Allington & Walmsley, 1995; the report of the National Reading Panel, 2000; Ball & Cohen, 1996; Davis and Krajcik, 2005)

2.4 Conceptual Framework

This study will draw on a combination of sociolinguistic and socio-economic ideas to examine the pedagogical efficacy of textbook materials.

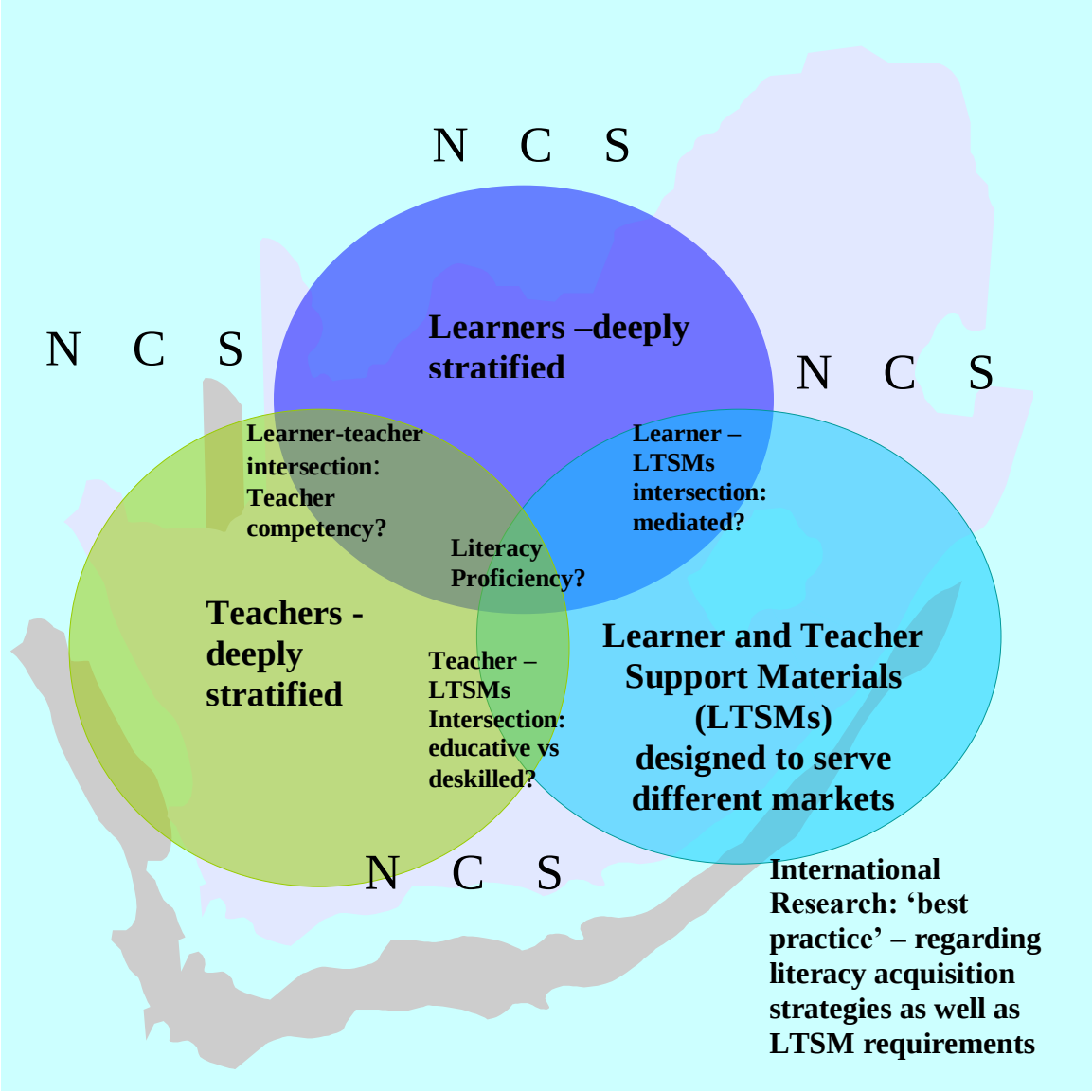
In using socio-linguistic notions, the relationship between literacy acquisition at Foundation Phase and what this entails in terms of best practice and the socio-cultural and socio-economic contexts within which such acquisition needs to take place as these

present in underperforming schools will be explored. A broad definition of literacy, such as that used by the NCS will be employed, incorporating the regular and extensive enjoyment of learners in reading a wide variety of texts, the use of writing to enhance reading practices, and a concerted and thorough teaching programme of phonics, phonology and language structures. The way in which issues of bilingualism (or multilingualism), poor socio-economic conditions, lack of literacy support from home environments and communities impact on acquisition programmes will be considered.

Additionally the relationship between literacy acquisition strategies and what is regarded as most effective – both for transmission by teachers and acquisition by learners will be used to support a critical analysis of government approved materials. This will include the ways in which publishers conceptualise and envisage the use of their materials.

The ways in which the various intersections between teacher-learner-textbook operate will form the basis for making inferences of what constitutes pedagogical efficacy (See figure 2).

Figure 2: *Questions around the intersections between teacher-learner-textbook triad*



3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Research Approach

A qualitative approach was adopted to examine and analyse the processes by which Foundation Phase (FP) literacy programmes are produced by publishers. Selected publishers were asked to give their own description of processes and procedures and discuss the purpose and value of the various elements that make up their Learner Teacher Support Materials (LTSMs).

By questioning participants about their programme environment and the various aspects that determine content and delivery, it was possible to juxtapose and contrast the various narratives and arrive at some common factors that underlie current thinking about the production of LTSMs at FP level as well as distinguish some significant problem areas.

This study examines the hypothesis that curriculum materials are a means for teacher development through the way in which these are constructed, as well as supported through training on the materials. This was viewed through the prism of the social and educational realities of the markets for which these materials are intended. Although it is not possible to draw direct causal relationships between the various elements of the programmes and the recipients of the programmes, cumulative evidence and the strength of particular trends indicated areas in which certain inferences could be made.

3.2 Research Method

Information was gathered through elite interviews and an examination of education policy documents. Kezar (2003, p 297) cites the following as definitive of elite interviews: "The interviewee is known to have participated in a certain situation; the

researcher reviews necessary information to arrive at a provisional analysis; the production of the interview guide is based on this analysis; the result of the interview is the interviewee's definition of the situation (Merton, Fiske, & Kendall, 1990)". Interviewees are persons in power and/or with specialist information who are able to reflect on the power relations and contextual factors of processes under discussion. Such interviews encourage the interviewees' own definition of a situation and of what is relevant to it (Kezar, 2003, p 397). The advantage of elite interviews is that issues may be probed in depth and at length and that key informants are able to provide rich detail from positions of experience and expert knowledge. Commissioning editors who produce materials by managing a team of (or individual) writers and who are embedded in the debates and dynamics within the industry that determine the product and its distribution and after-sales service in the market created ideal candidates for gathering information. Such individuals are part of senior management and, because of the nature of the industry, are almost always individuals with degrees (mostly post-graduate degrees) in the education-related areas in which they work. The research they do in the subject areas in which they work as well as the markets for which they produce, make them exceptionally knowledgeable and ensure that this knowledge is current. Commissioning editors from six major publishing houses agreed to interviews and these provided opportunity for cross-case analysis. This information related to process as well as establishing the attitudes, values and beliefs of those involved in materials production. Through direct open-ended questions it became possible to form broad impressions of a complex environment where complex processes and methods are employed to reach and satisfy particular interest groups and markets.

An insider's perspective gained through personal experience in the publishing industry in the past as a commissioning editor (May 95 – May 96) and a freelance editor, author and project manager (May 1996 – May 2000 and again Jan 2004 to April 2007) created both unique opportunities and an awareness of potential weaknesses that would raise issues relating to validity and bias. Strategies for addressing these included the use of the elements of an emergent design that 'focuses on specific practices within contextual influences and process variations,' as well as the creation of multiple perspectives and

realities, rather than isolated ones (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p 436, 437). Since formal data in the form of confidential company records was not available, other methods were used, almost all in the domain of elite interviews. Opportunity to approach respondents from a position of knowledge allowed for the honing of questions and the directing of discussion in ways that may otherwise not have been possible. Making provision for interviewees to review their comments based on a draft of chapter 4 allowed respondents to reflect from a more considered and less immediate position.

In line with Tansey's outline of the purpose of elite interviewing (2007, p 5, 6), this study attempted to establish underlying context, as well as the theoretical framework within which a particular processes take place. Awareness that interviewees can misrepresent or slant their accounts, or simply cannot recall can limit the usefulness of interviews (Tansey, 2007, p 8). However, for the purposes of this study, the input of the major publishers in the industry, as well as a number of related expert respondents allowed for a greater degree of cross-referencing and verification.

The publishing industry in South Africa is relatively small. There are a small number of international publishing houses, under which a variety of smaller publishing brands are subsumed. Smaller, independent South African publishing houses are few. Inasmuch as six major publishers, selected for their market share at FP level as well as their profile in the education publishing sector, participated in the study, it constituted purposive sampling. The opportunity of the interviewees to confirm and engage with the written account of their narratives increased the validity and reliability of this work.

A small amount of snowball sampling also formed part of this study, in that references to specific writers, trainers, and academics led to further interviews. These were useful inasmuch as it provided a different lens through which to examine pertinent issues that have a direct impact on the research questions.

The aim of this research was to obtain information about highly specific processes, and to uncover some of the causal links between generally poor teaching and learning of literacy skills in FP and the use of LTSMs.

3.3 Data collection Techniques

Interviews lasting between one and three hours were recorded. The list of interviewees was:

Table 1: List of interviewees

Name	**Capacity**	**Place**	**Date**
Botha Debbie Place Jean Joseph Marion	Lecturers in Foundation Phase	University Of Witwatersrand	16 April 2010
Naidoo Linda Beggs Alex	Publishers: English Macmillan	MacMillan offices, Melrose Arch Johannesburg	19 April 2010
Beynon Alison	Director of Phenduka Literacy project	Illovo, Johannesburg	19 April 2010
Pretorius Rebecca Gouws Louise	Publishers: English and Foundation phase materials	Heinemann offices, Sandton, Johannesburg	20 April 2010
Zulu Sabelo	Education publishing manager : Shuter and Shooter	Telephonic interview: Johannesburg, Pietermarizburg	23 April 2010
Viljoen Julie	Publisher: English, Oxford University press	Telephonic interview: Johannesburg, Cape Town	29 April 2010
Langhan David	Director: CSI Development Unit linked to Maskew Miller Longmann	Telephonic interview: Johannesburg, Cape Town	18 May 2010
Delport Sophia	Publisher: English Education Vivlia Publishers	Melville, Johannesburg	24 May 2010
Fivaz Sandra	Author on FP materials for MacMillan, Heinemann, various newspaper groups, and project manager for materials production for Nassou	Oakdene, Johannesburg	21 July 2010
De Jong Debbie	Independent consultant on FP and author	Killarney, Johannesburg	22 September 2010

Where possible, face-to-face interviews were conducted, but some were done telephonically. Semi-structured, open-ended questions around key issues, available to interviewees in advance were used. Key questions were made available to respondents since it allowed publishers to have relevant materials and/or documentation on hand that they might want to include in the discussion by way of illustration; it also allowed in two instances for publishers to have additional staff members present to add to discussion. Questions sent to publishers requested for general discussion about the FP literacy LTSMs they produced, outlining perceived strengths and weaknesses, an explanation of how the various components worked together, the theories of instruction that underpin those materials, the various markets for which these materials were intended and the teacher support that was provided. First-hand testimony by participants whilst using LTSMs to illustrate their points created favourable conditions for openness and enthusiasm and allowed respondents to promote the ways in which they approach LTSM development. It was in the interest of this study to have publishers experience the interviews as positive opportunities to place their views and approaches on record. It was agreed in advance that the company practices that are regarded as industry advantages would not be compromised through revelation in this report.

A draft of the findings was sent to those interviewed[5] for further comment if so desired. Many, but not all, of them responded with amendments and/or requests for exclusion or moderation of certain quotes. Informed consent to use the names of publishers and their publishing houses in this report were obtained. However, one asked for anonymity in certain instances for fear of possible victimisation by selection committees should certain of her words become public.

Interviews with experts outside the publishing process, as well as authors who are not aligned to a publishing house, the use of curriculum documents for referencing purposes allowed for some triangulation to take place. Awareness of how company promotion may produce slanted and biased accounts necessitated counter-balancing views from outside sources.

[5] One interviewee, Sophia Delport from Vivlia, had left the publishing company and could not be reached.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Background

This report seeks to identify the factors that influence Learner Teacher Support Materials (LTSMs) by examining the development of Foundation Phase (FP) literacy materials. The evidence from interviews show suggests three fundamental factors that underlie the process of LTSM development and which in turn determine conceptualisation and development:

1. the role of submission committees
2. publishers' understanding of the markets
3. the production process that takes place after a manuscript has been produced

Of these, the first two factors outweigh the third by far. And although the submission committees have a powerful 'make or break' influence, it is the understanding of markets that preoccupy publishers and authors alike.

The process of LTSM production almost always takes the following form:

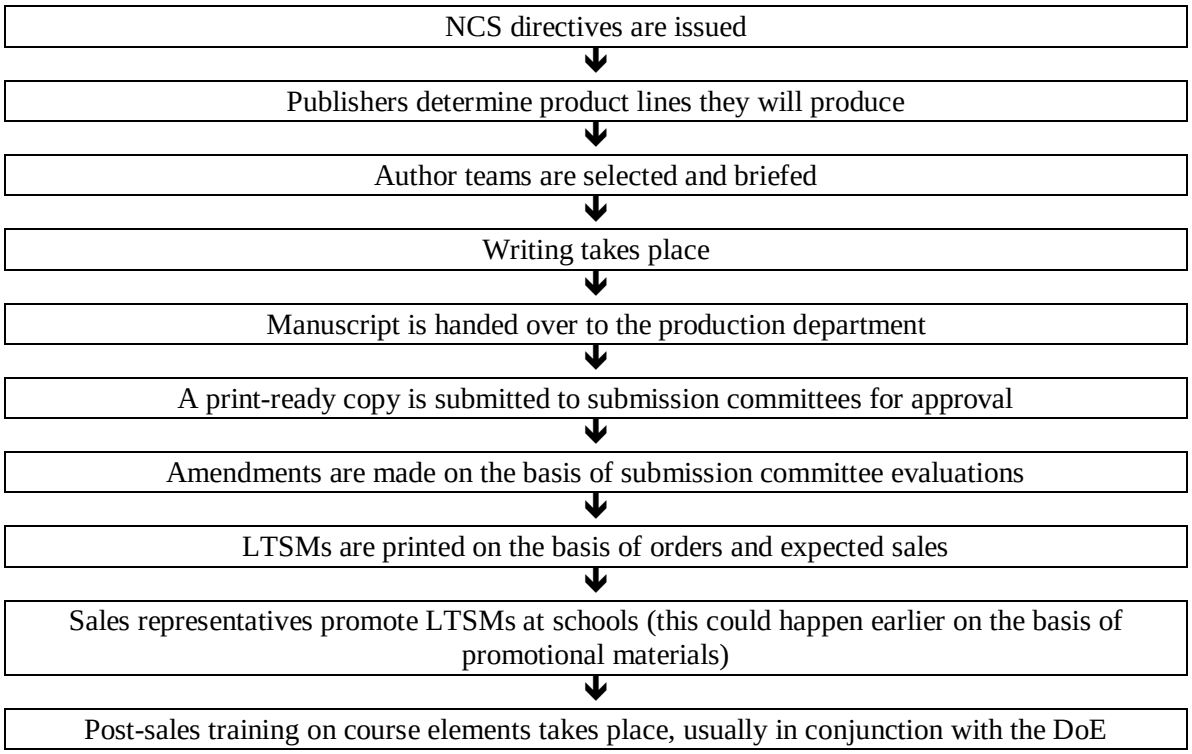


Figure 3: Processes involved in LTSM production

As is evident from this process, and as will be seen from interviews, the role of submission committees is fundamental to the entry of LTSMs into the marketplace. The market itself is studied through a number of mechanisms, most notably through the way publishers and author teams interpret the market, through report-back from sales representatives and the sales figures, and through the training workshops which bring publishers and their market face to face. Budgetary concerns and the quality of editors, type-setters, artists, various forms of materials that require permissions fees, paper and printing costs have an impact on the final product that is produced. All of these factors are framed by the NCS and other government directives – most notably the Foundations for Learning Campaign (DoE, 2008) documents at present, and the awaiting of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document.

4.2 Submission committees

The first hurdle for publishers of any LTSM programme is acceptance from submission committees who evaluate materials on the basis of specified criteria. In terms of the process, evaluators first measure the LTSM against the NCS. If the materials are not found to be "fully compliant" (DBE evaluation sheet of LTSMs; for an example see Appendices B 1, 2, and 3), no further evaluation takes place. Once evaluators are satisfied with compliance, the cost of the product is considered. If not "more than 20% above the average cost of materials under review" (ibid) evaluation will continue, otherwise the LTSM will be automatically rejected. Only then, will evaluators look at content quality, methodology, the teacher's guide, language levels and durability.

In describing the procurement process, the authors of the Cultural Industries Growth Strategies (CIGS) report (1998) remind of the inefficiency and corruption that plagued the system under apartheid – where there were 17 education departments, not only creating enormous fragmentation of the process but ample opportunity for mismanagement. Under the new dispensation, procurement fell to the nine provincial departments – virtually halving the number of officials working on approval and procurement procedures. A single national submissions process for core textbooks has already been established (Naidoo, MacMillan)[6]. The significance of the steady shrinking of governmental evaluation teams is that the power to approve resides increasingly in fewer and fewer hands. Whilst the logic for a streamlined process and cost implications may be argued to be valid, such centralisation makes explicit the contradictions between free market principles and a rigid state-controlled system. Additionally, acceptance of LTSMs would be dependent on the views of a very limited number of readers, narrowing possibilities of what might be deemed acceptable. Within the context of the realities of the majority of South African schools that fall within the same sphere as those in developing countries, reliance on government controlled processes are standard practice

[6] Interviewees will be referenced by referring to their names and the company they represent, or the capacity in which they were interviewed.

and regarded as the most viable strategy for some form of standardised and controllable implementation potential.

The DOE task team report (October, 2009) describes the procurement process as follows:

> While in recent years there have been significant improvements in LTSM delivery, there is on-going discord between the government imperative to develop local entrepreneurs and the need to get quality textbooks efficiently into learners' hands. Textbooks are an additional 30% more costly due to the complex supply chain that exists between the publisher and the DOE. Another challenge is one of legacy and the constitution, where provinces have historical methods of procurement, and are operating within the ambit of their constitutional mandate. A streamlining of systems into two or three options would bring more efficiency into the procurement of LTSM.

Concerns about costs are ongoing and a primary driver (together with the desire to standardise and control classroom activity) for the recent production of government produced LTSMs. Contradictory dynamics between the promotion of low-cost (state produced) materials, the promotion of small publishers (that have high overheads and no international back-up) and gaining access to comparatively vast resources of large international publishing houses – able to produce more durable and colourful LTSMs – create a variety of tensions. Many of these tensions play themselves out in classrooms: interview data suggest that teachers are supplied with government LTSMs[7], but have some commercially produced LTSMs and know about the availability of other LTSMs through the catalogue. They then try to find ways to manipulate their budgets to have access to commercially produced LTSMs. At the same time they feel the need to produce their own materials in order to meet the needs of their specific learners. Teachers are then invited by publishers (in collaboration with education departments) to attend workshop training, often based on a variety of materials that they are not necessarily familiar with. Getting commercial LTSMs into classrooms happens only through the approval of submission committees and then school management teams who consider teacher requests and try to balance these with budgetary constraints.

[7] In 2009, R524.15 million of the education budget was allocated for the production of workbooks by the DBE for literacy and numeracy for grades 1 to 6 learners. These workbooks were intended for schools in quintiles 1 to 3. (www.treasury.gov.za/documents/mtbps/2009/adjustments/Vote13.pdf)

The submission committee process, as it stands currently is far from perfect, as is evident from the way publishers describe it. The cost and time factors of the procurement process for publishers are described as follows:

> When we submit, the books are as close to final as possible – the material would have been typeset and proofread. The Department of Education puts together evaluation panels which are usually made up of teachers. Publishers submit more than one copy of a book – about five or six, so they go to different people. The panels evaluate the books – they either approve, conditionally approve or reject the material. They give publishers reports which highlight the shortcomings and/or strong points of the book/course. If the books are conditionally approved, you will get a chance to re-submit… And that's how it gets onto the department's catalogue. And teachers choose off that catalogue (Naidoo, MacMillan)

Publishers do not always have faith in the submission committee process and feel a sense of frustration with the way in which LTSMs are measured against a tick list or in a mechanistic way. Criteria for acceptance of LTSMs include how the LTSMs meet the curriculum requirements; the quality and representivity of illustrations; the relevance and quality of photographs; the use of terminology – so that it corresponds with curriculum terminology, but also for political sensitivity ensuring respect for race, gender, cultural differences, and disabilities. (See appendix B for an example of an official document specifying the criteria used for the evaluation of LTSMs). In 2009 – for the first time – the submissions committee also insisted on biographical details of all the authors involved. Publishers are not always confident of the evaluation process. A publisher who wished to remain anonymous for fear of possible victimisation by submission committees claims:

> … it can be a really flawed process. Because it depends on who they are getting to evaluate and how much time they have and last year we had evaluations which were appalling – if you look at the evaluation reports … sometimes you worry that they are not looking at the actual content, but just looking for little things.

The concern expressed here suggests that the quality of members of submission committees is uneven and not sufficiently informed. In many instances, committee

members will point out petty errors, and fulfil the task of proof-reader rather than serious assessor.

A rating system is used, where a score of 1 is very weak and a score of 4 is very good. Often conditional approval is given with lists of alterations that the committee requires before the LTSMs will be placed in the catalogue (see appendices C 1, 2 and 3 for examples of such a reports).

Once NCS compliance has been established and once selectors are satisfied that the LTSMs fall within a specified price bracket, consideration will be given to content and the quality of the product. Under content quality, issues such as the relevance to South African learners, the accuracy and currency of the content, the presentation and mediation of the content, the terminology and whether sufficient information and summaries are given are considered. Methodological criteria look at learner-centeredness, whether learner contexts have been considered and whether there is a variety of activities, including the appropriateness of the level and implementability of these (Departmental evaluation sheets, available as appendices C1, 2 and 3).

The significance of the evaluation is that LTSMs can be rejected without further evaluation if there is not full compliance with the NCS (or whichever most current policy document governs the evaluation process, for example, the Foundations for Learning document is currently used as the guideline requiring compliance for FP materials). Publishers understand compliance to mean the presence and specification of how and where Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards are covered in the LTSMs. Such compliance is the first and foremost criteria to be fulfilled by publishers in order to ensure any investment costs (and for authors any royalty payouts) are not forfeited before there has been an opportunity for market entry at all. Langhan (MML Foundation) frames the dilemma in the following way:

> One of the problems with the textbook approval process is that publishers have to ensure that their authors write to, and comply strictly with, curriculum 'guideline documents' that are not always well constructed. If textbooks submitted for review

> do not comply directly, and quite literally, with every detail of the curriculum 'guidelines', they are rejected. This puts all publishers under huge pressure to submit textbooks that reflect what the state wants, rather than what subject-specialist authors think might be the best way to do it. There is always a tight-rope act there. Some of the weaknesses you find in modern-day SA textbooks can be ascribed to that.

And as one publisher, who requested anonymity in relation to the following quote, lamented: "We wanted to try something different, but we had to abandon it. It was simply too risky". It is clear that the submission committee process creates a large measure of risk aversion in publishers and that, even where it is felt teachers and learners may benefit from LTSMs with a different appearance or slant, such projects are not considered.

> Textbooks revisions are based mainly on the requirements of review committee reports. In my own experience, about 50% of the time the feedback from review committees has been useful and constructive, while much of the rest has incorporated baffling misinterpretations of the curriculum guidelines, petty nitpicking, or has been completely useless. I have regularly been shocked by how 'out of touch' with the curriculum and teaching and learning realities review committee requirements have been. Under these circumstances, combined with extremely tight deadlines, publishers are forced to work with what they can to comply where they can, and ignore the rest. (Langhan, MML Foundation)

Given that submission committees are made up largely of teachers, there is a strong case to be made for teacher education which creates informed awareness and understanding of how to evaluate LTSMs.

The lists of criteria that form part of the evaluation reports are decidedly important for publishers in their briefing of authors and also to create a product that will be inclusive, user-friendly and appealing to teachers and learners. Indeed, the criteria are regarded as pedagogically sound and fair, but as with the NCS and other policy documents, interpretation would be subjective and/or could be superficial.

In theory, teachers then select off the catalogue and submit their choice of LTSMs to the school management team for further approval. Such approval would depend on available funds. Teachers are dependent on marketing representatives from publishing houses for an introduction to LTSMs. Langhan (MML Foundation) explains:

> The market is not well-informed. Generally, in disadvantaged schools, the teachers don't choose the books they want to use, the school does. In other words the school management team make decisions on behalf of the teachers, and these decisions are often influenced by District officials. The textbook selection process is largely driven by the department. If teachers are lucky enough to have seen some sales representatives from different companies, they might know what their options are, but the choice is seldom theirs and they more often than not end up receiving more of the books they have been using for the last ten years. Those teachers who do have the option to select their own textbooks often adopt a 'lucky dip' approach to selecting from the catalogue. A lot depends on how effective sales and marketing teams are. Not many choices are made on the basis of how good or well-known the authors might be.

The size of the catalogue (running into thousands of titles) is testimony to the size of the publishing industry as well as available funding for the viability of so many titles.

An examination of the buying patterns of schools and teachers is beyond the scope of this report; however, it would appear from comments of publishers and educationists that the selection of LTSMs is haphazard and inadequate:

> Often there is not enough money, and then teachers just use whatever they can get. Then there is a mish-mash of different course components. We obviously hope they use it [single LTSM programme created by a publisher] properly because we try to offer as much support as possible. (Begg, MacMillan)

More worryingly, Langhan (MML Foundation) describes how "learner and teacher support materials that schools actually have are severely under-utilized and are often stored in stock rooms, rather than distributed to learners" in his report on the impact of the School Development Project on eight primary schools (p 10).

Publishers and submission committees are bound by curriculum directives. This is not a simple or consistent task, given the frequency with which these change and the often dramatic new direction these will take.

a. Curriculum directives

First amongst all criteria used for acceptance of LTSMs by submission committees is curriculum compliance. The NCS, but more importantly for Foundation Phase at present, the Foundations for Learning document (which specifies 'milestones' for each term for each level), form the basis of what needs to happen in the classroom. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for Foundation Phase is in the process of being created, and will become the next document to dictate what needs to appear in LTSMs and how teachers teach.

Curriculum directives dictate *what* needs to happen at classroom level, and therefore determines what is produced the publishing industry. In addition, the processes by which LTSMs are approved and purchased through government appointed submissions committees, provincial departments that govern expenditure and school management teams determine how and *when* production takes place and *where* (i.e. in which province) it will be targeting its products. All publishers interviewed emphasised the centrality of the curriculum as the basis for how textbooks are conceptualised. What differentiates one LTSM from another is weighting of elements in the NCS. According to the promotional materials of Nasou Via Afrika: "Although all our materials comply with the National Curriculum Statement, they interpret the curriculum with different nuances and foci". Langhan (MML Foundation) claims that:

> The most important factor influencing how textbooks are written is the prescribed national curriculum. It determines the education theory, ideology, philosophy, content, approach to conceptual development, the pacing of classroom practice, and the approach to assessment embodied in textbooks. Publishers have no choices about these issues. What makes the difference between one book or series and another, is how well-informed the authors are about their subject, about who they are writing for, and about the realities of the teaching and learning contexts that teachers and learners find themselves in.

There may be some contestation regarding the choices that publishers have, and whether it is the degree of expertise on the curriculum that determines the outcome of LTSMs, but publishers will not risk materials that veer from the curriculum. This is strongly evident

in the way authors are briefed and in the way decisions are made regarding LTSMs. Of importance, though, is that publishers agree that the curriculum (certainly the NCS, but also the Foundations for Learning) is "very open" and allow for a great deal of freedom of interpretation.

> …I like the curriculum because it leaves scope for experimentation, while at the same time pinning you down on specific skills."(Delport, Vivlia);
>
> "I would look at the NCS, and then pick out the themes in there, and that is where one would start, and then writers would come up with funkier themes, but it would fit into what have to be covered. And you know, if you read the NCS, you get a lot of ideas. I just think the NCS is something to work with – to get something better. I don't think you can take it at its face value. .. It does allow you a lot of freedom."(Fivaz, FP LTSM author);
>
> "The curriculum binds you from top to toe. But how you interpret it is up to you. (de Jong, FP consultant and author)

The introduction of the Curriculum 2005 in 1997, while met with some positive response for its radical departure from the previous curriculum, was subject to fierce criticism on a number of scores (Armstrong, 1999). These ranged from doubts about implementability to more fundamental reservations about the pedagogical desirability of what was termed a largely 'behaviouristic', 'mechanistic' and 'fragmented' approach, where the "means-end OBE stance treated knowledge as instrumental" (Armstrong, 1999 referring to Brogan and Brogan, 1994, Glatthorn, 1993, Iserbyt, 1994, McKernan, 1993, McNeir, 1993a and Schwarz, 1994, p 10).

Problems with both the implementability and some of the pedagogical principles of curriculum led to revisions – some substantial, as in the creation of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (2000 – 2002) and others smaller as is evidenced by the plethora of curriculum documents on National Department of Education website. The constant stream of revisions has had a major impact on textbook production. Not only does it mean that LTSMs have had to be revised repeatedly, but also that this has had to be done at 'breakneck speed' (Delport, Vivlia) to fit in with the school year and buying times.

It might be argued that the NCS conforms to a 'slogan system' – what Apple (1986) defines as having the following three characteristics: areas of vagueness in order to accommodate the views and interests of powerful groups of individuals; areas of specificity to offer practitioners some hooks into the proposals; the 'ability to charm', so that readers may come away with a sense of 'imaginative possibility' (ibid, p 115). And yet, in what Apple then proposes as more substantial and desirable, the same criticisms might be levelled. He suggests tentatively that the following ideas be embedded in curriculum: critical literacy, knowledge and understanding of the diverse intellectual, cultural, and scientific traditions; ability to use knowledge and skill to create and pursue one's own interests; to make informed personal and political decisions; and to work for the welfare of the community (ibid, p 189, 190). Much of the intention of the NCS has embraced exactly those principles and it might suggest that it is in the nature of sophisticated curricula to be 'slogan systems', which attempt to be all things to all people and to create sufficient vagueness and openness to allow for fairly diverse interpretation.

It is puzzling then in the face of such 'openness' and scope for diversity that FP LTSMs from different publishers are (superficially, at least) all so similar. According to Fivaz (author on several FP LTSMs): "I found that publishers use more or less the same approach wherever you go". One possible explanation is that publishers have established that submission committees are swayed by particular appearances and features in LTSMs. Another is that markets have made clear what they want, although this is not borne out by interviews. Market research mainly takes the form of a 'deficit-model' – trying to establish where teacher weaknesses lie and trying to address these. Prior to the NCS, formal LTSMs for learners, similar to those used in later school phases, were not part of Foundation Phase, according to Place (Wits Education School): "I think there was a reason years ago that we didn't introduce textbooks until as late as grade 3, … because they really weren't essential and they didn't work that well." An entire new market opened up for publishers with OBE when Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards had to be covered meticulously at FP level and this could be done through the introduction of workbooks. Although it is very clear that the FAL markets have become

dependent on worksheet-based workbooks, these and the rest of the programmes seem to be publishers' interpretation of the NCS and what they think markets need.

South African curriculum developers had intended interpretation of the NCS to be constructed by teachers. However, one of the reasons for the revision of the curriculum was the clear and unequivocal pronunciation of teachers of their inability to do so. The task was taken on by publishers with gusto:

> … Publishers are trying to simplify the curriculum again until they are able to call a spade a shovel…The curriculum was implemented before the infrastructure was in place for it. The reality on the ground does not fit the curriculum as it is at the moment. Group work in large classes does not allow for optimal learning. Teachers are still not properly trained. It [the curriculum] was written by people who hadn't been in a classroom for many years and they forget what the level of learners is … It's not presented in a teacher friendly way. (Delport. Vivlia)

The implication of what Deport (Vivlia) is saying – one that is echoed by almost all publishers – is that the complexity of official documentation has led to a situation where LTSMs focus on explanation and clarification. The 'interpretation' is effectively a simplification of these documents so that implementation can take place. Such detailed and careful rewriting has become a substitute for any engagement with educational concepts and critical discussion of content – in other words the prerequisite for 'educative' (versus 'schooled') type of materials that Ball and Cohen (1996), Davis and Krajcik (2005) and Prabhu (1992) promote[8]. Whereas there can be little doubt of the usefulness of the kind of support discussed by Delport (Vivlia) and other publishers, that is exactly what LTSMs then are – supportive tools for implementation purposes – not educative materials that may lead practitioners to extend their own understanding of educational issues and debates. And while the NCS and other policy documents create the façade of intellectual sophistication, this sophistication is in no way matched by the majority of its implementers, and therefore requires agents who can create the extraordinary simplification (provided by LTSMs) that need to take place.

[8] Educative materials serve to foster a critical perspective with which teachers may engage, whereas schooled materials aim to be a blueprint for the transmission of the curriculum.

And yet, teachers are not necessarily receptive. As Langhan (MML Foundation) explains:

> The Department of Education has been sending out mixed messages about the role of textbooks since OBE was introduced. Because remember textbooks, in the bad old days of apartheid, were regarded either as the bible that you had to follow unquestioningly, and so there was a kind of 'slave' relationship to the textbooks; and/or they were really, really badly written. They were substandard books, often translated from Afrikaans, and were perceived to have contributed to the failures in black education. So there was a huge amount of suspicion about textbooks as an instrument of Apartheid and as a means of de-skilling teachers. So it is not surprising that with the introduction of OBE, the underlying message – explicit and implicit – was that 'good teachers' don't rely on, or depend on textbooks. They create their own materials'. So teachers have been under huge pressure not to rely on textbooks. As a result, in the more advantaged schools we have seen an enormous increase in the use of worksheets in the last 15 years. Every school that can afford it has a photocopy machine or five, and every learner's book has pages and pages of handouts, and worksheets stuck into their books. Sadly, in the more disadvantaged schools, the unintended consequence has been the withdrawal of textbooks from classrooms. This has often resulted in a marked increase the time teachers spend transmitting their own knowledge to their learners, coupled by a dramatic decrease in the amount of reading and writing learners are expected to do. Sadly, the mistrust of textbooks from a previous era, has unintentionally contributed towards undermining the intentions of the new generation textbooks that have been written to support teacher to implement the new curriculum.

Concern about effective teaching and learning is revisited annually with the release of matriculation results, and more recently with the release of international results on the literacy and numeracy levels of grades 3 and 6 learners. Strong calls for the systematic and methodical use of LTSMs that are integrated and supportive of the curriculum and teachers, have been made by government departments:

> To quote from the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign, effective schooling requires 'teachers, textbooks and time'. Research from around the world indicates that sufficient access to good textbooks amongst learners improves learning outcomes and provides an impetus for exploration and additional learning beyond the classroom. Currently access to textbooks is insufficiently monitored. … The ultimate aim should be that every learner has access to at least one textbook per learning area (or subject) that he or she can take home after school, even if at the end of the year the book must be returned to the school. (No. 33434 Government Gazette DBE, 2010)

At present, new revisions are under way. Reported in the May 2010 Curriculum News magazine put out by the Department of Basic Education (DBE), task teams have been appointed to amongst other tasks oversee the development of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements, provide guidance on methodologies and guidelines on textbooks and advise the Minister on any strategic matters to strengthen curriculum implementation (p 6).

To date, publishers have taken on the task of providing teachers with the wherewithal for curriculum implementation, operating within the strictures of submission committees, cost factors and their own interpretation of what they believe the market needs.

b. Time frames that constrain the development of LTSMs

As a result of government processes in curriculum re-design, publishers have to create materials at unreasonable speed:

> A significant factor is that, more often than not, curriculum documents are released to publishers extremely late, allowing publishers very little time to interpret the curriculum, brief authors, manage the writing process and get books produced and printed for submission to textbook review committees. Over the last 10-15 years, it has not been uncommon to have less than 6 months, to get the job done for submission purposes; and then to have even less time to revise and print books that include the corrections required by textbook review committees in time for school orders or deliveries. Typically what has happened is that each time the Department has announced a curriculum revision, it has also provided a revision timetable that includes a more reasonable allocation of about 12 months for publishers to prepare their textbooks. However, to my knowledge, there has not yet been a time when the Department has delivered completed curriculum guidelines on time. As a result, publishers have become accustomed to preparing themselves to gear up to do 12 months of work in 3 or 4 months or less. So, it needs to be understood that systemic factors within the Education Department have a significant impact on what is possible for publishers to achieve within the available time. It will be interesting to see whether this pattern is continued with the introduction of the new CAPS curriculum guidelines from 2011 onwards. (Langhan, MML Foundation)

And according to Delport (Vivlia):

> We had to do a submission last year in 4 weeks, and we submitted 700 titles at the end of the day. In one case we produced a series from conception to final product all in 4 weeks. You don't produce what you would like. Normally you have 3-4 months. Ideally you need at least a year. At the moment there just not time. I don't think the department is going to come right on that score. We have become used to these impossible deadlines.

De Jong (FP consultant and author) has the following to say: "Every project I have been involved in has been such a rush and had such tight deadlines it has not allowed for any real research or discussion or any input from experts."

Publishers then set out to do the following in LTSMs: provide interpretation of the NCS, comprehensive teacher support, interactive, exciting and effective learner activities and a template that will satisfy submissions committees across a variety of diverse markets. However, deadlines that are patently unreasonable militate against the quality of LTSMs and careful research. The simplest way to meet time frames is that LTSMs follow blueprints that have proven to be effective in persuading submission committees of the suitability of materials. When following unreasonable deadlines, publishers generally adopt 'tried and tested' recipes for planning and producing LTSMs, recruit authors, editors and artists that can work at speed and under pressure. Where possible input gleaned from market research is incorporated. In companies with easy access to international product, examples of these will provide the basis for attempting to establish what is done elsewhere. The quality of LTSMs inevitably suffers under the strain of timelines that not only do not allow for careful research and/or trialling, but also forces publishers to use as the primary criteria for production personnel, those who deliver quickly and efficiently.

4. Composition of author teams

Although there are some Foundation Phase courses written by a single author, the norm is to use teams. Not only does this (usually) assist with the meeting of tight deadlines, but it brings on board, the experience of different teachers and/or authors, providing a richer product (Naidoo and Begg, MacMillan). However, Fivaz (author on several FP LTSMs)

is critical of large teams and feels that efficiency is better ensured with a team of two to four authors who understand each other and work well together.

Clearly the target market will determine the kind of authors chosen. This will mean authors with some knowledge and/or experience of those markets are invited to write. If it proves to be difficult to find suitable writers, consultants will be used to represent those markets. What generally transpires is a mixture of authors, with differing views, writing styles and approaches to both the curriculum and teaching. Occasionally such a mix is a deliberate strategy. Langhan (MML Foundation) described his experience as an author, between periods as a publisher, thus:

> It was an interesting process. Different teams of authors wrote for different Phases and Grades. The overall plan, driven by the publisher, was explicitly based on prevailing curriculum requirements, which included a strong emphasis on integration across the curriculum. My co-author and I were selected, by the publisher, for the different but complementary perspectives we held about instructional theories. For instance, my views were fairly closely aligned with the new curriculum's learner-centred, teacher-mediated, constructivist approach; while my co-author's [views] were more closely aligned with a more traditional, structuralist, grammar-based approach. In collaboration with the publisher, we aimed to integrate the two styles so that the learners would benefit from exposure to both. As it turns out, this was the right thing to do because successive curriculum revisions have attempted to re-introduce the more structural elements that my co-author brought to the project, and that had been largely omitted from the earlier versions of the OBE curriculum guidelines. This example illustrates that publisher and author contributions can be significant in 'helping' the Department to more fully interpret and even develop initial curriculum guidelines over time. However, I am not sure how consistently and meaningfully this can be done under severe time constraints. The number of compromises that publishers, their authors and editors have to entertain during the manuscript development and production stages in order to deliver within extremely tight timeframes significantly reduces the possibilities.

Langhan (MML Foundation)'s observations can be read in a number of ways: he reveals how, at a time before the revised curriculum, traditional approaches were forced into marriage with OBE in LTSMs. This might have been to accommodate both departmental requirements on the one hand, and teacher needs and the other. However, it is also possible that another more subtle process took place, namely that the materials which strove to bring OBE closer to teachers, at the same time persuaded departmental officials

of the benefits of compromise. That the department eventually bowed to the wisdom of publishers (according to Langhan, MML Foundation) is testimony to the techniques publishers found to make the curriculum palatable for teachers and allowing departmental officials to reassure themselves that OBE was being implemented since OBE-approved textbooks in schools gave 'proof' that such teaching was taking place. The reservations he expresses about the way in which time frames and editorial processes may negatively impact on LTSMs and how a lack of consistency may manifest in LTSMs are ones that critics of LTSMs such as Place, Botha and Joseph (Wits Education School), readily use.

Delport (Vivlia), in choosing authors uses the following criteria:

> My authors must have classroom experience. But also to bear in mind that teachers are not generally good writers. I will often get materials and then work with it with an editor to get it right. The writing of a course is largely a group effort. I like to work with imaginative and creative thinkers – you can always rein them in; they must be lateral thinkers. We try to get specialists in our teams – we try to work in author teams and get the involvement of subject advisors as consultants; this is not only a good political move, but it also makes contextual sense.

Implicit in Delport's description is the power of editorial staff to modify author input. It is interesting to note that copyright for LTSMs reside with publishers, not authors, and that this gives publishers the right to rework and revise authors' writing in ways that suit them. Delport is explicit about the role of departmental officials in the writing process. This kind of consulting is a lucrative sideline for subject advisors, and the appearance of such names on the cover of a book gives instant credibility in the eyes of submission committees. The use of consultants is wide-spread – not necessarily governmental staff, but experts in any of a variety of fields. Often it is to ensure a 'voice' within the texts for different constituencies. Viljoen (OUP) explains:

> When we choose authors we look for consultants to act as authors. They may be people who are curriculum experts, language experts, writing experts or people who know about the market and its needs. Then we select those who are usually leaders in the field, either as subject experts, phase experts or just fantastic teachers.

Fivaz (FP LTSM author) was recruited through "word of mouth; "Another author recommended me for certain projects. I never sent a CV through to anyone; and I have worked with Nassou, Heinemann, MacMillan and Clever Books."

In large teams much time can be spent on debate. Whereas this can enhance the product, it is often a luxury publishers feel they have to forego, because of time constraints. Criticism of the untested nature of the materials, have led some publishers to rethink their stance on trialling. As a stopgap measure, publishers like Heinemann have teacher teams they can refer to on hand in order to review materials as these are being produced.

Submission committees have begun to insist on biographies of authors. Naidoo (Macmillan) assumed this was to ensure that people with sound credentials were involved in the writing of LTSMs, but it also serves the purpose of proving representivity of market sectors and forces publishers to consider the kind of expertise they were using. It is not unusual for publishers to use 'good writers' rather than subject specialists, and then for consultants to review the materials for accuracy of content:

> What many publishers try to do when commissioning manuscripts for the largely First Additional Language market, is to recruit multi-skilled teams which are also demographically representative. So for example, such a team might include: two good writers (ideally subject specialists, but not always) who can generate good manuscripts in a hurry but may not be familiar with the learners they are writing for; an African language speaking teacher/subject specialist who knows the learners the team will write for but may not necessarily write very well in English as a consultant; another subject specialist who is also not necessarily a good writer as consultant; and occasionally, if time allows, an additional language specialist as consultant/over-writer. It's not always possible to commission the ideal author team, but publishers do the best they can within the available time. (Langhan, MML Foundation).

What emerges from publishers' comments on the composition of author teams is that largely as a result of time constraints, but possibly also because of budgetary concerns, author teams are put together in the most pragmatic of ways. Although creativity, classroom expertise, understanding of the market and curriculum knowledge are important criteria, the ability to work to deadlines and to fulfil the specific specifications

of submission committee evaluation sheets are the essential driving forces behind the successful completion of manuscripts.

4.3 Understanding of the markets

In devising LTSMs, publishers make decisions regarding markets to be catered for, which in turn determine the numbers of series to be produced. Market research is based on teacher and learner profiles. Neither the teacher nor the learner target markets is in any way homogeneous, according to all interviewees. Learner constituencies are characterised not only by different economic and social factors, but also different language groups, as is made clear explicitly and implicitly by the NCS. Teacher constituencies have all the abovementioned characteristics, as well as a historical background in training and teaching which predisposes them to particular teaching styles and methods. Viljoen (OUP) describes the extensive research companies undertake to get a sense of their markets:

> We are currently busy with a research project concerning African languages, reading schemes and English FAL. We use paired interviews and classroom visits to see how teachers use [LTSMs]. It is very interesting to look at the [market] samples that we choose. For instance, for the African languages research we choose rural and urban samples in different provinces where those languages are most spoken and for English FAL we choose where our top sales come from. … We need to know what the product must be like, what target user it is for (the teacher or the learner), and for which part of the market it is being produced for. In the past we have also undertaken a market segmentation exercise so that we could develop differentiated series for different parts of the market. …It was a three year process. This process helped us enormously to differentiate our product.

The complexity created by having such differing and often contradictory markets, have been addressed in a variety of ways by publishers. Most produce different series for different markets, although as Begg (MacMillan) explains, series within a company are 'in competition with each other' and provide ways of appealing to different provinces, different socially defined markets and different teacher preferences. Several series, sometimes for first language, but decidedly for FAL will be produced by the large publishing houses, for example the following are all FAL series for FP literacy: *Successful English FAL* and *Headstart* (OUP), *Breakthrough to Literacy* (Kagiso as part of MML*)*, *Bridge to English*, and *Day by day* (MML), *MAPEP*, *English for All and*

*Clever Books (*MacMillan) and *Viva English* and *Literacy for the Nation* (Vivlia). Nasou Via Afrika have more than ten series under their various brands.

a. Language questions

At Foundation Phase, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) provides stratification through a language policy that makes provision for English Home Language, English First Additional language, and African languages as home languages for Languages of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) purposes. Language policy through the NCS translates into three spheres that also correspond roughly to the economic and social positions of various South African sectors. Langhan (MML Foundation) explains:

> Publishers try to identify clear markets in order to develop suitable products for them. So they will develop a particular type of product for the ex model-C and private school market; another type for your average government school; and a completely different product for disadvantaged and under-resourced schools where English medium instruction is a big challenge for both teachers and learners. Naturally, the curriculum plays a central role in determining how to cater to the needs of different market groups. Whereas the Christian National Education System discriminated between markets by providing different syllabi for different population groups, the Outcomes Based System does not. It provides the same curriculum guidelines for everybody. It distinguished between the different markets largely by whether learners are learning through their Home language, a First Additional language or a Second Additional language. Naturally, publishers try to select author teams who are able to meet the product needs of these different markets.

English home language is used by private schools and some 'ex-model C schools'. These schools are historically white upper middle-class suburban government schools, now integrated but still governed in large part by the ethos established under the previous dispensation. Learners are taught mainly by proficient English-speakers. Given the historical background to this environment, learners can expect to find well-resourced schools, teachers who are generally better skilled and smaller classes. The composition of these classes is not homogenous, but many learners will have English as a home language. Those learners whose mother tongue is not English will generally have had a fair amount of exposure to English prior to starting school. The awareness of privilege,

pressure to uphold standards, as well as sometimes problematic race, language and class relations, all form part of a complex set of relationships that form the basis of teaching and learning. A cursory examination of promotional materials on LTSMs generally reflect a sanitised version of reality where publishers take great care to represent all race groups, to have equal gender representation and to include a variety of cultural groups. Furthermore inclusivity is foregrounded and learners with disabilities will find themselves represented in the pages of story books and workbooks. No ambiguity exists of the class and economic expectations of these learners. They are being prepared to be entrepreneurs, professionals and intellectuals. Assumptions are made in the LTSMs of access to and availability of resources. Often international materials and computer software would be included and regular references to technology and science are the order of the day. According to Botha (Wits Education School) these are the only classrooms in which graded reading schemes will be found and teachers will employ an arsenal of teaching techniques (not always necessarily successfully) and have at their disposal all manner of remediation resources. Parental partnerships are generally assumed and learners take home books with the expectation that adults other than their teachers will listen to them read and oversee any writing that may be set. Parents are generally employed, and where the children of domestic workers attend schools in this category, there are still usually positive role models in the form of adult readers and literature in the home environment where these learners reside.

In the case of African-language speaking learners in a rural or semi-rural context where the language they speak predominate and is the language of the classroom**,** learners are exposed to literacy acquisition in two languages – one familiar and one 'foreign'. Teachers and learners are both aware that the 'foreign' language (English) is to become the future LoLT and therefore requires being privileged and foregrounded, but that its alien nature militates against this. A legitimate emphasis on African language literacy acquisition becomes the classroom reality: "So certainly there is the following of the Departments instruction to give mother tongue instruction at Foundation Phase; there is a huge vernacular buy." (Pretorius, Heinemann) Reasons for the emphasis on African languages (rather than equal attention to both an African language and English) include

teachers who have a lesser command of English than their own language would favour the African language; the probable awareness of the research that learning in one's own language results in better long-term academic performance (which is given wide and fairly constant media attention and regularly espoused by government spokespeople and academics) would act as legitimisation for an emphasis on mother-tongue literacy acquisition; time constraints and the administrative workload that the NCS and provincial education departments insist on is likely to result in an emphasis mother-tongue teaching and learning and a more technicist approach (in the form of filled-in worksheets) for English. This would almost certainly lead to an uneasy relationship between the two languages and would result in all manner of ambiguities and conflictual learning and teaching experiences. Cultural, psychological and academic problems relating to African language teaching would present themselves as a result of the status of the language in question, the resources available and the knowledge that the language would have to be abandoned as the LoLT within three years. These problems would present themselves in a more overt way to teachers and a more covert way to learners.

Publishers are caught in this vortex, whereby they attempt to produce materials that would satisfy both submissions committees and teachers by providing courses both in mother-tongue and English. Mother-tongue courses are often adaptations of English courses, and African language LTSMs and readers often use the same illustrations as English materials, but have revised content or story lines in order to create a fit with African language acquisition requirements. Phonics programmes would overlap in two languages, but it is unclear how (and whether) phonemic awareness is taught in African languages – an area that would differ vastly from English. According to Fivaz (FP LTSM author), as well as Botha, Place (Wits Education School) and Joseph (Naptosa) teachers are unfamiliar with many technical aspects of language teaching.

The availability of additional exposure to reading materials in African languages is poor. Not only is there a scarcity of story books and non-fiction at the level of Foundation Phase – although there would be more at this phase than at later phases – but there would be a virtual absence of any incidental and /or environmental signs of literacy in the

language of acquisition. Publishers acknowledge the lack and most publishers claim to be in the process of producing readers – initiatives largely as a result of a gazetted directive and the Teaching Reading in the Early grades Handbook (2008), a curriculum document that makes reading for pleasure compulsory and places emphasis on the availability of a variety of reading material.

> We don't link it [readers being produced] specifically to a reading period. However the gazette in terms of the structure obviously does that by talking about that half an hour of independent reading a day. It was as a result of that that we developed those *Spot On* readers. So it's not particularly linked because of the broad use of readers in the classroom… despite the government's comments about having readers and kids having access to books, they still have a massive shortage or where schools are using very very old readers… There was a lot of feed back from teachers in the market around not having the stuff to read, meaning for enjoyment. (Pretorius, Heinemann)

The introduction of a daily reading period in Foundation and Intermediate Phase has implications beyond the supply of many reading books. Beynon (independent consultant and reading expert) works with non-readers in the intermediate phase and discusses the lack of appropriate reading material:

> Literacy hour [reading period] must not make children feel bad! There should be a gentle easing into literacy … When kids get to grade 4 it is assumed they can already read, but it is not so. They can't. Intermediate teachers are not taught to teach initial reading, so they are stumped.

De Jong (FP consultant and author) who has worked extensively in ex Model C schools spoke about how "intermediate phase teachers keep asking 'what is going on in FP?' Learners are not adequately literate." There appears to be a large gap in the market for readers that are simple enough for age groups beyond very young readers and that can continue as part of graded reading for older readers.

In terms of the goals of the NCS, African language speaking learners would acquire 'stepping-stone' literacy in order to move into the language of the economy and social advancement. At the same time, attempts at preserving and validating African languages

and fulfilling constitutional provisions, African language acquisition would be seen to be valuable. According to publishers and educationists, teachers are largely unable to provide the change-over from mother-tongue to English as a result of their own limited knowledge of English – a sophisticated measure of which is required in order to transfer skills in the field of phonics and phonemic awareness and to understand the theoretical and methodological principles that are explained in TGs.

Classroom sizes are such that textbooks are often shared,[9] readers are usually not removed from school property and parents are rarely able or available as partners in education to listen to their children read – in either language (Place, Wits Education School).

English First Additional Language (FAL) is used as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in classrooms where learners come from many different language backgrounds, and for many of these learners there is no single language that can be said to be their 'home language'. As Fivaz (FP author) suggests: "The merge of languages make it very difficult to discern what mother-tongue really means." English is the common language – but one that neither learners nor teachers necessarily have a sound command of. Reports of teachers unable to communicate with learners in their first language and unable to teach competently in English abound, creating enormous strictures on the learning process (Place, Wits Education School). Using English as the LoLT does mean that all the teaching time allocated for literacy acquisition in the NCS would be spent on one language. However, this language will be English FAL and it would be within a context of much miscommunication and painstaking progress as learners and teachers attempt to overcome communication barriers. Cultural and psychological factors that infringe on the teaching and learning process would relate to the abandonment of first languages and the adoption of English as an *additional* language, rather than something that is given central and pivotal status – although, in effect, it needs to play such a role. The additional language status persists throughout a

[9] According to 2010 SACMEQ study done by Ross there has been a slight decrease (from 45.5% to 45%) in the access to reading textbooks for South African Grade 6 learners between 2000 and 2007.

school career, even when initial literacy acquisition takes place in English. According to Place (Wits Education School) concerns exist about the standards of LTSMs produced specifically for the FAL market, as well as the robustness and quality of formatting and illustrations that some of these materials may have. Furthermore, as a result of serving 'disadvantaged' learners and having limited resources, some of these schools become the recipients of wealthier schools' cast-offs, creating libraries of antiquated, and often unsuitable books (Botha, Wits Education School). Criticism of the way in which English FAL courses are devised whereby an obvious effort has been made to target 'rural' schools and 'additional language speakers' comes from educationists who fear the 'dumbing down' of LTSMs. "[Teachers need] … good materials – not cheap materials, we look at a lot of the stuff – it is almost dumbed down – and there is a sense of not having the best illustrators, the best authors …" (Place, Wits Education School).

Learners in these schools are surrounded by English media and the environment is suffused with English signs and the use of billboards, etc. This contributes to learners' early awareness of English as the dominant social language and the language of commerce and the economy.

What these different language policies signify to the publishing industry at Foundation Phase level is that the English Home Language courses are generally seen as having a degree of homogeneity, whereas English (FAL) courses need to be subtly refined so that two different markets may be straddled. Multi-lingual urban schools that introduce literacy in English (FAL) have a different profile from schools (which may be urban or rural, but tend to be mainly rural) that introduce literacy in an African language, but teach English (FAL) alongside it. The result is that almost all major publishers will have two English FAL courses – one targeting a more rural market, and one targeting an urban market. Most of the major publishing houses have African language courses at Foundation Phase level. Most of these courses are translated adaptations of an English course, but the translation process is fraught: "we have used teachers in the past but it can be a disaster – it is easier to use translation agencies in terms of the processes involved but then the translator doesn't always understand education terminology or

know the context of the classroom." (Begg, MacMillan). The majority of publishers will use the same artwork (as a cost-saving measure) for readers across languages but with different stories to match the visuals. However, Delport (Vivlia) maintains that this is a poor policy despite the cost implications. "… We don't use translations – you never get the timbre of the language quite right. You need original stories to capture the language better and you're not forced to make the language fit the picture."

What is clear is that the complexity of the South African language landscape makes detailed research and careful thought imperative in the conceptualisation and development of LTSMs – neither of which, according to publishers' own acknowledgement, has been done sufficiently.

> *Breakthrough to Literacy* aims to develop literacy in African languages. It is regarded, by many Primary School educators and educationists, as one of the best and most effective African language programmes available in South Africa. However, it is not being used as widely as it could be because so many Primary Schools are choosing English as the medium of instruction from Grade R or 1. This is in part due to perceptions about the power of English to provide future economic opportunities; and partly due to a steady decrease in number of schools with homogenous language groups among their learners. Where schools are using an African language as the medium of instruction in the first three years, many seem to prefer to use materials that reflect a more formal, grammar-based approach, than has been encouraged in the more learner-centred, communication oriented OBE curriculum guidelines…
> … There are programmes that attempt to build deliberate bridges between early African language literacy and English as the medium of instruction. A good example is the *Bridge to English* series, which follows on from *Breakthrough to Literacy* as part of a deliberate bi-lingual model of language development. What makes this series interesting is that while it complies with the broad curriculum guidelines for progression from Grade to Grade, and between Phases, it places a very deliberate emphasis on drawing on the Foundations of African Language literacy established in Grade 1, in order to develop English literacy skills. It also incorporates a deliberately eclectic approach, integrating a highly structured phonics and grammar approach with a strongly guided communicative and cross-curricular approach. Given the extremely tight timeframes for developing LTSMs already discussed above, I don't think many publishers and authors have the time to construct courses as carefully and deliberately as this. (Langhan, MML Foundation)

Pretorius (Heinemann) agrees that implementation of English from grade one alongside an African first language may problematic: "… how that happens from an actual classroom point of view I don't know. It is a mystery. "

English (HL) and African languages (HL) are presented in the NCS as having equal status. Publishers use English HL LTSMs as the basis from which African Language LTSMs are adapted. There are sound financial reasons for doing this, and publishers would argue sound pedagogical ones too. The expertise employed in the conceptualisation of English HL, which draws on a long local and international tradition would thus be transferred to African languages, albeit with the careful reconstruction of areas where major linguistic differences occur. However, it is clear that the construction of African Language LTSMs are almost always derivative. And this is the case because it is an easy cost-cutting measure. It upholds the practice whereby advantaged markets where resources and financial clout reside are provided with LTSMs that coincides with privilege and power, effectively continuing patterns that were prevalent under apartheid education.

The NCS conceives of English FAL as appropriate for learners who require strong support in the learning of the language so that it may become their language of learning and teaching (DoE, 2003b) RCNS English FAL, p 4). The rationale makes plain the mechanistic nature of the exercise of English FAL literacy acquisition. LTSMs are built around the notions of 'strong support' and acquiring a LoLT. In this publishers draw on second-language principles that are used globally to inform LTSMs for learners – either in English contexts, where integration needs to be accomplished, or in developing countries contexts, where English (or for that matter the any of the colonial languages seen as economically advantageous for the population) is learnt under severely limited and disadvantaged conditions. In either of these categories learners required to be 'uplifted'. Their status is that of aspiration and they are seen as coming off a base of weakness. In a South African context, this kind of differentiation places FAL learners once again in positions of inferiority – ones that were there in previous generation through different mechanisms in the form of different education departments for different

races. LTSMs, although at pains to present a face of non-racialism, non-sexism, and the variety of other politically sensitive categories made mandatory by the submission committee tick list, is nevertheless perpetuating inequality through the way it interprets the NCS. What Place (Wits Education School) terms as the 'dumbing down' of LTSMs is what publishers call 'step by step' support and this stands in stark contrast to the LTSMs produced for English HL.

b. The urban/rural divide

Publishers, academics, education department officials and teachers themselves are unanimous in recognising the complexity of teacher realities. The phrase that 'South Africa cannot produce one-size-fits-all type of materials and/or training' was voiced repeatedly. There is recognition of the rural environments where teachers may have several grades in one classroom, a very limited command of English, and very limited resources.

A refrain in the writing of English FAL is to write simply and clearly – bearing in mind 'rural teachers'. Caution must be exercised to avoid experiences and realities that do not apply to rural learners. Fivaz (writer on FP courses) explains: "Certain themes have to be avoided, like 'the sea' because many learners have never been to the sea, or even 'the zoo', because that is an urban phenomenon?"

Place (Wits Education School) in describing workbooks that parents have had to pay for, and where teachers then feel obliged to use the material, gives the following example of how authors may alienate their market:

> … and it's a page with my name and my address. What is your street name? What is your house number? Well, excuse me – we have neither a street nor a house. But the teachers try and force them to fill in these pages. There is some shocking, shocking stuff that is being OKed and schools are buying it.

There is of course a difference between insensitivity to a particular social reality and including material that may be foreign to a learner. However, both these instances signify the restrictions within which writers have to conceptualise content. Workbooks present tasks and activities that draw on pedagogical principles that demand that knowledge be built on prior knowledge and those learners are able to identify with the content on the page. For example, Beynon (Phenduka Literacy Project) explains: when you ask a child to read a story [or any text] that he/she has no knowledge of, you are asking them to work at two levels of difficultly: a) the level of the story where there might be unfamiliar concepts, vocabulary, and b) the actual decoding. … for example if you introduce the idea of a dragon and children have no understanding of what a dragon is – you need to at least break down that area of difficultly." Both Fivaz and Place are suggesting that publishers need to avoid those areas of difficulty by avoiding that which has no relevance for or is unfamiliar to rural learners – a policy publishers try to embrace. This has an important implication: rural children are exposed to LTSMs that cover very narrow bands of subject matter that do not take them beyond a very impoverished reality. Workbook formats focus narrowly on specific skills, especially in the way submission committees require learning outcomes and assessment standards to be followed and presented. In addition, they present (or try to present) content that represents the reality of learners. On the other hand reading books serve the purpose of expanding horizons and conceptual understanding of realities beyond a specific environment. There is a strong case for arguing that especially in disadvantaged communities, modern, exciting, colourful readers that deal with many different topics and situations should be available in abundance. Preserving social divisions based on economic and/or geographical lines through presenting them with their own reality only does little to prepare learners "to sustain, develop and transform identities… [to give] access to other views…" as the NCS would have it (DoE, 2003b, p 5). None of this is to suggest that rural learners be plunged into LTSMs where they may feel alienated. Clearly, strategies need to be devised by publishers that would aim to transform disadvantage into equality.

It needs to be borne in mind that publishers often have a particular market in mind, but that schools within that market might have materials that have not necessarily targeted

them. As has already been mentioned teachers and/or school management teams do not always make informed or considered choices about the materials they order. Whilst publishers may produce materials aimed at the rural market, promotional materials will not specifically mention that. This is in part to avoid that sales of a product be limited, but also to avoid branding certain materials in a particular way that may appear lesser or limited in some way.

According to Viljoen (OUP):

> We have two differentiated series: The *Headstart* series follows a step-by-step approach. It supports teachers in developing their understanding about the methodology and the whole language approach. The *Successful* series is aimed at the market that can handle more, that is well equipped and has access to resources outside the classroom. The *Successful* series has a broader approach, provides a basic lesson structure and gives teachers many ideas.

This is evident in the way these series are presented to their markets. Compare for example the promotional material used by Oxford University Press for the two English FAL series they produce.

> About *Headstart*:
>
> This easy-to-use series offers step-by-step support for learners and teachers. The excellent planning tools and well-presented assessment tools allow the teacher more quality teaching time. Written in accessible language and visually appealing, *Headstart* books can be trusted to deliver excellent results in the classroom. Available for Grades R to 9.
>
> *Oxford Successful* is a powerful series that is rich in content. The strong progression in content supports learners wanting to excel. The well-designed planning and assessment tools guarantee success for teachers. The books have comprehensive guidance for mixed ability classes, and a wide variety of teaching aids. Once a teacher has used *Successful* books, this series remains their choice for success in the classroom. Available for Grades R to 12.

It requires an understanding of the codes used by publishers when promoting LTSMs and where ‘step-by-step support’ means ‘intended for undertrained and unconfident teachers’

and where ‘excellent planning tool and well-presented assessment tools’ stand for underequipped classrooms and ways in which teachers may feel insecure about establishing a reasonable standard’. ‘Accessible language and visually appealing’ makes clear this is for teachers who have a poor command of English where both the text and the visuals will act as support to facilitate understanding.

The promotional material for the *Successful* series is more explicit in whom it is targeting, but it is easy to imagine a rural school feeling that this would be the material they would prefer to use. Add to this the complicating factor that not all publishers divide the market along urban/rural divides.

c. Teacher approaches

Publishers also differentiate their markets along the other lines.

> *Viva English* is intended for your teacher who is old-school, who likes a more conservative approach. Yes, it is learner friendly, yes it is activity-based and yes it is interactive, but it’s got a more formalised approach, in terms of situations in the classroom. *Viva English* is more difficult – not necessarily better than, it is presented in a more complex way. It is popular in model C and independent schools but also very popular in rural schools. It is so defined, it defines the teachers’ role so clearly, it is like taking them by the hand and doing a step-by-step thing. More didactic, but does exactly the same thing as the other series. Some people’s heads work like this and they are more comfortable working like this.
>
> *Literacy for the Nation* has a more creative approach – more communicative, more based on deductive learning, and lots of facilitation. It’s for a teacher who likes facilitating, is extrovert, wants to experiment, that doesn’t mind doing extra research who handles group work well – teachers are not properly trained in the skill of doing group work. Selling patterns are unpredictable. The market is NOT divided into rural and urban at all. Both series are popular across markets. The teacher is mediator – therefore you need to write to ensure the teacher is comfortable. We looked at types of people rather than places. (Delport from Vivlia Publishers)

In making a different distinction, i.e. traditional versus modern teachers, Delport is pointing in large measure to pre- and post OBE teacher training. The use of terms such as *conservative, formalised,* and *didactic* in association with traditional teachers, she is

pointing to vast numbers of teachers who have found it difficult to come to terms with and implement teaching strategies prescribed and associated with OBE; whereas concepts such as *communicative, facilitation,* and *group work* are clearly associated with OBE. In terms of and understanding of the teacher market, this analysis adds a degree of subtlety to the more conventional (but clearly also legitimate) distinction between urban and rural teachers, where the differences would relate to external factors, such as environment, resources, class sizes, language issues, etc.

d. Conceptions of teachers

Several factors inform the conception and creation of LTSMs. At Foundation Phase, in the field of literacy, learner responses to materials are considered throughout, but because learners are unable to negotiate these without teacher intervention, teacher responses and interaction with LTSMs are of primary importance. In order to address teachers, publishers create a specific mix of LTSMs that would relieve teachers of a measure of administrative workload (through the provision of completed sets of lesson plans), satisfy authorities that specific work has been covered (through the provision of workbooks that follow specific time lines that would allow for the achievement of milestones), teachers' guides that have teacher education as its function, and training in the form of workshops, or in some instances longer-term whole school support projects.

i. Capacity

Publishers are in agreement that teachers are overburdened with administrative work and therefore need a TG and course that makes it very easy for them to teach. One publisher provides a school with all the lesson plans for all three learning areas for the entire year if they purchase the full set of materials.

Pretorius (Heinemann) claimed that teachers are more interested in the TGs than the rest of the materials in the course. And yet, budgetary constraints often lead to the purchase of

materials without the TG. The TG is intended to give maximum support. As Begg (MacMillan) said:

> Part of me is slightly horrified at how much support is built in – really a lot. Bolded text is literally what they teacher says – of course it is a suggestion, but there are teachers who follow this exactly. And where suggested answers are given – if teachers follow that slavishly, it becomes dangerous. They are flummoxed or say it is wrong if learners give different answers. But a lot of the time it does work.

Begg illustrates the problematic dichotomy between LTSMs that intend so much support that they become in Apple (1986, p36)'s term 'teacher-proof', and the way in over-compliance with such support can lead to the exact opposite of what publishers had intended – poor teaching that reinforces inaccuracies. It points vividly to the weakness of a strategy that believes LTSMs can replace (or adequately provide) teacher expertise.

According to Naidoo (MacMillan):

> Components [of a course] will work thematically. But they have to have the TG in order to make the programme work. Often there is not enough money, and then teachers just use whatever they can get. It leads to a mish-mash of different course components. We obviously hope they use it properly because we try to offer as much support as possible. If used according to TG the course is very carefully structured to cover everything within a carefully constructed time frame and all the assessments are available to create a comprehensive overview of how the learners are coping.

What is expressed here by publishers from MacMillan applies broadly. Repeatedly publishers would explain the levels of support and the kind of coherence they have built into their materials. The indication of time frames to be used for activities can be down to ten minute intervals. Assessments are provided to be given on particular days after particular instruction in a particular way. The intention is clear: efficiency, uniformity, measurable activity. The Foundations for Learning document requires these fine specifications, and the introduction of external testing at various levels throughout a school career will undoubtedly reinforce a 'teaching to test' (or milestones) ethos.

In the writing of TGs, authors are advised to write "at about a grade 10 level – and that I thought was still too high", according to Fivaz (writer on several FP materials). Several publishers echoed the sentiment that teachers were either unwilling or unable to engage with materials directed at them, although one publisher (Pretorius from Heinemann) was adamant that TGs were a key element in selling a programme. Proficiency in English, as well as the density of the materials may be issues that prevent engagement with TGs, according to Langhan (MML Foundation), Naidoo and Begg (MacMillan) and Viljoen (OUP). Training programmes are largely a response to concern about implementation of programmes and familiarising teachers with how the content of TGs could assist them.

> One of the reasons that teachers don't use teachers' guides is because many teachers struggle to read English. Another is that many teachers are intimidated by the density of the text in many teachers' guides, which are generally not as user friendly as learner books. As a consequence, we have found that many teachers lack the confidence to engage with the teacher's guide. However, with a little encouragement, explanation and mentoring, teachers do develop the confidence to engage with their teacher's guides. For example, we have worked with teachers who have literally opened a teacher's guide that has been in their classroom for five years, for the first time. Once it becomes clear that teacher's guides actually do contain really useful information and supportive teaching guidelines, the motivation to use them more frequently, appears to be more or less automatic. What is surprising though, is how many teachers claim that they do not understand the role of teacher's guides, or how to use them; and how many teachers appear not to have made any effort to try to find out how useful they might be for themselves … (Langhan, MML Foundation)

According to Botha (Wits Education School) resources are available, but teachers cannot access these, even though such access would be available in the form of TGs if programmes have been purchased or donated:

> I'm coming very much from the perspective that there are schools that have unbelievable resources, and teachers have no idea how to use them effectively, and that's been something I've observed on a number of occasions. Disadvantaged schools, public schools in Ennerdale that had wonderful materials donated to them, and they are gathering dust… The resources are meaningless if the teachers don't know what to teach, why they are teaching it and how… Now that one [reference to a specific LTSM] is fabulous …in the hands of teachers who understand. But where they do not understand it's a failure. Not because of the programme but because of the teacher.

Publishers give careful and intense attention to the formulation of teachers' guides at FP level where these form the basis of the programme. It is clear that increasingly, thought is given to making TGs more accessible and user-friendly – either through the appearance of the books themselves or through publisher intervention which introduces the use of the TG directly to the teacher. Equally important to publishers is that LTSMs be used in the way these were intended – having created courses that are extremely well-defined and meticulous structured. As an author of grade 7 materials Beynon (Phenduka Literacy Project) found the following in the way her materials were used in classrooms:

> What shocked me is that we had devised the materials so systematically – but teachers were jumping all over the place. On the other hand one doesn't want to police teachers. But at the same time you want to get teachers to use materials properly. That comes with well-trained teachers. But teachers need textbooks that give them the principles of best practice.

The lack of proficiency in English on the part of teachers creates major problems for publishers. Teachers are teaching English literacy, but are unable to access the instructional guidelines of the TGs. TGs need to be written in ways that acknowledge the professional standing of teachers – both for the purposes of submission committees who want to see materials that address an adult market as literate and proficient, but also because teachers themselves would presumably be insulted by TGs that are written at the same level as the learners they are teaching. Viljoen (OUP) reported on a research project done by the company to establish how teachers use LTSMs in the classroom:

> It was very interesting to see how some of our rural teachers could not understand our questionnaire or some parts of it; we had to adapt the questions and explain them. However it was easier for some of the urban teachers. The use of the materials themselves is interesting. During the past few weeks we've undertaken classroom visits where it was clear that the well-trained teacher could use all the components for the reading scheme, whereas the other teacher just fumbled, despite a step-by step explanation in the accompanying teacher notes that goes with that specific reader. So, it is all about teacher training and what they have become accustomed to and what they haven't used before.

Publishers agree that teachers are often unable to interpret and/or implement LTSMs and there is a general lament that TGs are not read – or not read closely enough with

understanding. However, most feel that despite the density and the fact that TGs have not generally been user-friendly, these contain enormous potential for teacher development and assistance. At least one publisher, Pretorius (Heinemann), disputes that teachers are uninterested in TGs, although it was unclear whether she was speaking about a particular market segment:

> …also over the years from the department the message that's gone out is that you're not empowering teachers if you give them a TG that had everything in it. But obviously that philosophy did not speak to what was actually happening on the ground level with teachers in a classroom that needed – the support that came through a TG. So, although you make nothing on a TG (I think the only TG we would make anything on is the classroom maths) but what I always say is that we sell through the TG. And if you talk to people who are much more knowledgeable, those who are in marketing, they would say that a teacher would pick up this book and say: 'yea, this is nice, now show me the TG'. And that is literally how they look at the books themselves.

TGs are written with the explicit intention of being supportive and the educational input for teachers is informed by an interpretation of the NCS, teacher expertise and the input of subject advisors. Although the notion that the regulation of TG use is impossible, publishers do recognise that creating TGs that can be read and are inviting is something they need to attend to.

ii Practice

In the discussion above, the implicit assumption is that complete LTSM programmes are available and used. This appears to be the exception rather than the rule. The 'worksheet environment' of FP classrooms (Pretorius, Heinemann, and echoed by other publishers and academics), widespread teacher training that encourages the creation of own materials, remnants of departmental policy that discouraged the use of a single LTSM programme in order to accommodate the specific needs of learners in various geographical areas, financial and budgetary factors (mentioned by most publishers), ignorance about what is available (Langhan, MML Foundation) and how it should be used all play a role in the creation of classrooms with no single, coherent programme at

work. The desirability of having a single programme as the basis for curriculum implementation and how such a programme may be selected is of course subject to debate; however, this debate, as was highlighted in the literature review, revolves around informed choice and high levels of competency to make those kinds of choices provided the availability of comprehensive programmes that fulfil the needs of teachers and learners. The Department of Basic Education has embarked on the creation of workbooks in key subject areas for all grades in an attempt to facilitate coherence and accessibility to materials. This initiative has had a decided impact on publishers:

> …obviously we have our own ideas of how they [LTSM programmes produced by publishers] should be used in the classroom but that in itself is complicated by the material from the department because we obviously can't send the message of don't use the material from the department or the material from the department is bad or it's not bad but it has gaps, has shortcomings and that kind of thing because we obviously just can't send that kind of message about the department. (Pretorius, Heinemann)

Worksheets created by government departments and the promotion of specific programmes in order to create uniformity and measurability is testimony to the nature of classrooms that fall into categories described by Lockheed, Verspoor & associates (1991) – under resourced in every respect so that textbook provision is seen as the quickest and easiest way to provide some structure. The distinction made by Kampol (1998) between the 'schooled' teacher and the 'educated' teacher whereby a schooled teacher is deskilled – one that lacks autonomy over teaching and decision-making processes and one that falls into the category of "simply march[ing] to the tune of the state" would suggest the majority of South African teachers could be classified as deskilled.

iii. The deskilling question

Two not very dissimilar definitions of a 'deskilling' are presented in academic literature on LTSMs. Apple defines 'deskilling' as having 'technical control' only (over the teaching process and for the implementation of curricula) and he argues the LTSMs are created specifically to provide a technical handle on the teaching process (1986, p 35). Kampol expands on this definition by reflecting on the distance that occurs between

teachers and curricular processes and the alienation they experience as a result of the large degree of compliance that is enforced by government departments in a variety of ways, through standardised testing and also mandated LTSMs.

Publishers are aware that a technicist and mechanical approach to the curriculum runs deeply through their LTSMs, especially for the FAL market. In attempts to temper this (in some cases) or to ensure more efficient implementation (in other cases) they find avenues to connect directly with this market through training.

The involvement of publishers with teachers and classroom realities plays an important role in shaping LTSMs. It provides significant insights for publishers into their market in a variety of ways: pedagogical (where problems with implementation become visible); linguistic (where it is clear miscommunication or poor understanding is present); and cultural (where there are cultural mismatches – in the broadest sense, so that it includes geographical, gender, racial, economic, and political domains). There is general recognition that support cannot be a once-off workshop or a marketing exercise. However, in reality, unless a large company has the financial resources to set up a separate arm devoted to systematic support, as is the case with MML and Heinemann, MacMillan, and OUP, sporadic workshops are the order of the day.

Most publishers employ 'specialists' to run such workshops – ex-teachers or occasionally authors. One publishing company has employed 'a remarkable team' as their marketing team who are able to market and run some workshops, but who will call in the services of other specialists when the need arises (Delport, Vivlia). But the norm is that marketers are involved with pre-sales promotion and a separate group of personnel run workshops based on 'skills and content and not on specific materials' (Delport, Vivlia). According to Langhan (MML Foundation, 2010) "there are two elements of 'training' generally provided by publishing companies. First, the sales and marketing pitch which generally emphasizes how LTSMs meet curriculum requirements, and which is too frequently a substitute for training; and second, some companies have training teams that are intended to help teachers to use LTSMs meaningfully".

As a result of time constraints, little trialling of LTSMs happens, although it is increasingly recognised by publishers as an important part of the production process and a number of publishers have recently embarked on some trialling. Additionally, most large publishers have sustained programmes to ascertain how materials are used in classrooms. These vary from research institutes (Begg, MacMillan) to long-term school support projects (Langhan, MML Foundation; Viljoen, OUP), Research and Development departments, and a variety of relationships with departmental officials for the running of skills-based workshops (Zulu, Shuter and Shuter; Pretorius, Heinemann; Delport, Vivlia). Certain publishing managers will visit classrooms:

> "I spend time in schools. I sit in classrooms as part of my research. Authors are sometimes too close to the work and I will do trialling if there is time" (Delport, Vivlia)

The state makes direct use of this publishers' resource and collaboration is standard practice:

> The department is quite reliant on publishers to do training, often because of a shortage of skill in terms of their own people or because the subject advisers themselves are in some places very good at putting together workshops, organising workshops … it will vary from province to province, and subject advisor to subject advisor, but they are pretty good and pretty reliant in some sense as well in having the expertise of publishing training at their disposal as well. Because they want to be seen to support teachers but they don't necessarily have the manpower to do it themselves … if you are talking about HEET [Heineman Educator Empowerment Team] training, almost all the schools that are receiving training are section 21 schools. There's little or no workshopping – I mean there's presentations that are done at the independent schools level and the ex model C level as opposed to workshops. The workshops are very much for that kind of market… (Pretorius, Heinemann)

The ambiguity between 'meaningful' use of LTSMs and ensuring that teachers are able to understand what is expected of them, i.e. the difference between educative and unskilled use of LTSMs run through the discourse provided by publishers on their training interventions. Training on how to use LTSMs effectively is done in cycles in the school development project undertaken by the MML Foundation. Langhan (MML Foundation)

explains: “Every part of the cycle focuses on ‘how to’ use the teachers’ guide together with a LB and/or WB, and explaining and demonstrating how the authors have written them so as to be integrated. Often there is a big difference between what teachers experience on a training course and what they are implementing in their classrooms. This is why ongoing cycles of independent implementation supported by regular classroom-based monitoring, reflection and coaching can be extremely helpful in enabling teachers to use LTSMs more and more effectively in their classes.” For a report detailing the process, see appendix D.

A long-term systematic, holistic programme appears to have greater impact on teacher behaviour, a strategy endorsed by academic educationists: “Over time … over time, and at the moment what’s happening here in the country – it’s the quick fix mentality. ‘Oh we will run a course’. It doesn’t work. Or we will flood them with this new notion of materials as text books and model lessons’”. (Joseph, Naptosa); “For me the answer is taking whole school development and investing in getting a school up and then a next school running and then maybe starting twinning.”(Place, Wits Education School)

e. Types of material

Foundation phase courses consist of at least a Teachers’ Guide, a Learner’s Book and a reader. Teacher’s Guides are intended to provide teachers with a fully comprehensive course that includes all the information necessary to teach literacy acquisition. Increasingly publishers are linking Teacher’s Guides specifically to learner books, reproducing learner book pages and explaining how these are to be taught.

Some publishers produce both a learner’s book and a work book. These outline in strict sequence the learning outcomes and assessment standards to conform to the Foundations for Learning document, specifying how long activities ought to take and when assessment needs to take place. It specifies what methods of assessment are deemed suitable and how to remediate if learners have not yet met the required standard. The readers generally consist of a single book of thematically-based stories, somewhat

graded, and usually with activities about the stories included. The readers are intended for shared and independent reading. All the major publishers have Foundation Phase kits that include flash cards, posters, friezes, play dough, scissors, puzzles, games, etc. Some publishers have big books – intended for shared reading.

In response to departmental directives that stress the importance reading programmes, publishers have embarked on the production of reading series. Publishers will produce reading sets – stories (occasionally veering into non-fiction) divided into levels with about eight books per level. These are not produced as formally graded series, but are produced so that they are written at different levels (usually four levels) and so that these can be used across grades. These are intended either for shared or independent reading, although it is possible that teachers might use these for guided reading. They are usually sold so that a classroom will have a single set, but the intention of publishers is that several sets are available in a classroom. Certain publishers like MML and Oxford have large and comprehensive international reading schemes with up to 300 titles as part of their catalogue. These schemes assist with the teaching of phonics and introduce a variety of genres, but these are used in only upmarket and independent schools. Such reading schemes are not an integral part of any programme and are seen as supplementary.

According to Botha (2010):

> Apart from teacher training, the actual training of the teacher, the biggest difference I have seen between the two kinds of schools which is called the bimodal model in South Africa, was between the kinds of material that children have in model C schools and don't have in the more disadvantaged schools. I didn't in one disadvantaged schools ever see any kind of graded reading scheme – that is my personal experience right throughout the country.

Moats (1999), Allington & Walmsley (1995) and the report of the National Reading Panel (Lnagenberg, 2000) all emphasise the importance of graded reading programmes and the lack of use of graded reading programmes in the majority of South African classrooms is a serious gap in literacy teaching – a point made emphatically by the authors of the departmental teacher's handbook (Teaching Reading in the Early Grades,

2008). The Foundations for Learning document places far more emphasis on graded reading throughout FP and the Handbook on Teaching Reading in the Early Grades discusses the importance of guided reading (through graded reading schemes) describing the technique as the "the bridge to independent reading" (ibid, p 27).

The use of reading schemes for the purposes of guided reading do not generally make up part of what publishers regard as essential for courses, possibly as a result of submissions committees requirements and prescriptions of the NCS. Reading schemes are seen alternatively as 'too difficult for certain teachers to cope with' (Viljoen, OUP) or as a separate component that teachers may choose to buy if it was within their budgetary capacity. The result is that such schemes are seen in affluent, urban environments only (Botha, Wits School of Education). According to Langhan (MML Foundation):

> MML has a number of series of readers that are graded by age and level of difficulty, in clusters per grade. The series have grading systems and difficulty level grids, but don't include the kinds of detailed reading skills monitoring and assessment cards that traditional reading schemes do. The 'Stars of Africa' series is one example. Any teacher, who uses these materials as intended, would easily be able to monitor their learners' progress through the graded series.

In discussion with publishers and lecturers in education, there was general agreement on what the elements of course content should be and that these were all contained in the NCS. Courses devised by publishers all contain:

- phonemic awareness (explanation and suggestions for how this should be taught in the TG and activities in the LB and/or WB, as well as in readers, (all of which contain activities that relate to the reading material);
- a phonics programme or reference to a phonics programme (again explained in the TG and included in activities in the LB/WB);
- an emphasis on reading (with exposition in the TG on the use of shared and independent reading and to a lesser extent to guided reading as well as suggestions for expansion of reading material in the classroom environment)
- guided and independent writing (explained in demonstrated in the TG and included as activities in the LB/WB).

- addenda with sight words are included in TGs
- detailed sections on assessment with examples, criteria for marking and assessing, and sample assessment sheets – in all the various kinds of assessments that are used are provided.
- sample lesson plans according to prescribed formats are given

In short, as much as possible is included in order to make teaching easy and streamlined, and in line with education policy.

Although large segments of both the NCS and the TGs discuss the use of alternative materials to books and worksheets – such as activities to be done with playdough, flashcards, the kinds of resources contained in FP kits, other natural materials, like water and soil, etc), it would appear that teachers generally rely heavily on printed materials in the form of LBs/WBs and worksheets. "For Foundation Phase teachers in the classroom a workbook is most valuable and if you don't provide a workbook essentially what teachers are doing are having to create worksheets anyway. Foundation [Phase] is certainly a worksheet environment" (Pretorius, Heinemann). The use of worksheets comes in for considerable criticism from academics and authors and publishers alike:

> I don't like these packaged lesson plans, etc. I don't like textbooks in Foundation Phase. Children find it very difficult to take something from there and do something from here… they don't have the reading skills, and I would rather say, take the funds that you would spend on all these millions of pages and put it into better non-fiction material, better reading programmes and get that up and running. And then take whatever change you have left over and start teaching the teachers how to use them. (Place, Wits Education School);

> It is a way of getting more work done quickly. It is part of an age of easy access to photocopying and a way of coping with the pace of teaching – if you have too much admin, it is a way of getting work done. In Australia I have heard them called 'shut up' sheets. It allows teachers to think they are working a lot. It is a way of 'babysitting' children. Teachers don't seem to have the ability to make the worksheets fit their learners – they try to make the learners fit the worksheets…. And adding: "Sitting still filling in worksheets does not suit all children." (De Jong, FP consultant and author);

> Poorly trained teachers use WB badly – but publishers are in a situation of having to give teachers what they want – and they want WBs. …. They want material that is easy to use. Because of class size and an admin-heavy system. They want to open a book and it's all there… Our aim is to make teachers' prep time as minimal as possible (Begg, MacMillan)

> Teachers don't have a lot of resources. They rely on worksheets to replace other kinds of resources…Start with what they [learners] know. Start with oral. We are throwing worksheets at them and these kids don't even know the language. It's important to have fun with them – children learn through play and enjoyment. Lots of fantasy – children learn to read and write without even knowing they are learning to read and write. You don't start with 'a' – can everyone say 'a', can everyone look around the room and find things that start with 'a'. My grade R child is doing worksheets, my four year old is doing worksheets! They shouldn't be doing that. Learning at that age happens through play. By making it boring, you lose the learning. (Fivaz, FP author)

Place (Wits Education School) makes a distinction between worksheets and what she terms 'activity' sheets: "What you need to start looking at is to move away from worksheets to … activity sheets. Which then direct an activity – so there is a total shift in what is put down on that page" Place is referring to activities that are not page bound – ones that require physical exploration of elements in the environment, such as building letters with playdough or acting out words, etc. However, in instances where publishers have attempted that, teachers have either dismissed these or used them inappropriately:

> So what would happen is … that there is this activity there is some kind of guidance in the teachers guide and either teachers stretch that out for two and a half hours doing this little activity which should take them 30 minutes. Or they are then forced to look for something else which is not a problem …but obviously where that wasn't happening … it was important to create a course where the two and a half hours was filled with valuable literacy activities and not kind of fillers … like run around in the garden type of thing … [and] talk about the leaves and stuff but actually what they are doing is playing outside (Pretorius, Heinemann).

There appears to be a decided discrepancy between what teachers want (worksheets and workbooks that provide 'fill in' exercises as proof of work covered) and what educationists believe are preferable (activities that are mediated by teachers in such a way that a solid foundation in skills take place, and where the mediation happens largely through reading books (shared, guided and independent) together with the other very

important part of literacy, namely writing, but writing that is an organic part of activities that promote reading (Place, Botha, Wits Education School, and Joseph, Naptosa). This discrepancy is one that the education department, the NCS (and all the additional curriculum documentation) and publishers all grapple with. It reflects the division between classrooms and teachers that fall into what may be termed a 'developed' social system – where the potential for educative LTSMs and engaged and reflective teaching exists, and classrooms and teachers that fall into what may be termed a 'developing' social system – where enormous support and monitoring, often mechanistic and in contrast to values of critical engagement, are required.

It is clear that differences between the products produced by publishers for the same markets (small though these are by the own admission of publishers) relate to the way publishers weight the various elements of the NCS and also to the way in which the FP course as a whole is integrated. While all the programmes appear to adopt a thematic approach, not all programmes integrate these themes across all the learning areas: "The structure of the [revised series] was quite different from the integrated approach" (Pretorius, Heinemann).

Other differences relate to the position of phonics as a central part of the programme. Because of a 'gap in the market' (Delport, Vivlia), a phonics-based series is being produced by a publisher, clearly moving into a direction not yet considered by other publishers – as a response to the Foundations for learning documents and possibly in an attempt to second-guess the CAPS document currently in progress and/or a response to the much stronger emphasis on phonics in the Foundations for learning document.

Foundation Phase courses are built around the specific requirements for a language as outlined by the curriculum – i.e. English Home Language, English FAL, English as a further (as opposed to 'first') additional language[10] or an African language as Home

[10] The curriculum does not outline a separate set of outcomes and assessment standards for English as a further additional language in Foundation Phase, but publishers will generally write to such an audience and adapt English FAL for a market that requires greater guidance and input, in line with curriculum suggestions.

language. It would appear that scant attention is paid to how these courses are to be used concurrently or consecutively

4.4 Development of manuscripts

a. Style

Before the writing process begins, publishers all run a 'commissioning workshop' during which they provide prospective authors with guidelines on how to write, the specifications and framework according to which the course will be written and an outline of the approach to be used, the target market for whom the authors will be writing and some features that need to be included. Precise instructions on language levels (together with English second language writing principles) are given. (see appendices E1 and 2 for writer instructions from publishers)

By its nature, the instructions given by publishers are restrictive. These relate not only to issues such as the number of pages, the font and formatting to be used, numbers of words per page and how much and what kind of artwork briefs are to be written, but it also prescribes to authors how information needs to be structured and presented. As Place (Wits School of Education) reflects:

> I'm afraid I've written for publishers. My handbooks sit on the shelf. There's plenty of stuff. I was told to write it in a certain way. I would never have done that. I had a very inexperienced [publisher] – it was my first time of writing. Yes, we learnt through the process but I do think that some people are too ready to write who are not experts in the field, and who [don't] understand the communities for whom they are writing.

Generally writers write to a given time schedule. From the beginning of the writing process, timelines are set and schedules are devised. This means that the work is apportioned as equally as possible within the spheres of the authors' expertise, and workshop dates are set for discussion of draft materials. During workshops, authors are meant to come prepared with comments on the work of their colleagues, having had time

before the workshop to peruse what has been produced. Mostly workshops take the form of systematic discussion on batches of work under the guidance of the publisher or team leader.

The NCS recommends "careful choice of themes and topics stimulates the interest of the learner" whereby the teacher needs to

- "find a balance of topics and themes which interest boys and girls, and rural and city learners, as well as themes which unite learners across these divisions;
- choose topics that are relevant to the learners' lives, and yet also move them beyond what they already know
    - for example, they can learn about other countries and cultures; and
- select themes and topics that link with the Critical and Developmental Outcomes – for example, learners need to engage with important human rights and environmental issues such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, the right to land, and consumerism." (DoE 2003b, p 8).

And that is what authors do. The themes selected for Foundation Phase in the different LTSMs are very similar and reflect the recommendations of the NCS.

Authors write to particular house style rules and are given specific instructions regarding sensitivity relating to gender, race, disabilities and cultural and religious differences that need to be observed. (Heinemann guidelines for authors, 1997)

b. Editing and production

A completed manuscript that includes detailed artwork briefs and permissions forms for any material that might need to be accessed from other publishers or authors is handed over to the production department for the process of editing and design.

Handover is a crucial process involving an attempt to create alignment in the way authors have conceptualised materials and production teams that have to bring that conception to

life in the form of final products. Where misalignment takes place, there is conflict, but also a sense of disempowerment on the part of authors:

> An especially challenging dimension of developing LTSMs relates to the number of interests that eventually combine to mould the finished product. First there are the requirements of an imperfect curriculum, coupled with those of imperfect textbook review committees. Then there are the design, style, space and extent requirements of the publisher. Add the subject-specific ideas and expertise of the author team and the expertise and experience of the author team's consultants. Once these interests have been woven into a manuscript, it is handed over to an editor who is more likely to be a 'technical specialist' than an educator. During the editorial and production phase, the parameters are necessarily more rigid to ensure consistency of style and so forth, and the emphasis shifts to matters such as 'house rules' and budgets that govern factors such as layout, space and extent. Ideally, if all of these interests are well coordinated, the ideal product will emerge to meet the needs of textbook review committees, teachers and learners alike. Sadly, unrealistic time constraints, combined with budgetary constraints, exert extreme pressure on all role players at every stage of the manuscript development and production processes. This can result in, among other things, miscommunication and/or conflict between authors, publishers and editors; and more importantly, the unintentional 'cutting' of critical teaching and learning elements from manuscripts. (Langhan, MML Foundation). .

The point in the production process where budgetary concerns come to the fore most decidedly is after the written manuscript is handed over to the production departments. Authors do not generally receive payment for their efforts but are bound by contracts, which allow for royalty payments on the sales of the books on which they work. The royalty percentage is usually divided amongst the team according to their contribution to the writing process – a motivation for authors to want to keep teams smaller. What is of the essence is that the writing process does not constitute a major expense in the overall production of the materials. The implication of this is that writers write with the express purpose of creating a product that will sell well. De Jong (FP consultant and author) expressed her disenchantment: "Many big publishers are incredibly rude to writers. Writers are regarded as the bottom of the pack. I have had some shocking experiences…" On reflection she added that she had had equally excellent experiences with publishers.

From the moment handover of the manuscript to the production department occurs, expenditure occurs. Budgets for editing, artwork and permissions govern processes and

this has important implications for authors. Publishers will not hesitate to take a ruthless approach to authors' work if the budget requires it.

Author conflicts arise over the quality of artwork, cuts in materials and the dispensing of material that require expensive permissions fees. Particular book formats are also not favoured by publishers for reasons of cost. Occasionally disputes between authors and editors may arise over the writing and the content, although, with the exception of one project Fivaz (author on several FP projects) felt "they [editors] were respectful, we would get queries about certain things, but … they were dealt with very nicely" and authors are usually pleased and relieved to see the final result: "It is generally a good experience. I have always liked the end product, but it takes a long time to see royalties – it is a hit and miss affair – if your book is lucky enough to get onto the catalogue you have a chance" (De Jong, FP consultant and author).

4.5 Conclusion

Submissions committees have a stranglehold over the publishing industry, such that certain utterances interviewees had to be made anonymously lest it jeopardise the publishers' chances of being accepted onto the official catalogue, should these words by some chance become public. The oppressive nature of the submissions process is evident in the way in which publishers have become entirely risk averse. Unreasonable timeframes have created situations which preclude research prior to production and trialling post production. It has led to the employment of authors who are efficient and reliable, rather than necessarily the most suitable for the learning area, although the use of expert consultants is meant to address this problem. According to academic experts, the acceptance of LTSMs by submissions committees is no guarantee of excellence and publishers themselves have reservations about the quality of evaluations. Furthermore, the use of public officials form the DBE as consultants makes it possible for corrupt practices to take root. Publishers create LTSMs that are almost indistinguishable from one publishing house to another, suggesting that submissions committees have adopted a specific template that serves for what is deemed as acceptable.

Markets are studied by publishers through the prism of the NCS which differentiates between different language teaching strategies, according to language categories such as HL or FAL. The English HL is a very small market, and while the African languages (HL) are vast by comparison, LTSMs for this market is derivative of the English LTSMs, consisting mainly of translations and adaptations. The English FAL markets are divided between those who use English as the LoLT, and those who introduce English to become the LoLT at a later stage and which is taught alongside and African home language.

The following table outlines in very general terms the differences between the requirements different markets as perceived by publishers:

Table 2: General differences between the needs of different market sectors as perceived by publishers[11].

English HL	English FAL	African languages + English FAL
Variety – largely of reading material, but also structured materials from which teachers can choose and which may be used at teachers' discretion	A carefully structured all-inclusive programme that gives step-by-step support and ensures uniformity and measurability with sufficient but not additional materials to ensure reading and writing.	Two carefully structured all-inclusive programmes that gives step-by-step support and ensures uniformity and measurability with sufficient but not additional materials to ensure reading and writing. The English FAL programme would need to be modified to accommodate the reduction of time that is necessary as a result of having two language programmes.
Broadly in line with international best practice principles of critical engagement with education issues – methodologically as well as in terms of content	Simplification of content and methodology, ensuring that strictures imposed by large classes, slower transmission and greater teacher support can be accommodated	Simplification of content and methodology, ensuring that strictures imposed by large classes, few resources, the mixing of different grades in one classroom, limited exposure to urban phenomena and greater teacher support can be accommodated.
LTSMs generally mediated by teacher knowledge and experience	Teaching mainly mediated by LTSMs	Teaching mainly mediated by LTSMs

It is clear that learners who fall in the FAL markets are disadvantaged on a number of scores: fewer LTSMs, more rigid and more narrowly constructed LTSMs, and teachers who rely heavily on LTSMs only for NCS implementation. In addition, rural learners have to acquire literacy in two languages simultaneously, which has significant implications for time spent on literacy acquisition in any one language.

[11] It is important to note that this table in no way reflects what is used in classrooms. It merely summarises what publishers imagine is necessary.

Production processes determine the physical quality of the LTSMs in that the cost factors for art, paper, colour, editing and permissions come into play. The editing process have some impact on the final product, in that editors, inasmuch as these may not be educators, could destroy or change the authors' intentions. It appears from interview data though, that this is the exception rather than the norm.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This study set out to examine the factors that shape decision-making in relation to the development of LTSMs in South Africa by focusing on the processes that govern the development of FP LTSMs, and on how publishers understand the educational nature of LTSMs that will lead to effective literacy acquisition. This was done against the backdrop of current international thinking about the role LTSMs as tools for further professional development of teachers as well as how LTSMs feature as part of the teaching of FP literacy.

The conventional World Bank position (evident in the research of Lockheed, Verspoor & associates, 1991), Heyneman & White (1986), Fuller (1991), Abadzi (2006) and Glewwe, Kremer & Moulin (2007) on LTSMs in the latter half of the previous century was that LTSMs were fundamental to the improvement of learning and teaching. LTSMs are generally regarded as part of the solution to fixing dysfunctional education systems, as well as redressing some of the imbalances that exist within different parts of an education system. Additionally, it is thought that it is possible for LTSMs to compensate for the lack of teacher knowledge and that teachers may benefit professionally through the use of LTSMs. In providing a structured programme, it is argued, teachers and learners are better able to negotiate their own learning. For skilled teachers this means a measure of freedom so that it possible to deviate in interesting and/or appropriate ways (appropriate to particular learner groups, that is) from the LTSM, so that both teaching and learning is broadened and enriched. For unskilled teachers it means a lifeline that ensures the systematic covering of the curriculum.

Critiques of this position contend that textbooks are of limited value, and that unless effective teacher mediation takes place, and/or pre-existing competence on the part of learners is present, LTSMs effect little change (Glewwe, Kremer & Moulin, 2007; Fuller,

1991). The more radical critique, espoused by Apple (1986) is that the production of LTSMs is driven by both commercial and cultural interests. Inasmuch as materials are produced to reproduce government agendas and the political, social and economic values of powerful interest groups in the society they cater for, these do not encourage critical engagement of any sort with wider pedagogical or social issues. LTSMs are viewed then as a deskilling mechanism[12].

For Apple (1995) the notion that technical knowledge defines conceptions of competence (ibid, p 152) and that materials can be made to be "teacher-proof" (Apple. 1986, p 34) by providing and pre-specifying everything that teachers are required to do in the classroom (Apple, 1986, p 36) becomes the basis for his argument that LTSMs can deskill teachers. In a South African context, the appearance, production and intention of LTSMs (and by extension the NCS) is to be educative, but the perception of teachers as vastly incompetent on the one hand, and unable to manage English on the other hand, has led to LTSMs that define teacher input in the most minute detail. This gives credence to the notion of Apple (1986) that South African teachers may be deskilled through LTSMs. Total reliance on specific LTSM programmes and the restriction that comes with the checking of teacher portfolios that are meant to indicate a careful and precise following of NCS prescriptions have the effect of 'schooling' teachers (in the sense of the term that Kampol, 1998, uses), not educating them. Proponents of the argument that LTSMs have the potential to be educative, presuppose both skilled and linguistically proficient teachers.

Factors that shape the production of LTSMs in South Africa are plentiful: full compliance with the specific outcomes of the curriculum; producing LTSMs that are affordable in terms of set criteria by selection committees; selection committees that, because of the quality of members, make decisions that may vary from competent to poor; time frames

[12] Apple acknowledged, though, that schools were not passive sites of mindless reproduction and that a variety of dynamics that relate to resistance of imposed ideologies and structures were well established in most places of learning. In a South African context ambiguity between different sets of ideological principles are constantly at play. Two pertinent examples are: embracing a position which embraces the development and valuing of African languages vs. the need to be globally competitive and having citizens who are sophisticated users of English; espousing the interactive, humanist and creative aspects of being a teacher vs. promoting the technicist, and technological nature of the modern world.

that preclude in-depth research and trialling, a market that is deeply stratified and where this stratification is reinforced by curriculum imperatives relating to language, and production processes that may counteract the intentions of authors.

Producing LTSMs in South Africa is an expensive and high risk business and producing high quality LTSMs that are underscored by careful and extensive research as well as having good quality colour artwork, and paper, even more so. With international back-up large companies can take those risks and ride some of the losses that may occur as a result of non-acceptance by submissions committees. Smaller companies, as has been evident in the last decade have almost all been subsumed by larger ones, with Vivlia, the only wholly black-owned publishing company in South Africa, being a notable exception.

The ambiguities embedded in government directives (from the curriculum documentation to the criteria used by submissions committees) make for extraordinarily complex planning and production of LTSMs. At FP these ambiguities are expressed in the way different curricula exist for different categories of learners based on the languages they speak and the environments they inhabit. Values of equality and equity in the NCS and other curriculum document are expressed in the critical outcomes but are contradicted in the specific outcomes for different language groups. Although ostensibly similar to English Home Language speakers, African language speakers are disadvantaged in a variety of ways: through the imposition of having to acquire literacy in two languages or through not providing the means for acquiring literacy in a home language; through ignoring (or at least not acknowledging) the vast gap in resources, human and material, of the different groups and through a lack of emphasis on the provision of essential elements that would facilitate literacy acquisition. The curriculum and submissions committees are attempting to promote the same ideas, standards, resources and skills for all South Africans through systemic means, but these attempts fail at implementation stage where social, racial, linguistic and economic factors in the schooling system all intersect differently with those values. Whereas privileged sectors may be responsive to issues relating to best international practice, other sectors are expressing their needs for

sufficient textbooks that are highly supportive and provide teachers with explicit structure and guidance. In taking on the task of translating and interpreting the NCS for teachers through LTSMs, considerable power is transferred into the hands of publishers. Publishers are responding to the FAL market by giving them a simple and easily implementable version of the NCS, but by doing so, many of the elements outlined as essential by international research on additional language acquisition (such as phonemic awareness, phonics and guided reading programmes) are not sufficiently foregrounded and promoted.

At Foundation Phase, learners can negotiate LTSMs through pictures only – at least at first, and for a long time to come. This is especially true for learners who have to learn English FAL. The role of teacher becomes more pronounced than in other phases when it comes to LTSM negotiation and engagement. Moats (1999) contends that language proficiency differentiates good and poor readers and that an awareness of phonology provides this. Taylor, Short, Shearer and Frye in Allington and Walmsley (1995, p 161) refer to a host of research that confirm the link between low phonemic awareness and poor reading progress. Phonemic awareness cannot be taught through LTSMs. Teacher's Guides can instruct teachers in the teaching of phonemic awareness; however, the very basis for the ability to teach phonemic awareness is a clear and profound knowledge of language itself. When publishers lament the inability of teachers to use TGs because they cannot read English or engage sufficiently with the contents of TGs, it has profound and tragic consequences for learners. It means that, aside from LB/WBs, the programmes designed in LTSMs are reaching neither teachers nor learners.

The use of workbooks for very young learners has a place, because, as has been repeatedly claimed by academics, departmental officials and publishers themselves, these seem to provide measurable and visible means of productivity in the classroom. Used well and as the culmination of extensive teaching that goes before, workbooks are valuable. Used as proof that time had not been wasted in class makes these dangerous. Temptation exists (and is seldom resisted, it appears) to have learners fill in worksheets for the eyes of HoDs, parents and other official personnel. Even the best designed

worksheets cannot substitute for good teaching. A misplaced emphasis on worksheets as the basis for FP courses creates and exacerbates weaknesses in teaching and learning. Alternative resources in the form of readers force teachers to enact their teaching differently. The recommendations of Taylor, Short, Shearer and Frye in Allington and Walmsley (1995, p 161) for successful literacy teaching include the expansion of the quantity of literacy instruction, and that reading and writing activity become the basis for instruction, rather than discrete skill and drill exercises.

With the introduction of the NCS, not only have publishers been able to create an entire market where none existed before, but they have been able to shape how this market experiences and implements the curriculum. In doing this, they have determined that the way in which language policy differentiates learners, also differentiates markets. Different LTSMs, where the nature, content, style and presentation of LTSMs are marked, and where the introduction of these to different markets is even more so, have served to create sharp divisions between markets – as sharp as these had ever been under any previous dispensation.

Of course, sharp divisions between the various market segments that publishers serve are real. However, in the way in which publishers have approached these markets, their products continue to reinforce these divisions rather than bring them together. This is not to suggest malice on the part of publishers. Market forces are the determining factors in conceptualisation of LTSMs. Wealthy schools that provide for advantaged learners buy consistently and look more discerningly at the kind of resources that would suit their learner (and teacher) needs. An abundance of resources means that they 'top up' or add qualitatively to these.

In poor schools that serve disadvantaged learners, little effort has been made to do a proper needs analysis (certainly by publishers, by their own admission, although it seems this trend is slowly changing with the substantial studies started by OUP and the whole school development projects in which MML is engaged). By having inept submissions committees, poor planning systems and creating unreasonable time frames, the education

department colludes with the stratification in education and the way LTSMs intersect with this. While it is true that developing markets need a great deal of support, they also need to be brought closer in line with what is decidedly advantageous to literacy acquisition at FP level. This means far more resources in the way of books – not necessarily workbooks, but story books. Teacher manuals need to be extremely reader friendly and linked to the teaching of reading and writing through actual reading.

Disadvantaged and/or dysfunctional schools have limited buying power. What buying power there is, is exploited by the publishing industry through the creation of packages that will fulfil the minimum standards of literacy acquisition: a TG (unlikely to be used, according to interview data), LBs/WBs that will satisfy the monitoring function of teachers and a reader that is a sad and sorry substitute for the kind of exposure to reading that this market requires. In 2007 in South Africa 45% of learners in grade 6 did not share textbooks and it would be a legitimate inference that the same or worse would apply to younger learners (Ross, 2010). It is common practice for no books to leave school premises for fear of loss or damage (Place, Wits Education School). In their research Lockheed, Verspoor & associates (1991), Heyneman & White (1986), Fuller (1991), Abadzi (2006) and Glewwe, Kremer & Moulin (2007) variously underline the importance of sufficient materials for learners not only in the form a single textbook, but also the availability of a wealth of reading materials, a great deal of teaching time and strong emphasis on comprehension.

The markets for which publishers cater are very unstable. This instability is largely because concern over poor results has led to constant curriculum revisions, and because the landscape of how teachers teach and who they are addressing is constantly changing. This means that it is difficult for publishers to position themselves. They assert power through the creation of LTSMs that maintain the status quo as far as possible. In this they are complicit in creating highly deskilled teachers for the majority of South African learners.

a. The position of this study in the field of understanding the role of textbooks

The literature on the role of textbooks are differentiated along two distinct lines: that of how LTSMs may function as educative tools within the context of schools in well developed social contexts, and that of how to put textbooks in the hands of learners and teachers in undeveloped social contexts where the textbook functions as the curriculum guideline that ensures some measure of implementation. South Africa is in a situation where schools in both of these categories exist side by side. This provides an ideal platform from which to examine how publishers conceive of these different markets and the kind of LTSMs that materialise as a result.

This study examines only the perspectives of those that are part of the process of developing LTSMs and cannot therefore comment on classroom practices or teacher development. However, inasmuch as it provides insight into publishers' and authors' intentions, it can confirm that the role of LTSMs are carefully considered and that through the use of TGs LTSM developers have specific notions of how these ought to be experienced by teachers. What emerges is that these intentions are different for different markets – in some instances educative, and in others as an implementation tool, although clearly these are not mutually exclusive and operate to a greater or lesser extent in all LTSMs. Where it would seem these intentions are not realised, publishers, in collaboration with government, will move beyond a traditional publishing role into that of trainer. In other words, there is singular determination that LTSMs be used, and used as intended. The need to extend into training is testimony to the extraordinary complexity embedded in the realisation of LTSM intentions and that no amount of text in TGs can create adequate insurance that productive and constructive implementation will take place and not the 'lethal mutation', the phrase coined by Davis and Krajcik (2005, p6) to refer to serious misinterpretation and / or mismanagement of materials. This is in line with the findings of studies on the limitations of textbooks as a strategy for creating uniformity and measurability of implementation (Collopy, 2003).

The importance of social context as a measure of how LTSMs are conceived, emphasised by Ball & Cohen (1996), Goodman (1984) and Zwed (1981) is shown in this study as indisputable factors in the way publishers think about and segment their markets. Where researchers discuss the importance of social context as a way to ensure excellence in LTSMs and a neat fit with the needs and demands of learners and teachers, the consideration of social context in a society as splintered as South Africa, is compelled by different motives. Partly guided by curricular prescriptions and largely guided by systemic and market-related factors, publishers consider the social contexts with extreme care, but without sufficient factual knowledge. Cost factors, time limits and rigid criteria set by submissions committees preclude research, analyses and trialling. A variety of LTSMs designed for different social sectors may appear to embrace the notion an understanding of social context in the conceptualisation of LTSMs are present, but this is only partially the case.

Apple (1996, p 85) makes the suggestion that studies on the publishing industry would be useful in establishing how ideological and various power dynamics are created and maintained through the relationships between the textbook publishing industry and governments. By embarking on such a study, this research extends notions about the social implications and ramifications of the way LTSM programmes are conceived. In a South African context, the contradictions between a tightly state-controlled system and the fierce competition of a free market system vying for market share are glaring. Fear, secrecy, a permanent sense of panic, and the temptation to resort to measures that may border on carelessness at best, and corruption at worst, are spectres that lie below the surface. The command that submissions committees hold, has spawned a subservient and risk-averse industry that have all but abandoned experimentation and innovation. The result is the successful imposition of an instrumentalist adherence to education policy; but the poor success rate of literacy at FP and sufficient reading materials and adequate LTSMs for most South African learners point to the failure to capture the spirit of this policy.

b. Limitations and further research

There are large areas relating to LTSMs and the publishing industry that are not addressed by this study but where reference is made to those areas. Research on the buying patterns of schools and an audit on what schools are using and why would be useful; an ethnographic study of the creation and implementation of a FP programme in a variety of schools would highlight a range of interesting issues relating to both production and markets. Case studies on the introduction and use of graded readers and/or other reading techniques as part of literacy acquisition strategies in FAL contexts need to be investigated. A detailed analysis of teacher attitudes to various kinds of programmes needs to be undertaken in order to establish reasons for choices, levels of understanding of what choices are available and any other factors that influence choice. Analyses of LTSMs are imperative, but with the proviso that this cannot be done in isolation from the way in which teachers mediate these.

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Appendix A

Interview protocol

Publishers of Foundation Phase materials:

1. Could you tell me about your literacy programme(s) in Foundation Phase?
2. Explain how these materials work together as a programme.
3. What is the theory of instruction that underpin the programme?
4. Tell me about the schools that use your materials: who are they and how do they use the materials?
5. What is your policy on workbooks for learners vs., textbooks?
6. What teacher support is built into your programme?

Academics who teach Foundation Phase Literacy acquisition:

1. What do you regard as best practice for the teaching of FP literacy?
2. What is the role of LTSMs in literacy teaching and acquisition?
3. What is your experience of the way in which teachers use LTSMs at FP level?