

https://dspace.org/

# Teacher pedagogies for literacy acquisition amongst EFAL learners in Grade 3 in two schools in the Western Cape

**Dooms, Anastasia Chloe**

**2023-08**

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/41531

Dooms, Anastasia Chloe. (2023). Teacher pedagogies for literacy acquisition amongst EFAL learners in Grade 3 in two schools in the Western Cape. [Master's dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg]. https://hdl.handle.net/10539/41531

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

# Teacher pedagogies for literacy acquisition amongst EFAL learners in Grade 3 in two schools in the Western Cape

Student name: Anastasia Dooms

Student number: 920258

Research Supervisor: Dr Cameron Martin

Research Proposal Due: 30 June 2022

Ethics Consideration: 4 July 2022

Final Dissertation Due: 15 February 2023

# DECLARATION

I, Anastasia Dooms, declare that this research report is my own work. This research report is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Education in Inclusive Education as required by the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before, for any other degree or examination at any other university.

Anastasia Dooms

Signed: 

February 2023

# ABSTRACT

The issue of literacy and language development is still a pressing concern within South African education. Many South African learners that are required to attend school and learn in their first/second additional language (FAL) as opposed to their home language (HL) are disadvantaged and comparatively excluded compared to their peers that learn in their HL. In the foundation phase, literacy acquisition is seen as a building block to education and therefore teachers need to ensure that learners have acquired adequate oral vocabulary and phonological awareness in English to enable a strong literacy foundation for their transition from their HL to English (EFAL).

This study analysed the pedagogical practices used by four Grade 3 educators from two non-English schools in the Western Cape during their EFAL lessons. The research intended to identify the pedagogical approaches used by these educators to assist learners in learning and adequately acquiring their FAL to the level of proficiency needed for English as the language of instruction from Grade 4 onwards.

A qualitative approach was used and incorporated the use of two EFAL lesson observations (per educator), lesson plan analyses, and semi-structured interviews. The main findings were analysed through the lens of Pedagogical Link-Making (PLM) (Scott et al., 2011). PLM as an evaluation tool was used to guide and thereafter analyse the observations and the post-observation interviews. This was used to establish the effective pedagogies used by Grade 3 educators to establish meaning amongst their learners. The findings gave insight into promising pedagogical actions that should be incorporated into teaching and learning EFAL to facilitate meaning-making amongst learners and ensure adequate language and literacy acquisition.

The inclusive education field will benefit from further research being conducted into PLM, with particular interest in language and literacy development. This may aid the field of education to find new ways for educators to adapt their pedagogical practices to foster inclusion within their classroom and hinder the exclusionary practices faced by EFAL learners due to learning barriers imposed by language.

**Keywords:**

inclusion, pedagogical link-making, literacy, foundation phase, English first additional language

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


**DECLARATION** ..... 1

**ABSTRACT** ..... 2

**TABLE OF CONTENTS** ..... 4

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:** ..... 8

**LIST OF TABLES:** ..... 9

**CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT** ..... 10

**1.1 INTRODUCTION** ..... 10
**1.2 BACKGROUND TO STUDY** ..... 10
**1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT** ..... 14
**1.4. PURPOSE STATEMENT** ..... 18
**1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS** ..... 19
**1.6. RATIONALE** ..... 19
**1.7. CONCLUSION** ..... 20

**CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE** ..... 21

**2.1 INTRODUCTION** ..... 21
**2.2 A STRONG LITERACY FOUNDATION** ..... 21
**2.3 LITERACY ACQUISITION IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE** ..... 22
2.3.1 HL LITERACY ACQUISITION ..... 22
2.3.2 FAL LITERACY ACQUISITION ..... 23
2.3.3 EFAL CAPS DOCUMENT ..... 25
**2.4 ADDITIVE BI/MULTILINGUALISM** ..... 27
**2.5 CHALLENGES OF LITERACY ACQUISITION IN FAL VERSUS HL** ..... 28
**2.6 TEACHING PEDAGOGIES** ..... 31
**2.7 PEDAGOGICAL LINK-MAKING (PLM)** ..... 34
FORM 1- TO SUPPORT KNOWLEDGE BUILDING ..... 35
FORM 2- TO PROMOTE CONTINUITY ..... 40
FORM 3- ENCOURAGEMENT OF EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT ..... 41

**2.8 LITERACY INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES ..... 42**
**2.9 CONCLUSION ..... 43**

**CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN ..... 44**

**3.1 INTRODUCTION ..... 44**
**3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN ..... 44**
3.2.1. PHILOSOPHICAL ORIENTATION ..... 44
3.2.2. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ..... 45
3.2.3. CASE STUDY ..... 45
3.2.4. RESEARCH SITE AND PARTICIPANTS ..... 46
3.2.5. SAMPLING ..... 46
**3.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS ..... 47**
**3.4 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS ..... 48**
3.4.1. OBSERVATIONS: ..... 48
3.4.2. CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST ..... 49
3.4.3. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS: ..... 49
3.4.4. AUDIO RECORDING: ..... 51
3.4.5. DOCUMENT ANALYSIS: ..... 51
**3.5. DATA ANALYSIS ..... 52**
**3.6. COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS ..... 52**
3.6.1. VALIDITY ..... 54
3.6.2. RESEARCH BIAS ..... 55
3.6.3. TRUSTWORTHINESS ..... 56
**3.7. CONCLUSION ..... 57**

**CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF DATA ..... 58**

**4.1 INTRODUCTION ..... 58**
**4.2 DATA COLLECTION ..... 58**
4.2.1 SYNOPSIS OF RESEARCH SITE ..... 58
4.2.2 GENERAL FEEDBACK OF THE PARTICIPANTS ..... 60
**4.3 LESSON PLANS ..... 61**
**4.4. CLASSROOM LESSON OBSERVATIONS ..... 64**
4.4.1. LESSON DESCRIPTIONS ..... 65
**4.5. PEDAGOGICAL ACTIONS ..... 68**

4.5.1. The most commonly occurring pedagogical categories ..... 68
4.5.2. Other impactful pedagogical actions ..... 71
4.5.3. The least commonly occurring pedagogical category ..... 71
**4.6. Interviews ..... 72**
4.6.1. Challenges described ..... 72
4.6.2. Actions to overcome ..... 75
4.6.3. Support from CAPS ..... 76
4.6.4. Recommendations from teachers ..... 78
**4.7. Conclusion ..... 78**

**CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION ..... 79**

**5.1. Introduction ..... 79**
**5.2. Key pedagogical actions observed ..... 79**
Songs/rhymes ..... 80
Visual aids ..... 82
Fun activities/games ..... 84
Code-switching ..... 84
Checking for learner understanding ..... 87
Guided practice ..... 91
**5.3. Pedagogical Link Making (PLM) as an evaluation tool ..... 93**
**5.4. Key actions analyzed using PLM ..... 96**
Action 1: Song/rhyme ..... 98
Action 2: Visual aids ..... 99
Action 3: Fun activity/game ..... 100
Action 4: Code-switching ..... 101
Action 5: Checking for learner understanding ..... 102
Action 6: Guided Practice ..... 103
**5.5. Conclusion ..... 104**

**CHAPTER 6: OVERVIEW, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ..... 105**

**6.1. Introduction ..... 105**
**6.2. Relating Overall Findings to the Research Questions ..... 105**
What pedagogical approaches are Grade 3 educators using? ..... 105

How well do these pedagogical approaches develop meaning in students (using the PLM framework)? ..... 106
How do these pedagogical practices align with CAPS? ..... 106
What are the most promising pedagogical practices that Grade 3 educators are using to facilitate language development and literacy acquisition in EFAL learners? ..... 108
**6.3. Reflections ..... 109**
Sampling location ..... 110
Time constraints ..... 110
Research bias ..... 110
PLM as an assessment tool ..... 111
Semi-structured interviews ..... 111
**6.4. Recommendations for Future Research ..... 111**
**6.5. Conclusion ..... 113**

**REFERENCE LIST: ..... 115**

**APPENDICES: ..... 127**

**Appendix 1: Observation Checklist ..... 127**
Observation Checklist sample: ..... 130
**Appendix 2: Observation Schedule ..... 133**
Observation Schedule sample: ..... 134
**Appendix 3: Lesson Plan Checklist ..... 142**
Lesson Plan Checklist sample: ..... 143
**Appendix 4: Interview Schedule ..... 145**
Interview transcript sample: ..... 151
**Appendix 5: Permission to Conduct Research in Schools ..... 180**
**Appendix 6: Participant Information Sheet ..... 184**
**Appendix 7: Teacher Consent Form ..... 187**
Teacher Consent Form sample: ..... 192
**Appendix 8: Learner Assent ..... 194**
**Appendix 9: Ethics Clearance Certificate ..... 195**

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:

FP: Foundation Phase

HL: Home Language

L1/L2: Language 1/2 (home language/first additional language)

LoLT: Language of Learning and Teaching

FAL: First Additional Language

EFAL: English First Additional Language

DOE: Department of Education

DoBE: Department of Basic Education

CAPS: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

PLM: Pedagogical Link-Making

# LIST OF TABLES:

TABLE 1: NATIONAL AVERAGE PERCENTAGE MARKS FOR HOME LANGUAGE IN 2012, 2013 AND 2014 (DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION, 2014, P. 81). ..... 15
TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE OF LEARNERS THAT ACHIEVED THE VARIOUS LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE ANAS IN 2014 ..... 16
TABLE 3: PSEUDONYMS FOR THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS ..... 59
TABLE 4: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS ..... 60
TABLE 5: LESSON PLAN ALIGNMENT IN TERMS OF EFAL CAPS DOCUMENT ..... 63
TABLE 7: EVIDENCE OF THE PLM FORM/APPROACH IN EACH PEDAGOGICAL ACTION ..... 97

# Chapter One: Introduction to the Report

## 1.1 Introduction

Within South Africa, Foundation Phase (FP) (Grade 1-3) learners are provided with the opportunity to attend schooling in their home language (HL). Thereafter, in Grade 4, schooling transitions to English or Afrikaans as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT). This shift from HL to English/Afrikaans has evoked copious issues in learning, particularly within literacy acquisition. Due to this language barrier, learners that are required to learn in their first/second additional language (FAL) are often disadvantaged and comparatively excluded compared to their peers that learn in their HL.

Chapter one will introduce the research report and elaborate on the issues faced by learners that are required to learn in their FAL, particularly in terms of language development and literacy acquisition. Furthermore, it will explain the background of the study and how our past and present education system has perpetuated this issue. This chapter will highlight some of the key components of the issue and the importance of aiding research to address this ongoing issue within the South African context. Thereafter, this chapter will set out the key problem and raise the questions that will guide this research.

## 1.2 Background to study

During the time of colonialism, indigenous languages were largely ignored and had to give way to European languages such as English, German, Dutch (later Afrikaans), and Portuguese. Language policies and practices within many African countries, including South Africa, reflected the priorities of these colonial governments and neglected the multicultural realities of the region (Peirce & Ridge, 1997).

As independence across African countries later emerged in the 1960s, language practices were then scrutinized and revised by diverse groups. Within South Africa, Afrikaans and English were the official languages and the languages used in schools. Learners whose mother tongue was English, or Afrikaans were at an advantage, while those whose mother tongue was an African language were at a distinct disadvantage.

During the Apartheid regime, language was used to discriminate, dominate, and oppress the black majority. This oppression also took place in schools whereby learners were required to learn in Afrikaans (the language of the leaders of the National Party such as B.J Vorster, P.W. Botha, and others), compared to their HL. Throughout South African history, various protest movements have resisted oppression by white Afrikaner hegemony. These protests all emphasized the deeply rooted issue of language within South African education as language has been known to be a means to exclude and marginalize certain members of society.

Post-1994, when South Africa became a democracy, the new African national leaders sought to achieve unity through new innovative language policies that encouraged multilingualism. South Africa is now a multilingual country with 11 official languages, and therefore have guaranteed equal status. According to Stats SA's Community Survey of 2018, nationally 25,3% of individuals spoke isiZulu at home, 14,8% spoke isiXhosa, and 8,1% spoke English (Department of Statistics of South Africa, 2019). The language most widely used outside of the household is isiZulu (25,1%), followed by English (16,6%), and preceding isiXhosa (12,8%) (Tibane, 2019). This raises the question as to why a language spoken by the country's minority should be used universally as opposed to languages spoken by the country's majority. Resistance has been shown to the official use of African languages as languages of instruction, as many people believe that children should be exposed and immersed in English, the language of commerce and politics in South Africa and across the globe (Mda, 1997). English is considered a significant language because of its international status and its "use value". In addition, most business transitions are conducted in English and thereby grant English a status that exceeds various other South African languages.

The post-Apartheid government revised the education curriculum and was mandated by two policy frameworks. These included the inclusive education policy implemented through the Education White Paper 6, Special Education Needs: Building an Inclusive Education System (WP6) in 2001, as well as the education's language policy. The White Paper 6 policy document was intended to establish a "system where learners with disabilities can learn alongside their peers with appropriate supports" (Department of Basic Education, 2010). The policy advocates for the inclusion of all learners, irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability, or HIV status and

aims to minimize the barriers to learning that may have been a result (Department of Basic Education, 2010).

The Department of Education's (DoE) language policy states that all children have the right to be educated in their HL (Brink & Nel, 2019). Although in theory, this may seem optimal, in practice, this may be difficult. In 2006, the DoE (Mayatula, 2006) hosted a briefing that elaborated on language within the education policy. Schools were given the choice of their preferred language of teaching but were required to declare how they would practically implement multilingualism. English was adopted as the most optimal language of choice as it is seen as the language of commerce and politics in South Africa and therefore served as the dominant LoLT (Mda, 1997). This was in contrast with indigenous language that were often deemed inferior as the languages were perceived as having limited applicability (Mayatula, 2006). Mother tongue would in turn be used from Grades 1-3 and then teaching would revert to English/Afrikaans as the LoLT from Grade 4 onwards.

However, in contrast, research has also shown that there is a clear link between the LoLT and academic achievement as learners develop reading and writing skills faster and in a more meaningful way (Kioko, 2015a). Furthermore, the use of learners' HL in early education leads to a better understanding of the curriculum content and a more positive attitude towards schools (Kioko, 2015a). Therefore, the Department sought to encourage mother tongue education while still facilitating access to the global language–English. In order to assist the transition from mother tongue to English, English was introduced as a First Additional Language (EFAL). In order to assist the facilitation of the new curriculum and policies, the Department had to implement standardisation across South African schools.

The Annual National Assessment (ANA) are standardized national assessment for Languages and Mathematics in the senior phase (Grades 7-9), intermediate phase (Grades 4-6), and literacy and numeracy for the foundation phase (Grades 1-3) (Department of Basic Education, 2014c). This provides numerical data on learner achievement that may be used to improve the relationship between assessment and classroom instruction. This data may act as a means for teachers to adjust instructional strategies, resources and environments effectively to help all learners in

the classroom to achieve grade-specific outcomes (Department of Basic Education, 2014a).

The report on the ANA of 2014 (Department of Basic Education, 2014c) indicated that the national average percentage mark for HL assessments in Grade 4 was 43% in 2012, 49% in 2013 and 57% in 2014. These rates are progressively increasing but still need to be improved. Although these are national averages, there are individual provinces that are performing much lower. For example, the average percentage mark in Grade 4 HL in 2012 in the Limpopo province was 24.1%. Similarly, the average percentage mark in Grade 4 HL in 2012 in the Northwest province was 25.9%. Both provinces are not proficient in English as the demographics consist of 52.9% Sepedi speaking in Limpopo and 70.4% Tswana speaking in the Northwest. Neither province indicate English as a dominant language. Therefore, learners progressing to Grade 4 in English as the LoLT, as their FAL, may struggle more, resulting in lower HL (English) percentages compared to other provinces that may have more English HL learners.

In addition, the ANA presented numerous challenges that were still prevalent in Mathematics and Language topics and concluded that some of these challenges may have been a result of ineffective teaching methods, lack of resources, socioeconomic challenges, etc. While there are many factors that may affect poor results on the ANA reports, it has been argued that language is one of the main barriers and thereby should place emphasis on the need to assist educators in developing appropriate teaching pedagogies within language development that may aid these statistics.

Similarly, additional alarming rates are emphasized by the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). PIRLS is an international comparative assessment that evaluates reading literacy at the Grade 4 level (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), 2020). Fifty-eight education systems across the world were assessed. South Africa was rated last (out of 58 countries) with the lowest average reading scale scores of fourth-grade learners in 2016 (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), 2020). These results confirmed South Africa's alarmingly low levels in reading and literacy. The statistics paint a dismal picture of the current literacy reality within South African education, especially pertaining to learners' literacy competence in the FP. The results further emphasize the urgent need for intervention strategies to remedy the literacy situation in South Africa.

## 1.3 Problem Statement

South Africa yields one of the lowest reading and literacy rates in the world. Our overall population had a 76.2% literacy rate in 1980, reached a peak in 2009 at 92.8% and thereafter began to decline. Our current population literacy rate in 2017 was at 87%, a decline of 7.3% after 2015 (Macrotrends, n.d.). The DoE had to adapt the education system to right the wrongs of the Apartheid system and improve the standards of education for all South Africans. The South African education system is mandated by the *Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning* (2010) in terms of inclusive education. Their approach to inclusion can be hindered by common barriers associated with language and communication.

The document states that there are three main barriers related to language and thereby promote exclusion among learners. Firstly, a barrier is evident with learners with hearing disabilities. The communication needs of learners that require South African Sign Language (SASL) experience difficulties due to the lack of SASL-proficient educators. Secondly, learners who require the provision of technical support in order to communicate may be disadvantaged if they do not have access to aids that may support learning (Department of Basic Education, 2010). Lastly, “some learners find themselves in situations where the school’s language of teaching and learning is either rarely or never used at home, thereby compromising effective learning” (Department of Basic Education, 2010, p. 13). Many learners are inherently marginalized due to the inability to access formal schooling in their HL after Grade 3. Learners that fall into these categories of language and communication are perpetually excluded due to these barriers.

In 2011, the DoE introduced our current curriculum, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). With CAPS, the Department of Basic Education (DoBE) aimed to develop a policy framework that would provide improved learning areas, learning programme guidelines, and appropriate assessment guidelines (Department of Basic Education, 2011). The goal of the adapted curriculum was to provide details on what teachers needed to teach and assess. This guideline was provided on a grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject basis. However, despite the implementation of

the CAPS document in 2013, almost 10 years later, we see minimal improvement in literacy rates (as per the statistics mentioned above).

The CAPS EFAL document emphasizes the notion of additive bilingualism. Additive bilingualism refers to the continuous development of a learner's first language (L1) while they develop their second language (L2) (Diaz, 2020). Children enter school knowing their HL, with a wide vocabulary and the ability to speak it fluently. In Grade 1, learners use their acquired foundation of oral language to learn to read and write. Thereafter, when they start to learn an additional language, they also need to be able to build a strong oral foundation. This sets the foundation for learning to read and write in the additional language in Grades 2 and 3 (Department of Basic Education, 2011). In Grade 4, learners are then required to transition from their HL to English/Afrikaans as the LoLT. Therefore, progress in English literacy needs to be sufficient to ensure the learners' ability to continue literacy development after the transition.

This notion can be supported by the ANA report that indicates the national average percentage marks for HL in 2012, 2013 and 2014 for Grade 3 and Grade 4 learners. The Grade 3 average percentage mark for HL is higher compared to the average percentage mark for HL in Grade 4. Although there may be many attributes to this disparity, a pressing point may be attributed to the fact that learners are allowed to learn in their HL up until Grade 3 as opposed to their FAL. Thereafter, in Grade 4, when English becomes the LoLT, they are required to learn in English, a language they may not be as proficient in.

*Table 1: National average percentage marks for Home Language in 2012, 2013 and 2014 (Department of Basic Education, 2014, p. 81).*

| **Grade:** | **Home Language average percentage mark:** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** |
| **3** | 52% | 51% | 56% |
| **4** | 43% | 49% | 57% |

A second result yielded by the ANA report indicates the percentage of Grade 3 learners in achievement levels in HL (Department of Basic Education, 2014, p. 75).

This can be compared to the percentage of Grade 9 learners in achievement levels in HL (Department of Basic Education, 2014, p. 81).

*Table 2: Percentage of learners that achieved the various levels of achievement in the ANAs in 2014*

| **Achievement level:** | **National:** | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Grade 3** | **Grade 9** |
| **L1 (0-29%)** | 15.9% | 15.8% |
| **L2 (30-39%)** | 8.6% | 16.8% |
| **L3 (30-39%)** | 9.9% | 19.4% |
| **L4 (50-59%)** | 15.0% | 19.3% |
| **L5 (60-69%)** | 15.4% | 14.8% |
| **L6 (70-79%)** | 15.7% | 9.5% |
| **L7 (80-100%)** | 19.5% | 4.4% |

Therefore, 34.4% of Grade 3 learners are underachieving (below 50%) whereas in Grade 9 there are 52% of learners underachieving in HL. This percentage increase is not a positive reflection of the education system and provides insight into why we have a decline in the number of school-going learners after Grade 9. The Education Statistics in South Africa (2010) state that in 2010, we had 92% of learners enrolled in South African schools in Grades R-9 and only 80% of learners enrolled in Grades 10-12 (Department of Basic Education, 2012). This is an indication that a larger number of learners are present in Grades R-9 but then fall out of the traditional schooling systems as they reach Grades 10-12. There are various factors that influence learner dropout rates. Amongst these influencing factors may be the literacy challenges faced by EFAL learners in primary schools across South Africa. This challenge may hinder their ability to progress through high school and therefore cause an increase in the dropout rate.

The CAPS document provides teachers with practical guidelines to use within the classroom to actively expose learners to the additional language. These examples are included across the components: listening and speaking, as well as reading and writing. Each learning area is expanded into subgroups with elaborated time frames,

outcomes, and suggestions. These are all set out clearly and provided to South African educators, and yet South Africa still has alarmingly low literacy rates. This is indicative of a crucial gap between policy and practice in the classroom. This gap may be accredited to inappropriate pedagogical practices used by teachers when addressing literacy challenges faced by English HL and EFAL learners. Teachers need to be aware of this gap and adapt their pedagogies through differentiated teaching methods to facilitate adequate English language and literacy acquisition among EFAL learners. Teachers need to ensure that their pedagogical practices do not perpetuate exclusionary practices and should make use of appropriate pedagogies to foster inclusion for all learners.

The CAPS document should be used by teachers within the classroom to ensure that their teaching pedagogies are appropriate and that it meets the requirements and outcomes set out by the document for each subject/learning area. The CAPS EFAL document can be particularly useful for teachers to assist learners when teaching EFAL to ensure that they receive strong foundational knowledge in the FP and ensure a successful transition to English as the LoLT in Grade 4. CAPS (2011, p. 11) states that “teachers should identify barriers to learning in the classroom and in order to address these barriers make use of various curriculum differentiation strategies”. Despite this goal imposed by the Department, many teachers are not equipped with the necessary skills needed to identify and address these barriers. This emphasizes the need for more research into teachers’ pedagogical choices to aid teachers in identifying and proactively working with different learner barriers. One of the most pressing learning barriers is inadequate literacy acquisition, particularly when a learner is required to learn in their FAL. Therefore, teachers need to adapt their teaching pedagogies to assist all the learners in the classroom and promote inclusivity.

Makoelle (2014) advocates for the use of inclusive pedagogy that is intended to promote a learning environment that is accommodating for all and ensures practice that is based on the use of diverse teaching strategies. Teachers should revise their teaching methods, approaches, forms, and principles to enhance learner participation. This is particularly important to ensure that EFAL learners are provided with equitable learning opportunities for adequate language and literacy acquisition, and this can be achieved through appropriate intervention strategies to assist FAL learners

accordingly. Despite all the instructions, interventions, and knowledge available, there is still a gap between theory and practice. Therefore, this research aims to identify the key pedagogical practices used by teachers to aid EFAL learners in acquiring and developing English, in terms of language and literacy development.

## 1.4. Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research report was to identify the current pedagogical approaches used by teachers within the classroom to assist learners that are required to learn in their FAL. This is a particularly prevalent topic within South African education as language is often seen as a barrier to learning for many pupils and therefore perpetuates the exclusionary practices that inclusive education aims to improve.

Through observing EFAL lessons in Grade 3, the research could identify the pedagogical approaches and literacy interventions currently used by teachers to assist learners in learning in their FAL and ensure that learners have adequately acquired the necessary English skills to transition to English as the LoLT in Grade 4.

This report sought to identify and analyze all pedagogies used by educators and thereafter aimed to highlight those that seemed most promising with respect to learning literacy in FP education. In addition, it aimed to highlight the pedagogical approaches and literacy interventions that will particularly assist FAL learners.

Pedagogical link-making (PLM) will be used as a lens to analyze the pedagogical practices of educators. PLM refers to the active construction of knowledge by making links between existing knowledge and new ideas. The teacher's role within the learning environment is to ensure that they support link-making to enhance knowledge acquisition. This term will be discussed in more depth in Chapter two.

Potentially, this research may set the platform for further research into improving literacy acquisition, realigning pedagogical approaches to teaching, and learning in the FAL, as well as potential adjustments to the CAPS EFAL document to assist all learners adequately. These adjustments to FAL teaching and learning will aid the

inclusion of all learners in the classroom and ensure that all learners have the needed foundation to succeed throughout their schooling career.

## 1.5. Research Questions

The following research question is proposed for this study:

*What are the most promising pedagogical practices that Grade 3 educators are using to facilitate language development and literacy acquisition in EFAL learners?*

The following sub-questions will be used as a guide to aim to answer the primary research question:

1. *What pedagogical approaches are Grade 3 educators using?*
2. *How well do these pedagogical approaches develop meaning in students (using the PLM framework)?*
3. *How do these pedagogical practices align with CAPS?*

## 1.6. Rationale

As a current educator within a diverse learning environment, I have experienced first-hand the language differences between learners whose HL is English and those that speak English as their first/second additional language. Although bi/multilingualism is encouraged, learners that are required to learn in their FAL as the LoLT are often at a disadvantage compared to their English peers. This may be attributed to a lack of proficiency in the LoLT due to a limited vocabulary, lack of practice, less confidence and inadequate exposure to English literacy. Therefore, adequate interventions need to be put into place to ensure that learners are given equitable opportunities to succeed. Inclusive education aims to address these issues by enabling learners to learn in their HL in the FP and by encouraging a child-centred, active learning approach to language learning.

In the FP, literacy acquisition is seen as a building block to education and therefore teachers need to ensure that learners have acquired adequate oral vocabulary and phonological awareness in English to enable a strong literacy foundation for their transition from their HL to English. Teachers may have the necessary pedagogical

approaches, goals, and outcomes set out by the CAPS EFAL document; however, they are still currently struggling to produce the required or desired outcomes. Therefore, teachers should adjust their pedagogical approaches accordingly to aid EFAL learners.

## 1.7. Conclusion

South African education is still trying to transform the curriculum bequeathed to us by colonialism and Apartheid. Our overall literacy rates are still in dire need of improvement. Consequently, there is still a pressing demand for practical ways to improve this issue. This chapter has outlined the shortcomings still evident in South African literacy education and emphasized the need for this research within the field of literacy. Practical solutions can be accounted for by analysing first-hand literacy interventions and teaching pedagogies that are used in the classroom to assist literacy acquisition, particularly amongst EFAL learners. The purpose of the study is to therefore identify the current pedagogical approaches used by teachers within the classroom to assist learners that are required to learn in their FAL. Chapter two - the literature review - will provide a more in-depth exploration of literacy acquisition, the challenges faced by EFAL learners and the pedagogical approaches that this report intends to focus on.

# Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework and Review of Literature

## 2.1 Introduction

Chapter two will explore the concept of literacy and expand on the various aspects of literacy acquisition with particular attention to the South African context. Bi/multilingualism is a concept that South African education is placing great importance on. There are many positive reasons for this stance however there are also several challenges. This chapter will provide insight into the gap between theory, the current pedagogical choices aligned with the CAPS curriculum, and the current pedagogical practices used by teachers to ensure literacy acquisition, and practice. It will provide a conceptual framework in which to analyse the current pedagogical practices of teachers that are used to assist English HL and EFAL learners in literacy acquisition. Thereafter, PLM will act as a lens through which to analyse the efficacy of teachers' current pedagogies. This data will provide insight into whether these current practices evoke meaningful learning among EFAL learners to ensure adequate language and literacy acquisition.

## 2.2 A strong literacy foundation

Early literacy is considered a fundamental human right (Pretorius, 2015). Literacy is the "ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with various contexts" (Robinson & Vũ, 2019, p. 446). The provision of quality education, particularly in terms of literacy acquisition, lays the foundation for the rest of learners' formal schooling. Early literacy is the most important aspect of ensuring sustained learning throughout the school career (Schaefer & Kotzé, 2019a). If we ensure adequate early literacy, then we afford the opportunity for educational success. Therefore, it is imperative that children receive adequate instruction in their early schooling. In South Africa, early schooling is termed the foundation phase (FP) which covers Grades 1-3. This instruction in the early year is vital to ensure the acquisition of literacy, firstly in their HL and then followed by their FAL.

Netten, Droop and Verhoeven (2010) illustrate that literacy acquisition can be accounted for by factors such as language, cognitive skills, reading motivation, self-

confidence, and home environmental factors. These factors all play a significant role in ensuring that learners acquire literacy skills in the LoLT, thus these factors should be taken into consideration when implementing appropriate pedagogies and interventions to ensure literacy acquisition in the classroom.

The CAPS document provides the framework for HL and EFAL for Grades 1-3. Thereafter, in Grade 4, learners transition to English as the LoLT. Critical to this transition, is the ability to read for comprehension in English. However, this is an ability that few learners have mastered when they enter the Grade 4 (Biesman-Simons et al., 2021). The learners need to have acquired the necessary English language skills to ensure that they can succeed in Grade 4 with English as the LoLT. This emphasizes the need to ensure that learners have a strong literacy foundation in the FP to avoid learners lagging. It is vital to bridge the language gap between Grade 3 and Grade 4 in order to address the issue of language and exclusionary practices that may be perpetuated throughout learners' schooling.

## 2.3 Literacy acquisition in the Foundation Phase

### *2.3.1 HL literacy acquisition*

The South African Curriculum enables learners to access formal schooling in their HL from Grades 1-3. This assists with the transition from the home to the school environment. This transition forms a positive attitude toward schools and enables a better understanding of the curriculum. The aim of the use of HL in early education is to ensure that learners can acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that may be meaningful to their lives. Learners are able to use the language that they are comfortable in to navigate their new environment and bridge their learning at school with the experiences they bring from home (Kioko, 2015a). Through the use of the HL, learners are more likely to engage in the learning process more confidently as they are sufficiently proficient in the language of instruction. These positive attributes set the tone for enhanced learning opportunities that may enable literacy acquisition.

Early education aims to develop basic literacy skills. Early reading skills such as syllable identification, phonemic awareness, word recognition and oral reading frequency (De Sousa et al., 2010) are vital in ensuring the acquisition of literacy. These skills build on the foundational and interactional skills of speaking and listening. When

learners speak and understand the language used in the classroom, they develop reading and writing faster and in a more meaningful way. These skills are therefore all imperative to language-learning and literacy development and thereafter academic achievement (De Sousa & Broom, 2011). Kioko (2015) states that skills and concepts taught in the HL would not have to be retaught when they transfer to a second language. Therefore, a learner that knows how to read and write in one language, will be able to develop reading and writing skills in a new language much faster (Kioko, 2015b).

Poor literacy rates, such as the ones highlighted by the ANAs and the PIRLS (Department of Basic Education, 2014) can be attributed to various downfalls in literacy acquisition. However, the two more prominent reasons can be attributed to poor oral orientation in classroom practices and the lack of opportunities for exposure to reading (Pretorius, 2015). Although much research advocates for bilingualism, if it is not conducted properly, it can be disadvantageous for the learners if required to learn in their FAL. Similarly, much research has also been presented against the use of a FAL as the language of instruction in early education. For example, Netter et al. (2011) stated that studies have shown that L2 learners lag behind their L1 peers when it comes to reading literacy skills. These learners are required to adopt the complex task of learning to read in a language they were not accustomed to speaking before entering formal schooling. If learners have a problem with the spoken L2, it may have an impact on their reading processes (Netten et al., 2011). This initial lag may have an impact on a learner's literacy foundation and may have implications on later literacy acquisition and academic progress.

### *2.3.2 FAL literacy acquisition*

Learners are exposed to HL and FAL as academic subjects from Grade 1. The EFAL CAPS document, similar to the HL CAPS document, also covers the four main components of language (listening, speaking, reading and writing) with the integration of thinking, reasoning and language structure in the four areas (Schaefer & Kotzé, 2019a). In addition, it also follows the key roles of decoding and oral language competence. The curriculum takes an additive bilingualism approach where EFAL proficiencies can be developed on L1 proficiencies. Therefore, learners are encouraged to continually develop their first language while they develop a second

language. Learners that learn in their HL in Grades 1-3 require additional opportunities to learn English (EFAL) to ensure a strong foundation for Grade 4. Teachers are required to develop literacy in the learners' HL but are often challenged to help children reach the level of proficiency required for learning in English.

Dixon, Zhao, Shin, Wu, Su, Burgess-Brigham, Gezer and Snow (2012) provide insight into possible suggestions that can be used to assist L2 learners in language development. Optimal conditions that should be encouraged for L2 learners are strong HL literacy practices, opportunities to use the L2 informally, specifically designed educational programmes for literacy acquisition, and adapted inclusive pedagogies with sufficient time devoted to L2 literacy instruction. Learners that had a strong L2 aptitude, motivation and L1 skills were more successful in acquiring the L2. In order to ensure this success, teachers were required to demonstrate sufficient L2 proficiency, strong instructional skills, and proficiency in their learners' L1.

Teachers should incorporate both the HL and EFAL in the classroom in the FP to ensure acquisition and proficiency in both languages (Rios & Castillón, 2018). Learners need to acquire reading and writing skills in their L1 in order to reinforce their linguistic resources, cultural strengths, and the academic foundation of their HL. In turn, this will support and facilitate learning the L2 and therefore the acquisition of English literacy (Rios & Castillón, 2018). The primary language enables learners to use their full language repertoire to enable them to acquire an additional language. The conceptual understanding of the L2 will further be supported by the child's primary language as there is a link to the 'home' which provides a comfort zone (Rios & Castillón, 2018). This comfort zone can be further enforced by creating a classroom that encourages the use of both languages. The teacher needs to ensure and promote a safe and healthy learning environment for all the learners and encourage positive well-being that will promote optimum learning (Excell & Linington, 2019). The teacher should create an environment that will allow the learners to feel comfortable expressing themselves in English inside and outside the classroom with other learners (Nel, 2015).

Rios and Castillon (2018) refer to several studies that may assist the acquisition of EFAL. These studies emphasized that encouraging reading in the L1 will assist in promoting L2 literacy. Furthermore, free reading in the L2 will make a strong

contribution to the advancement of L2 development. They believe that in order to ensure bilingualism, children should develop their knowledge of their native language as they acquire English (Rios & Castillón, 2018). Schools are required to ensure that they offer sufficient support in both languages as both languages are deemed the vehicle for strong cognitive and academic development.

De Sousa, Greenop and Fry (2010) refer to research studies that have shown that children who use their L1 for basic education, develop good linguistic proficiency. Their research focused on whether an L1 or L2 mode of instruction may have an impact on the attainment of academic language skills. They were able to conduct this research by analyzing the effects on Zulu-speaking learners. These children had little exposure to English before entering school. English is introduced on the playground and through literacy instruction at school. For the acquisition of literacy skills, the development of phonological awareness is particularly important. Therefore, independent levels of awareness of words and units of sounds such as syllables, onsets, rhymes, and phonemes need to be established in the HL and thereafter in English (EFAL). The awareness of phonemes and the ability to reflect on and manipulate them enhances a learner's decoding skills which will enable early spelling success (De Sousa et al., 2010). Teachers who understand and can use this literacy knowledge in practice are better placed to enhance literacy acquisition in their learners. However, if teachers lack this knowledge, they may further exacerbate this gap in literacy.

### *2.3.3 EFAL CAPS document*

In the FP, the EFAL CAPS document divides the acquisition of a new language into three categorical components- *Listening and Speaking, Reading and Phonics,* and *Writing and Language use*. Teachers must incorporate each learning area into daily EFAL lessons to adequately assist learners in developing the necessary language skills.

**Listening and Speaking**

According to the EFAL CAPS document, within the listening and speaking category, it is suggested that teachers devote 1 hour per week. Daily activities within this category may include activities such as following instructions, understanding and responding to

simple questions, participating in short conversations, memorizing and performing songs/rhymes/poems, etc. (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

In addition, twice a week, the teacher should read/tell a story. This encourages the development of oral vocabulary and begins to develop understanding and ability to use simple language in the context of meaningful spoken language. Teachers are encouraged to make use of a variety of resources such as Big Books, posters, rhymes, songs, games, and real objects for the selected themes to develop meaningful and engaging FAL lessons.

**Reading and Phonics**

According to the EFAL CAPS document, within the reading and phonics category, it is suggested that teachers devote a minimum of 1 hour and a maximum of 1 hour 30 minutes per week. Phonics is whereby the teacher introduces new vowel diagraphs and consonant blends, using words that learners already know. When introducing new words, the teacher must ensure that the learners understand the meaning and can use it in a sentence. This can be integrated with *Listening and Speaking* and *Reading* activities.

Phonics activities can include the distinguishing between different vowel sounds aurally (e.g. 'bird' and 'bed'; 'ship' and 'sheep'), recognizing some differences between sound/spelling relationships in home and additional language (e.g. '*th*a*th*a' and '*th*in'), or building and sounding out words using sounds learnt, etc. (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

Reading can be divided into Shared Reading, Group Guided Reading and Independent reading. Teachers are advised to divide learners into the same ability reading groups and work with one group each day for 15 minutes. Learners are encouraged to do independent reading when they have spare time in class and at home.

**Writing and Language Use**

According to the EFAL CAPS document, within the writing and language use category, it is suggested that teachers devote a minimum of 30 minutes and a maximum of 1

hour per week. Teachers are encouraged to give learners one/two main writing activities a week where the maximum time is being used and at least one activity per week where the minimum time is being used. Writing and language use activities can include using handwriting skills taught in HL, writing a paragraph of 4–6 sentences on a familiar topic, using punctuation already taught in HL, etc. (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

Teachers need to incorporate the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing into their EFAL lessons to ensure that learners have developed the level of English proficiency needed for Grade 4.

## 2.4 Additive bi/multilingualism

Bilingualism or multilingualism can be defined as the use of more than one language- bi-meaning two languages and multi-referring to more than two languages. Chibaka (2017) indicates that the phenomenon of bilingualism or multilingualism can be associated with advantages on an individual and societal level. On an individual level, the ability to speak more than one language has been associated with additive advantages within cognitive development, linguistic awareness, communicative ability and competence, academic or educational performance, sociocultural, economic and political advantages. The benefits of societal multilingualism assist communities and the nation. Chibaka (2017) states that multilingualism within a society is legally backed with policies and structures to implement them. The implementation of such a policy can be seen within our education system (Chibaka, 2017).

The South African education system's stance on language is that of additive bilingualism to ensure that the use of our eleven official languages gets adequately represented across South Africa. Learners are able to learn in their HL and acquire their FAL in Grades 1-3. This goal is specifically important within the promotion of inclusive education as all learners should be given the opportunity to learn in their HL. Thereafter, the learners transition to English/Afrikaans as the LoLT from Grade 4 onwards. Therefore, the introduction of additive bilingualism facilitates and aids a smoother transition from a learner's HL to their FAL as the LoLT.

Grades R–3 is the optimum time for a child to learn an additional language. This is because they have already mastered and consolidated their HL and now have access to additional cognitive resources such as conscious learning strategies that will aid them in becoming bi/multilingual (Nel, 2015). In addition, the encouragement of bi/multilingualism can be accredited to its benefits in cognition, communicative competence, and language learning, as well as due to its greater sociocultural, economic, and societal advantages.

Although this is the goal, the question at hand is whether teachers are applying the appropriate pedagogies to ensure that learners are actively exposed to both languages and/or implementing appropriate interventions to enable the transition from the HL to EFAL in Grade 4. If there is not sufficient language exposure, this may have repercussions on the acquisition of English literacy and therefore have an impact on a learner's overall academic career (Kioko, 2015a).

## 2.5 Challenges of literacy acquisition in FAL versus HL

There are two scenarios for FAL in South Africa. In the case of English/Afrikaans (monolinguistic) schools, a FAL is introduced for the sake of bi- or multilingualism. The FAL is introduced according to the demographics of the area and the accessibility to language resources such as the language teacher, books, resources, etc.

In the case of speakers of African languages (most South African learners), they can attend a school in their HL. However, the transition to an English or Afrikaans medium from Grade 4 onwards necessitates the introduction of (mostly) English as FAL (EFAL). In this regard, only a small number of South African children identify English as their HL, yet all children are expected to navigate their school years in these languages exclusively. While most children enter Grade 1 with some degree of HL proficiency, they are considerably less proficient in either English or Afrikaans. This creates various issues within literacy acquisition and may have lasting effects on learners' long-term schooling careers.

The National Education and Evaluation Unit (NEEDU, 2012) produced a report on literacy teaching and learning in the FP. The report revealed that most children in the FP lack basic literacy and numeracy skills. Furthermore, the report elaborated on

learner retention whereby the DoE noted the explicitly high number of Grade 1 learners that were required to repeat the academic year. These results may be due to serious deficiencies in school entrants' learning and unsuitable literacy pedagogies (Martin & Ebrahim, 2016). This provides a compelling urgency to adapt teaching pedagogies and implement early literacy inventions to improve the schooling success of all learners. In this regard, it is the stance of the report that the notion to ensure a solid literacy foundation is emphasized and strongly advised.

As previously mentioned, learners will acquire literacy in an additional language much faster if they have adequately acquired literacy in their HL. However, adequate time should be devoted to EFAL instruction to allow for the transition to English as the LoLT in Grade 4. According to Schaefer and Kotzé (2019), the EFAL CAPS document states that for learners to be proficient in EFAL, it assumes the following:

- English oral proficiency is vital for later English literacy acquisition.
- A strong L1 literacy foundation is necessary for English literacy proficiency.
- 2-3 hours per week should be devoted to English instruction for 3 years to develop the necessary vocabulary to transition to English LoLT in Grade 4.
- Teachers can use English as the main language of instruction in EFAL lessons to increase learners' exposure to English.

(Schaefer & Kotzé, 2019b)

Although the curriculum sets out these assumptions in the hope that learners have developed a level of proficiency necessary for Grade 4, on the ground, this may not be the case. This notion was proven through the previously mentioned global reading literacy rates at the Grade 4 level by the PIRLS, where South Africa was rated the lowest out of fifty-eight other education systems across the world. If these assumptions set out by the curriculum are not met, learners will be further disadvantaged, and these rates will only worsen.

De Sousa et al. (2010) further expand on challenges that arise among EFAL learners. These challenges may stem due to differences in language structures. Often differences between language systems may affect the organization of phonological representations of words. For example, in a South African context, the language

structures of African languages are very different from those of English (Lenyai, 2011). Teachers need to be well informed regarding suitable methods for teaching language structures and pronunciation. Educators should use the methods set out by curriculum policy on additive bilingualism in order to develop children's communicative skills, as well as to effectively prepare learners to engage with the subject matter presented in English from Grade 4 (Lenyai, 2011). De Sousa and Broom (2011) found significantly different correlations for onset-rime (onset-the initial phonological unit of any word e.g. /c/ in cat, rime- the string of letters that follows e.g. /a/ /t/ in cat) and phoneme deletion (the ability to identify how a word would sound if one sound were omitted)-reading comprehension, as well as differences between phonological awareness (awareness of sounds), word reading and reading comprehension measures in learners whose HL is English versus learners whose HL was not English (De Sousa & Broom, 2011).

Their results suggested that different phonological processing skills have an impact on literacy. Furthermore, this implied that reading acquisition in the HL and EFAL should involve different strategies based on different underlying phonological processing skills, language background and orthographic transparency (De Sousa & Broom, 2011). De Sousa and Broom (2011) further emphasized a gap in the curriculum in terms of word reading and reading comprehension for both English HL and EFAL learners. Therefore, learners will only benefit from differentiated pedagogies and appropriate literacy interventions that will enhance literacy acquisition in both languages.

Cilliers and Bloch (2018) refer to a study conducted in the Eastern Cape that found that 32% of Grade 4 learners were considered illiterate and 60% could not read for meaning at the end of Grade 4 (Cilliers & Bloch, 2018b). One of the reasons attributed to these results was that the learners were tested in English, the LoLT in Grade 4, as opposed to their HL. Another reason was attributed to the overcrowding of rural schools. Many teachers are often overwhelmed with the learners and are unable to adequately observe and facilitate the learning of literacy skills.

Schaefer and Kotzé (2019) conducted a study that analysed the differences between learners' literacy skills between EFAL versus English HL learners. The study too conceded that learners that were taught in their HL yielded better literacy results than peers that were required to read in their FAL. These literacy skills would in turn transfer

to EFAL. In addition, this study attributed most literacy success to learners' exposure to the new language through print-rich classrooms and quality instruction. Schaefer and Kotzé (2019) emphasize the teacher's explicit role in developing adequate English language and literacy proficiency in learners. This indicates the importance of teachers' pedagogical strategies in developing EFAL.

The above-mentioned examples provide current and relevant evidence of literacy challenges within South African contexts and therefore emphasize the prevalence of the issue throughout South African schools. This research may aid the academic field by further providing evidence into the phenomena and establishing why these issues are still apparent.

## 2.6 Teaching pedagogies

Teachers play a pivotal role in the classroom and are deemed a necessity for learner success. Therefore, educators should incorporate appropriate pedagogies for the content, the learning environment, and the different learners. These appropriate pedagogies should be constantly reviewed and adapted for this dynamic environment.

In terms of the language and communication barriers stipulated by the Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning (2010), the teacher contributes to the inclusive practices instilled in the classroom and schooling environment. If a learner is in a school where the LoLT differs from their HL, the school management and teachers should provide the necessary support and supplementary learning in the LoLT up until such time that the learner is able to effectively learn in the school's medium of choice. It is therefore the teacher's responsibility to ensure that language does not evoke a barrier to learning nor perpetuate exclusion.

In addition, teachers require constant awareness and review of current and emergent research in literacy acquisition so that it may positively inform teaching pedagogies (Biesman-Simons, Dixon & Pretorius, 2021).

Therefore, teachers should constantly adapt their pedagogies to adapt to the changing literacy needs of learners. Teachers should provide particular attention to learners whose HL is not English in order to accelerate language acquisition to ensure that the

learner may work toward being assessed according to the assessment standards of the appropriate language level (Department of Basic Education, 2010). In addition, teachers must ensure that they are creating learning environments that may eliminate exclusionary practices that may marginalise and exclude certain learners in the classroom.

Venketsamy and Sibanda (2021) emphasize the importance of adopting a play-based approach to teaching and learning, particularly in literacy teaching. They stipulate that a play-based approach encourages literacy development and enhances learners' enthusiasm and interest in learning. This approach is supported by Vygotsky's theory of social learning as learners can learn from their peers through social interaction.

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory describes learning as a social process and thereby social interaction plays a vital role in the development of cognition (*Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory*, n.d.). The second aspect of Vygotsky's theory is the idea that cognitive development is limited to a "zone of proximal development" (ZPD). This zone is the "area of exploration for which the student is cognitively prepared but requires help and social interaction to fully develop" (*Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory*, n.d.). The teacher, therefore, plays a prevalent role in the learner's cognitive development and therefore in literacy development. The teacher should provide the necessary scaffolding to support the learner's evolving understanding of knowledge or development of skills. Collaborative learning, scaffolding, and modelling are strategies for supporting cognitive development and facilitating intentional learning (*Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory*, n.d.). Teachers should incorporate these skills into their pedagogical practices to enhance learning and ensure literacy acquisition.

Hausfather (1996) elaborates on three main themes that are categorized by Vygotsky's theory. These themes firstly include that the mind can be best understood when we understand how it changes. Therefore, within an educational environment, with particular attention to literacy teaching and learning, we need to understand how learners acquire knowledge and languages (HL and FAL) and thereafter adapt their pedagogical practices accordingly. Secondly, higher mental functions can be seen because of social activity. This notion speaks to the play-based approach that should be adopted within teaching and learning. This approach can be extended to literacy practices and will enhance literacy acquisition as learners may build mental functions

through these carefully manipulated social activities in the classroom. Thirdly, higher mental functions can be mediated by tools and signs (Hausfather, 1996). Teachers should be aided with various literacy tools and signs to enhance teaching and learning and create an inclusive learning environment that promotes literacy acquisition amongst all learners (HL and EFAL learners).

In more recent research, Probert and de Vos (2015) conducted a study that examined the reading strategies used by learners in isiXhosa and the transfer of such strategies when reading in EFAL. They argued that the learners who learnt in English (their FAL) in Grades 1-3 provided a greater literacy foundation for Grade 4. During Grades 1-3, learners acquired a combination of lexical and sub-lexical strategies for reading words in English (Probert & De Vos, 2016a). This may be attributed to the reading strategies and cognitive skills being fine-tuned to specific language structures. Learners, therefore, develop suites of cognitive skills that are dependent on particular linguistic typologies and orthographies to which they are exposed and that promote their literacy (Biesman-Simons et al., 2021). Consequently, learners that learn in their HL, as opposed to English, in the FP are disadvantaged compared to their English HL peers.

These authors noted four pedagogical implications that arose from the study. These included language-specific reading instructions that are needed for early literacy development in different languages, teachers should assist to reduce learners' confusion between different orthographies, teachers should be sensitive to infelicitous transfers that learners may make when reading in different languages, and lastly, teachers should provide adequate practice opportunities to read in both languages (HL and EFAL) (Probert & De Vos, 2016b).

Similarly, Dixon et al. (2012) suggest that “excellent” L2 teachers can be ascribed to L1 and L2 proficiency, desire to teach well and classroom organization. This article suggests that teachers should be proficient in both the learners’ L1 and L2 and should use code-switching between L1 and L2 interchangeably to support student learning. This can be achieved by incorporating the use of both language materials in the classroom, including print materials, videos, and songs to help build a trusting relationship between the teacher and the learners. However, this is not always possible, particularly within a South African context where we have eleven official languages. Therefore, it should be acknowledged that code-switching has various

degrees of competence but can still be effective as long as the teacher has a good understanding of the language and language teaching methods. This solidifies a statement by the articles that states that there is a significant link between teaching style, teacher reflectivity and teacher sense of efficacy that can predict learner achievement outcomes and thereby promote language and literacy development (Dixon et al., 2012). In turn, this reflects the urgency to review teachers' classroom pedagogies and literacy practices in the hope that they may adapt their practices accordingly even more so if they cannot effectively code-switch.

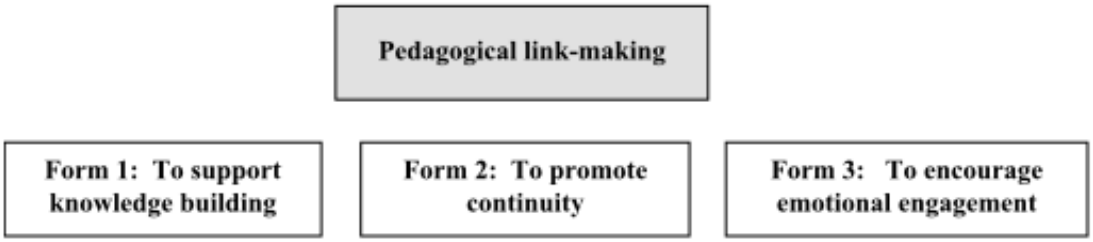
## 2.7 Pedagogical link-making (PLM)

Pedagogical link-making (PLM) can be aligned with Vygotsky's constructivist perspective on learning, whereby learners are actively involved in the construction of their own knowledge by making links between their existing knowledge and new ideas. Mashinyira (2013) attributes effective teaching and learning to conceptual understanding that involves link-making. Learners may access their prior knowledge and create new connections with new ideas and/or between ideas and experiences. In the classroom, the teacher should therefore mediate the process of meaning-making for learners. Teachers should establish effective pedagogies that may help learners make links and actively search for new ways that may improve their mediation of link-making for learners and promote knowledge building.

The teacher's role is therefore important as they should enable a learning environment that encourages learning for meaning and steers away from rote learning which does not establish the deep principle of learning (Scott et al., 2011). This adoption is particularly vital within literacy as focusing on rote learning primarily, is often a common occurrence in schools.

PLM approaches may provide a framework to identify pedagogical tools/strategies that may be introduced in the classroom to support link-making (Scott et al., 2011). Scott et al. (2011) have identified three forms of PLM. These include the need to support knowledge building, to promote continuity with teaching and learning, and the encouragement of emotional engagement.

*Image 1: Three forms of pedagogical link-making* (Scott et al., 2011, p.6)




***Form 1- To support knowledge building***

The first form of PLM- to *support knowledge building*, expands on the notion that we need to make connections between different kinds of knowledge to develop a deeper conceptual understanding. This support for knowledge-building involves six approaches to address making links between different kinds of knowledge.

**Approach 1: making links between everyday and scientific ways of explaining**

The first approach to *support knowledge building* explained by Scott et al. (2011) is to *make links between everyday and scientific ways of explaining*. They emphasize the importance of drawing comparisons between everyday concepts and scientific concepts and the overlapping use of both everyday and scientific ways of explaining. Therefore, learning requires making links between scientific ways of explaining with everyday views. An example of this may be by providing simple explanations for more complex words during a new story's vocabulary. The learners are unfamiliar with the more "scientific explanation" or word and the teacher uses relatable, everyday language to explain the more complex term and thereby enhance understanding.

This approach can be closely aligned with Vygotsky's (1931) "*The history of the development of higher mental functions*". This article refers to the beginning of speech and its ties to a means of socialization. Higher mental functions and cognitive development are therefore a result of social interactions and relations between people. Language plays a prevalent role in these social interactions and therefore impacts cognitive development. Language development starts at an early age between the baby and the parent. Later, within the early stages of education, educators play a prevalent role in the further development of a child's vocabulary and in turn enhance

cognitive development. Educators familiarize learners with various new things in their environment to expand their vocabulary. This vocabulary is learnt in the child's HL and later may also extend to their FAL. Learners should be provided with ample opportunities to use the different languages in informal settings before they can extend it to more complicated settings.

**Approach 2: making links between scientific concepts**

The second approach involves *making links between scientific concepts*. This link between concepts is essential in creating a deeper understanding. Scott et al. (2011) state that this deeper understanding requires learners to manipulate their previously acquired knowledge and use this information to inform future predicted outcomes. This approach may be similar within a literacy context. Learners are provided with the necessary skills to assist them when reading. Learners must adequately acquire these literacy skills to implement them in decoding words they may never have seen before, as well as transferring the learnt skills in their HL to their FAL, e.g., when seeing an object and knowing what it is in both languages.

**Approach 3: making links between scientific explanations and real-world phenomena**

Approach 3 involves *making links between scientific explanations and real-world phenomena*. This approach emphasizes the importance of linking scientific conceptual knowledge with real-world phenomena. Once again, the role of the teacher is accentuated as they need to ensure that they provide learners with the opportunities to make connections between scientific constructs and the real world. In terms of literacy, teachers can ensure this by providing learners with relevant texts/props that may appeal to their “real world” circumstances/environments and interests. This is particularly important to develop a love for reading from an early age (Venketsamy & Sibanda, 2021). This approach can be supported by an evidence-based approach, as well as a balanced literacy approach to the literacy development (Venketsamy & Sibanda, 2021).

Teaching literacy through an evidence-based approach encourages learners to engage in conversation. The teacher models listening and speaking skills in the

additional language and provides feedback for learner participation. Teachers need to engage learners in meaningful literacy learning that exposes them to key literacy concepts and meaningful engagement (Venketsamy & Sibanda, 2021). This encourages the learners to make the link with *real-world* experiences. Similarly, a problem-based approach engages learners through a learner-centred approach. This approach enables teachers to integrate literacy naturally and guide learners through the activity to find the solution to a problem. The teacher will depict a real-life situation that the learners can relate to. Learners are actively involved and continuously engaged. Both approaches, link to the constructivist approach to learning where learners should be actively involved in the construction of their new knowledge.

**Approach 4: making links between modes of representation**

Approach 4 involves *making links between modes of representation*. Scott et al (2011) stipulate that to create a deeper understanding, one must make links between different modalities of representation. This approach can be supported by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory which states that higher mental functions can be mediated by tools and signs. These *tools* and/or *signs* act as various modes of representation to aid our sense of the world and in turn understanding. Teachers can use physical tools in day-to-day learning and are mediated by psychological tools such as language, signs and symbols (Mcleod, 2023).

Similarly, McLeod (2019) expands on Bruner's Learning Theory in Education and stipulates that knowledge is represented and organized through different modes of thinking and/or representation. This author draws on three modes of representation: enactive representation (action-based), iconic representation (image-based) and symbolic representation (language-based).

The first stage- *enactive*, occurs during the ages of 0-1 year. During this stage, thinking is based solely on physical actions and by infants "doing", as opposed to thinking (McLeod, 2019). The second stage- *iconic*, occurs during the ages of 1- 6 years. Information is stored as sensory images in the mind and mental images (icons) such as hearing, smell, or touch. The third stage is *symbolic*. This stage occurs from 7 years onwards. This is when information is stored in the form of codes or symbols, commonly known as language. In the symbolic stage, knowledge is stored as words. These

symbols are thereafter flexible and can be manipulated, ordered, and classified and don't constrain the individual solely to actions or images. Language is therefore very important as it allows us to deal with abstract concepts and enable a more complex and flexible cognition (McLeod, 2019). A practical example of language use as a mode of representation within the classroom can be described in the form of language/code-switching. This technique includes the teacher switching between the learner's HL and FAL to aid instruction and assist the child's understanding.

Anderson, Reder and Simon (1996) state that representation and degree of practice are critical for cognitive development and determining the transfer of knowledge from one task to another. The teacher is therefore required to make pedagogical links which involve moving between different modes of representation to facilitate and support the link-making process. In literacy instruction, teachers are advised to use a variety of techniques such as decoding, sounds, images, etc. to encourage link-making and assist literacy development. Gunel and Yesildag-Hasancebi (2016) argue that learners that can identify modal representations, understand their functions in communication, and efficiently make transitions between different representation modes, can learn concepts more easily and permanently. Therefore, the use of various representations can only prove beneficial in teaching and learning. In addition, these authors extend to say that if educators use different modes of representations and integrate them with writing-to-learn activities, this may further activate learners' cognitive abilities (Gunel & Yesildag-Hasancebi, 2016).

**Approach 5: moving between different scales and levels of explanation**

The fifth approach is *moving between different scales and levels of explanation*. Scott et al. (2011) refers to a variety of explanations that should be set at different scales of magnitude. He then refers to the three levels of representation presented by Treagust (2007). He suggests that the three levels that are fundamental to the scientific approach include the macroscopic level, the microscopic level, and the symbolic level. The macroscopic or phenomenological level refers to various phenomena, concrete or visible, that can be seen in everyday experiences. The microscopic or theoretical level bases explanations on abstract models (Treagust, 2007). Therefore, the teacher needs to establish a link when moving between different scales of descriptions and explanations. The third level refers to the symbolic representations that may apply to

both the macroscopic and microscopic scales. In terms of science, it may be seen as symbolic as learners need to learn the social language of science to ensure understanding (Scott et al., 2011). A practical example of *moving between different scales and levels of explanation* within a literacy environment can be learning about the new concept/vocabulary of “pencils”. On a macroscopic level, the pencil would be seen as a physical object. The learners can relate the word pencil to the physical object that they see in front of them. On an abstract level, the pencil is seen as a writing instrument. We can learn about where the pencil originates from, why we may want to use a pencil, what the pencil is made from, etc. On a symbolic level, the word “pencil’ is the symbolic representation of that specific object and that is why we call a pencil- “pencil”. In terms of literacy acquisition, teachers need to move through these different levels when explaining various new concepts. For example, when teaching “nouns”. A common noun is something you can touch. The teacher may show a variety of objects to illustrate the concept of a “noun” on a macroscopic level. Thereafter, the teacher may provide the formal definition of a noun that learners need to be able to recite. E.g. “a common noun are words for the type of things, person, animal, places and/or ideas. This is the abstract level. The term “noun” is therefore now the symbolic representation of anything, person, animal, place and/or idea.

In addition, teachers need to provide differentiated teaching and learning opportunities that are relatable to the learners and appeal to their everyday experiences. Teachers need to provide various levels of assistance for their learners that are at different reading levels. Therefore, teachers need to adapt their pedagogical practices for EFAL versus English HL learners.

**Approach 6: analogical link-making**

The last approach is *analogical link-making.* The teacher uses analogies to assist learners in understanding a scientific concept or way of explaining it. The use of an analogy helps to link the scientific concept with more accessible or familiar cases. Scott et al. (2011) state that this approach may not be necessary to develop a deeper conceptual understanding but may prove beneficial in supporting learning. Although this approach may be deemed less important in science pedagogy, it can be helpful in literacy instruction, particularly within an inclusive classroom setting. Lombardi (2018) states that analogies can be used to introduce new vocabulary or compare situations

or characters in literature. Secondly, connecting what children already know to concepts may sharpen their focus and deepen their understanding as it enables learners to make connections while recognizing recently acquired vocabulary which improves their reading comprehension. Thirdly, incorporating analogies may encourage learners to think about what they have previously learnt and use it as an effective learning tool to reinforce thinking skills and conceptual understanding. Lastly, the use of analogies can aid learner understanding as it helps learners understand a lesson more easily as the teacher forms connections between the new topic and what has already previously been taught (Lombardi, 2018). By drawing upon various analogies that are relevant to learners' lived experiences, we may assist learners to develop deeper conceptual understandings and apply their acquired knowledge to other aspects of learning. These six pedagogical approaches can all be adapted accordingly to support knowledge building within the classroom.

***Form 2- to promote continuity***

Hereafter, we can refer back to the second form of link-making- *to promote continuation*. Pedagogical link-making to promote continuity suggests that teaching and learning should occur over time and links between teaching and learning events should occur at different points in time (Scott et al., 2011). This form can also be closely linked to the favourable teaching approach of Vygotsky's scaffolding. This theory states that learners learn more when working with someone who has a broader scope of knowledge than the learner learning the content. The teacher scaffolds the material in smaller "chunks" so that the learner can expand their understanding of the new material _. The teacher may teach one small "chunk" today and teach the next "chunk" the following day. The teacher will use the knowledge learnt the previous day and scaffold that knowledge to teach the new topic. This instruction technique is based on "continuity" to ensure link-making.

In terms of language development, this form is supported by various academics who suggest continuous engagement with the HL and FAL is necessary to ensure language proficiency. Scott et al. (2011) suggests two pedagogical approaches that may promote continuity within the classroom. These include the development of a scientific story and managing/organizing the activities of the classroom. The saying "practice makes perfect" can be used to support literacy development. Learners must

be actively exposed to the second language, in verbal and written forms to encourage and enhance literacy acquisition in the FAL. This is also supported by Chall's (1996) six stages of reading development whereby learners should be continuously exposed to print and spoken word. This aims to further develop the child's phonological awareness, letter-sound knowledge, and ability to manipulate phonemes and syllables (The Literacy Bug, n.d.). Constant exposure and frequent repetition will enhance the language and thereafter literacy development.

***Form 3- encouragement of emotional engagement***

The last form- the *encouragement of emotional engagement*, emphasizes the role of the teacher to ensure a positive emotional response from learners during teaching and learning (Scott et al., 2011). Emotional engagement can be described as the learner's involvement and enthusiasm for school and learning. Walden University (n.d.) states that when learners are emotionally engaged, they are more likely to want to participate in school. Similarly, emotional engagement can be closely linked to learners' overall achievement as the more engaged learners are in their learning, the greater their achievements (Walden University, n.d.).

This form emphasizes the need for emotional engagement as a requirement for knowledge building. However, sometimes, despite a teacher's full effort, some topics (for example, grammar) remain to be "uninteresting". This may be a critique to the theory as even though a topic may not be "interesting", if is part of the curriculum, the teacher has to still teach it.

Although, there may be a decrease in emotional engagement, this does not negate the value of learning or the concept being taught. Learning does still take place, even when using undesirable teaching techniques and approaches such as a teacher-centred classroom, rote learning, etc. However, Scott et al. (2011) state that new information is more likely to be remembered if it is imbued with "an emotional charge". Therefore, the topic being taught does not necessarily have to be "interesting" as long as the manner in which the teacher delivers the lesson and invokes an emotional charge. The teacher should encourage learner involvement, entice learner interest and evoke emotional engagement. This can be achieved through incorporating elements such as dance, music, actions, rhymes, stories, etc.

PLM has been developed and used in a variety of educational research situations and has proven very useful in the explanation of learning actions. It may be used as an analytical lens to observe the efficacy of teachers' pedagogical choices in literacy teaching, particularly with EFAL learners, and thereby establish the most promising pedagogical actions to develop EFAL.

## 2.8 Literacy intervention programmes

Literacy levels are a well-known issue within South Africa and therefore various interventions need to be drastically implemented to address our dire statistics. In Nathanson's (2008) view, all learners require a sound, balanced classroom literacy programme that will engage all the learners in a variety of literacy experiences. This balanced approach should include the integration of language and literacy across modes of language (listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting) and across disciplines, recognize the reciprocity of reading and writing, attend to literacy and other skills, as well as strategies when reading, writing and learning from a text (Nathanson, 2008).

In order to achieve this, teachers need to use a flexible organizational framework that includes various literacy strategies such as reading aloud, guided reading and writing, etc. (Nathanson, 2008). In addition, various interventions both inside and outside of the classroom need to be adopted to ensure that learners develop a strong literacy foundation in English to ensure that they have the required necessary reading and writing skills for Grade 4. These intervention programmes can take the form of various reading and literacy programmes which can be conducted by the school or external facilitators. In theory, if this framework is applied, learners should acquire the necessary language and literacy skills that will ensure proficiency.

All aspects of learning, over and above classroom support, should be encouraged to ensure learner success. In order to provide learners with the required support, teachers require continuous professional development and support to ensure their pedagogical approaches are well adapted to their classroom environments and individual learners' abilities, as well as design and facilitate various literacy intervention programmes that may be needed by their classroom or school.

## 2.9 Conclusion

This chapter has explored literacy in much greater depth and has analysed the challenges currently evident within HL and EFAL literacy acquisition. This research would like to observe the current pedagogical approaches that are currently in place and used by teachers to assist with these pressing issues. This may aid the promotion of inclusive education so that we may adequately address this barrier to learning that is still challenging many learners across South Africa and perpetuating the exclusionary practices still evident in schools.

It is apparent that the teacher's role in terms of literacy acquisition is pertinent and therefore in an attempt to improve our literacy rates, we need to find ways to inform our teachers on new ways to assist their learners, ensure literacy acquisition (in the HL and FAL) and to successfully facilitate the transition to English as the LoLT in Grade 4.

The next chapter will explore how the research intends to collect the relevant data and analyse the pedagogical practices currently in place in Western Cape schools in order to deepen our understanding of the current pedagogical practices of Grade 3 educators, relative to what the CAPS documents prescribe to teachers.

# Chapter Three: Methodology and Research Design

## 3.1 Introduction

This study intended to analyse the pedagogical practices of Grade 3 teachers in assisting EFAL learners in literacy acquisition. Chapter three will explain the research design and methodology adopted by this study to help achieve the research aims and gain additional insight into appropriate pedagogies for EFAL learners. The research was conducted within two South African non-English schools and therefore, in order to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of the research part pants from these schools, ethical considerations needed to be taken into consideration to ensure the validity of the study.

## 3.2 Research Design

The research design section will provide insight into the methodology used throughout the research process and the selected paradigmatic framework that provided a logical plan to tackle the research questions through the collection, interpretation, analysis, and discussion of the acquired data.

### *3.2.1. Philosophical orientation*

A paradigm is a perspective or set of ideas that guide the research practice. This set of beliefs provides insight into the researcher's worldview about the nature of reality (ontology), the nature of knowledge (epistemology) and the nature of human nature (axiology) (Mertens, 2009). This research was guided by an interpretivist approach within the critical paradigm.

The critical paradigm accepts that our social world is characterised by injustice, exploitation, as well as political and economic domination (Le Grange & Beets, 2005). These injustices are also very much apparent within our education system. A critical researcher, therefore, conducts research within this unjust world and does so through an interpretivist lens that seeks to understand how individuals experience and construct social reality (Le Grange & Beets, 2005). The primary focus of the critical

paradigm is to identify, contest and help resolve systemic inequalities and social injustices in society (Taylor, 2013).

### *3.2.2. Qualitative Research*

This report adopted a qualitative research approach. Silverman (2014) explains qualitative research as the process of describing real-life situations and seeks to understand certain phenomena in real-world contexts. As such, the qualitative data are to be collected from the natural setting of the educational context, and not from contrived environments or laboratories. Qualitative research focuses on capturing participants' experiences of phenomena in a natural setting and offers an effective way to the insight and understanding of people's lived experiences (Silverman, 2014). The research is concerned with the behaviours, actions and interactions of people in the real-world setting and can be used to capture and make sense of the complexities of the real world by trying to understand the situation as a whole (Patton & Schwandt, 2015). This study, therefore, used data collection tools to understand the social behaviour of educators within a particular social situation.

Denny and Weckesser (2020) stipulated that qualitative research can be used to inform the development of interventions and/or in understanding barriers. This is key in this study as the aim was to identify teachers' pedagogical practices, in an attempt to identify where literacy acquisition may be going wrong in our education system. Insight from this study could in turn be used to more accurately inform teachers' pedagogical practices and/or in the development of literacy interventions.

### *3.2.3. Case Study*

This research adopted a case study research design. Case studies are the analyses of persons, events, decisions, policies, institutions or other systems (Astalin, 2013). Creswell, Hanson, Clark and Morales (2007, p. 77) state that a case study approach should be used when the researcher has a "case bounded by time or place that can inform a problem". A case study, therefore, explores multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (interviews, observations) and thereafter reports a case description and case-based themes (Creswell *et al*., 2007).

This study had a narrow focus and therefore the selection of a case study was deemed most appropriate. The main focus of this research report was to offer insight into the pedagogical practices of Grade 3 educators in assisting EFAL learners in language development and literacy acquisition to ensure learners have the necessary English skills to transition to Grade 4.

### *3.2.4. Research Site and Participants*

The research was conducted within two primary schools in the Western Cape. These schools were non-English schools to ensure that English was the FAL for all learners. Two Grade 3 teachers within each school were selected to get a wide understanding of the current literacy pedagogies. These teachers provided two detailed EFAL lesson plans, were observed and then later interviewed.

### *3.2.5. Sampling*

A homogenous purposive sampling approach was utilized in this study to carefully select the participants that were included in the case study. A purposive sampling includes carefully selecting the members of the population to participate in the study (Foley, 2018). The participants in this study were carefully selected to produce the most appropriate results and provide an accurate representation of the phenomenon.

The participants in the study consisted of two Grade 3 teachers from two different schools in the Western Cape. These participants were appropriate for the homogenous purposive sample because the members of the sample had shared characteristics. These shared characteristics included that they all had learners in their class whose HL was not English and therefore were required to learn in their FAL. Each of these teachers had to navigate around the language differences and challenges inflicted on EFAL learners and had to adapt their pedagogical practices accordingly to assist all the learners in the classroom. These educators were required to ensure that the Grade 3 learners have a strong EFAL foundation to ensure academic success in English as the LoLT from Grade 4 onwards.

The selected participants were asked to commit to participation and be willing to provide copies of their EFAL lesson plans, undergo observations of their EFAL lessons

and partake in semi-structured interviews regarding their pedagogical practices and literacy interventions. They were free to withdraw at any time during the research and were entitled to state whether or not I was able to use their information (verbal and/or written) provided within the study.

## 3.3 Data Collection Process

Prior to commencing the study, ethical clearance needed to be granted. Ethical clearance from the University of Witwatersrand was firstly required to ensure that the research would adhere to the accepted ethical standards of the university and would be conducted in an ethically accountable manner. This was to ensure the minimization of any risk of harm that may be imposed on the participants due to the research. In addition, ethical clearance needed to be granted from the Department of Education to enter the schools and to observe teachers and learners within the classroom.

Thereafter, permission needed to be given by the participating schools. The principal and/or the school governing body needed to grant permission for my visit and participation in their school. Lastly, I needed to consult the voluntary Grade 3 educators to ask their permission to participate in the study. I provided the school and the relevant educators with a detailed summary of the study, the proposed goals/outcomes, as well as the ethical safeguards. Permission from learners nor parents was required as the learners were not engaged in any discussion, nor were they directly involved in the study. This was because the main purpose of the study was to observe teachers' pedagogies and their efficacy in teaching EFAL. The study intended to observe two EFAL lessons by four Grade 3 educators within two Western Cape, non-English schools.

Once all permission had been granted and informed consent obtained, I could conduct my research accordingly. I received two detailed EFAL lesson plans from four Grade 3 educators in total, these would later be analysed. Thereafter, I observed two EFAL lessons conducted by each educator. Upon completion of the observed EFAL lessons, I conducted semi-structured interviews with each participating educator. Once I had received the lesson plans, observed the EFAL lessons and conducted the semi-structured interviews, the data analysis process could continue.

## 3.4 Data Collection Instruments

The following instruments were used to collect the required data:

### *3.4.1. Observations:*

Observation is where researchers observe participants' ongoing behaviour in their natural environment. The behaviour is systematically observed and recorded to explain a particular phenomenon first-hand (Price, Chiang, Leighton & Cuttler, n.d.). Observational research is intended to learn more about a particular phenomenon. It involves watching, listening, reflecting and engaging with the participants (Fargas-Malet, McSherry, Larkin & Robinson, 2010). The researcher can observe what people do instead of what they profess to do. This was particularly useful so that I could compare the proposed pedagogical practices set out by the CAPS document versus what teachers were actually doing in the classroom. During the observation period, I used an observation checklist (*See Appendix 1*) to guide what may be seen as appropriate events during the lesson and used the observation schedule to record any events and their effectiveness in link-making (*See Appendix 2*). The data gathered during the observation schedule were used to inform and guide the interviews and were analysed in terms of the PLM framework.

Observations occurred in the Grade 3 classrooms during EFAL lessons. The purpose of these observations was to observe the pedagogical practices that teachers had introduced in their classrooms to facilitate EFAL learning and whether these pedagogies facilitate and/or enhanced PLM.

Observations were used to analyse first-hand experiences. Therefore, the phenomenon was limited to current situations as the problems of the past or future could not be studied through observations (Singh, 2010). Although I may not have witnessed all the literacy challenges in the classroom, the use of the interviews provided deeper insight into the teachers' perspectives on various phenomena that may have been happening for a long period of time.

Observation as a data collection tool is often seen as time-consuming and may not accurately reflect the true phenomenon currently taking place across South African

schools. As I was the sole researcher, the research was limited to a small sample size as it was limited to what the observer can observe at one time. However, this study intended to observe multiple lessons by various teachers across different settings in an attempt to get a wider perspective and gain a deeper understanding of current pedagogical practices across Western Cape schools.

The researcher's presence could also have had a behavioural and environmental impact on the study. I tried to limit my impact on behaviour and the environment by not communicating with the teacher or learner during the lesson. As the researcher is merely observing, the researcher has no influence or control over the physical situation. However, although, I did not communicate with the teacher or the learners during the lesson, my presence within the classroom was still felt by the learners and the teacher and this may have impacted how the learners responded or reacted to the teacher and the lesson. Within this study, my lack of involvement was advantageous as my goal was solely to document the current pedagogical practices evident in the field and in turn relate it to what the DoE and CAPS indicated, or suggested educators to use to enhance literacy acquisition amongst EFAL learners.

### *3.4.2. Classroom Observation Checklist*

In order to mitigate any potential bias during the classroom observations, I used an observation checklist. The observation checklist was based on the Madeline Hunter Lesson Plan Model which provided seven steps to an effective lesson that promotes instruction, checking for understanding and practice (Wilson, 2022). The checklist provided a list of predesigned behaviour indices that could be linked to PLM. During the classroom observations, I recorded the behaviours observed and added any additional comments.

### *3.4.3. Semi-structured interviews:*

Semi-structured interviews is a qualitative data collection tool whereby the researcher will ask participants a set of pre-existing questions that require in-depth answers (Thibodeaux, 2020). However, they also allow the researcher the flexibility to deviate and probe further questions if they arise during the interview (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

The interview questions were formulated before the interview and each participant was asked the same set of basic questions. By having a set of standardized questions, I was able to compose a comparability of responses. This enabled and facilitated the organization and analysis of the data (Patton & Schwandt, 2015).

The questions in the interview were worded in an open-ended format to allow for discussion (Patton & Schwandt, 2015). These interviews allowed for in-depth investigation and free participant responses. The interview questions were aimed at providing insight into the teachers' pedagogical choices, particularly in terms of literacy teaching. These teachers had first-hand experience with EFAL learners and were therefore, able to provide insight into the various literacy challenges that the learners are faced with due to language implications. Furthermore, they elaborated on the current literacy interventions that they introduced to assist their EFAL learners.

The first six questions in the interview were asked to get demographical data from the participant. These questions included information such as time in the profession, their current teaching position, highest teaching qualification, etc. Thereafter, the next set of questions was based on the previously presented EFAL lesson. During my lesson observations, I noted various techniques used by the teacher to evoke meaning and learner engagement. These questions were teacher specific, and I asked the teacher to provide more insight into why they did/did not do certain things in their lesson. Subsequently, I reverted to the predetermined questions originally set in my semi-structured interview. These predetermined questions were intended to gain insight into *their* learners, their learners' EFAL ability and what *they* were doing as teachers to adequately teach and ensure EFAL acquisition. Lastly, some questions were guided by the EFAL CAPS document to gain additional insight into how the teachers were using the document and the subject's requirements to teach EFAL.

Including a set of predetermined questions in the interview incurred some challenges. It hindered flexibility in relating the interview to the participant and circumstances, as well as constrained and limited the naturalness and relevance of the questions and answers (Patton & Schwandt, 2015). These pre-existing questions were formulated and placed within an interview schedule to create the structure (*See Appendix 4*).

Although the interview was guided by a set of predetermined questions, the semi-structured nature of the interview provided me with the flexibility to use the interviewees' answers and further probe to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

### *3.4.4. Audio recording:*

Recordings were taken during the teacher interviews. This was used for data analysis and assisted me in accurately transcribing the interview. In addition, the use of audio recordings enabled me to revert back to the interviews to reanalyse the data in search of recurring patterns or findings. The audio recordings improved factual precision and thereby could be used to ensure accuracy and efficiency (Smith & Noble, 2014).

### *3.4.5. Document Analysis:*

Document analysis uses a systematic procedure to analyse various documentary evidence. This requires the repeated review, examination, and interpretation of the data in order to gain adequate meaning and conceptual understanding. Document analysis may prove beneficial as it may be used during triangulation as the documents may corroborate or refute the findings which will help guard against bias (Frey, 2018).

#### 3.4.5.1. Lesson Plans:

The data collected from the observations and the interviews were supplemented by an analysis of the lesson plans submitted by the Grade 3 educators. A lesson plan provides a detailed guide of the lesson: how it will be taught, what the learner should gain from the lesson (outcome) and how will learning be measured. This provided teachers with an effective teaching guide. I used the educators' lesson plans in conjunction with the classroom observation to gain an overview of the teacher's understanding and their idea of what was effective in their classroom environment.

#### 3.4.5.2. Lesson Plan Checklist:

The lesson plan checklist (*See Appendix 3*) provided a framework to analyse the teachers' lesson plans and establish whether their proposed lessons aligned with what was stipulated by the EFAL CAPS document. In addition, it was used to measure the

efficacy of the lesson and cross analyse it in terms of the lesson execution and whether the proposed goals and outcomes were achievable and reached at the end of the lesson.

## 3.5. Data Analysis

The data was gathered through the means of lesson observations, lesson plan analysis and followed by semi-structured interviews. Once the data was gathered, reading and interpretation were the starting point for meaningful analysis.

Firstly, the researcher has to familiarise themself with the raw data by reading and re-reading. This ensures that the researcher may gain deeper insight into the phenomena and may assist with finding commonalities among the participants. There were commonalities in their pedagogical actions during the observed lessons. Thereafter, the semi-structured interviews enabled the participants to provide insight into their pedagogical actions and deciding factors for these actions.

The data collected was then later analysed through the PLM lens. This framework helped to gauge whether the practices used by the teachers during the lessons were effective in creating meaningful links. These pedagogical links determined whether learners had actively engaged in the lesson and assisted with knowledge acquisition. In addition, the CAPS document was used to establish whether the effective practices used by teachers aligned with what was prescribed by the Grade 3 curriculum.

## 3.6. Compliance with Ethical Standards

Walsham (2006) emphasized that when doing qualitative research, there are often four main ethical issues that may arise. These areas of concern included harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy and deception.

Firstly, during the research process, often one is uncertain as to the potential harm that may arise due to the presence of the researcher. Therefore, I had to ensure that no harm would come to the participants due to their involvement in the research process.

Secondly, prior to commencing the study, I needed to obtain the necessary permission from the various authorities involved. Firstly, I needed to obtain ethical clearance from the University of Witwatersrand, as well as the DoE to conduct my study within the chosen government institutions (See *Appendix 9*). These guidelines, codes and laws imposed by professional associations and the government were enforced to control research activity while protecting the participants of the study and assisted in hindering any potential ethical dilemmas.

Thereafter, I needed to gain permission from the participating schools. I approached the various principals and provided them with a detailed outline of my proposed study and the implications it may have on their teachers and/or learners (*See Appendix 5*).

Once I had been given access to the schools, I gained consent from the individual potential participant educators (See Appendix 6). I informed these educators of their role in the research (EFAL lesson plans, EFAL lesson observations and semi-structured interviews), as well as the purpose and methodology of the study. These educators thereafter provided written, voluntary consent (*See Appendix 7*). Although consent was imperative at the beginning of the research process, Walsham (2006) states that one cannot always enable fully informed consent. The participants needed to be well informed about the process of the research and their role as a participant. Participants were allowed to withdraw from the research at any time. Although their learners were not directly involved in the study, as the focus lay mainly on the educators, learners were still present in the classroom during the observations. Therefore, I informed the learners of the reason for my classroom visits and gained verbal assent from all the learners (*See Appendix 8)*.

Thirdly, the invasion of privacy could have occurred during the observation task. Teachers may have felt that the presence of the researcher may have been imposed and this could have enticed emotions such as anxiety, pressure, and intimidation (Walsham, 2006). The notion of data dissemination needed to be taken into account as the teachers who participated in the study may have been concerned about issues involving confidentiality and the extent to which the data could be reported back (Burgess, 1989). Confidentiality and anonymity were emphasized and ensured throughout the research process, i.e., during the procedures for the collection, storage, and disposal of audio recordings.

Lastly, a sense of deception may have arisen (Walsham, 2006). This may have been caused if the participants were not fully informed or aware of the purpose of the study. This could have been derived as a result of the language barrier. If the teacher participants' HL was isiXhosa or Afrikaans and the interviews were conducted in English, miscommunication may have arisen due to differences in language. If necessary, this ethical issue could have been resolved by having the teachers go through the data afterwards, or by having a translator. No ethical issues arose during and/or after the research process and therefore, this step was not conducted.

It was vital to be mindful of these ethical issues when entering the field of research, especially when working with vulnerable people. I needed to establish rapport with the participants to diminish any power relations and ensure authenticity. I attempted to establish rapport with educators by meeting with them prior to the lesson observations. I explained the research project, what I would be observing and what was expected from them. I gave them the opportunity to voice any fears or grievances prior to the study to ensure that they would feel comfortable with my presence in their classroom.

In addition, to resolve these ethical dilemmas, one may have encouraged collaboration. This collaboration could establish working relationships and engage in collaborative research (Burgess, 1989). This relationship could be established and encouraged through a built-up rapport between myself and the participants. This sense of rapport and collaboration was evident after each lesson as often I sat with the educators whereby, I listened and gave them the opportunity to speak freely speak about what they thought about teaching and learning EFAL. During these discussions, we could build on shared experiences and alleviated any power dynamics. All the above-mentioned steps were used to ensure that the key principles of validity and trustworthiness mitigated any bias imposed by myself as the researcher.

### *3.6.1. Validity*

The concept of validity is an indication of how sound the research is (Le Grange & Beets, 2005). When conducting research, for the data to be valid, the research design must seek counter-patterns, as well as convergences in the data. This is known as triangulation. The use of multiple data collection tools for the same phenomenon will enable method triangulation. Triangulation allows for the comparison of different data

sources and methods to confirm one's findings. This may be used to justify the conclusion, identify areas for future research and strengthen the validity of the study (Save the Children, n.d.). Triangulation was effectively used throughout this study through the use of observations (checklists and schedules), semi-structured interviews, audio recordings and the lesson plan analysis.

In addition, validity was ensured through sampling validity. This refers to the "area of coverage of the measure within the research area is vast" (Dudovskiy, 2022). Although this phenomenon is prevalent across South Africa, I have used a specific pattern of sampling methods that positively informed the aims and objectives of the study.

### *3.6.2. Research Bias*

Smith and Noble (2014, p. 1) refer to research bias as "an inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair"; "a concentration on an interest in one particular area or subject"; and "a systematic distortion of statistical results due to a factor not allowed for in their derivation".

Bias may take place at various levels within the study, such as during the study design, participant selection, data collection and measurement, analysis and within the publication (Smith & Noble, 2014). Although research bias imposed by the researcher cannot be completely avoided, it can be mitigated.

This research was conducted by a single researcher. Often, if researchers conduct research alone, they are subjected to criticism for being biased. However, this criticism was avoided as the research utilized multiple data collection methods and maintained a detailed audit trail. In addition, the data collection and analysis were reviewed by my research supervisor as well as various academics in the field. I presented my research project to various academics via *Microsoft Teams,* a digitical meeting application. During this presentation, they questioned certain elements and encouraged me to dive deeper into certain topics. This acted as a means to raise any necessary questions or concerns of bias (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Having the research peer-reviewed added to the validity of the research as the panel of peers could determine whether the data collection tools were valid and appropriate. Furthermore, the peer review

ensured the confirmability of the research. This refers to objectivity, neutrality and unbiased interpretation of the findings by the researcher (Bosman, 2020).

### *3.6.3. Trustworthiness*

Bosman (2020) stipulates that the trustworthiness of research is measured against the criteria of credibility, dependability, confirmability and authenticity.

This study ensured the trustworthiness of the findings by providing a detailed description of the research process. A detailed description of the research process and its outcomes encourages a sense of trust in the reader. Maintaining transparency in the research process and its findings can provide readers with a basis for judging the credibility of the study (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

This notion of credibility is vital in ensuring the quality of the research. Credibility refers to the “overarching criterion for judging the trustworthiness of the qualitative data analysis” (Bosman, 2020, slide 33). Credibility is the extent to which the results provide a true reflection of the truth and thereby implying the researcher’s professional integrity, methodological competence and rigour (Bosman, 2020).

The use of interviews, audio recordings, observation checklist and schedule from the field contributed to the trustworthiness of this case. The data was gathered from first-hand experience and included personal views and opinions of the units of analysis. The data and literature that supported the findings illustrated that the phenomenon being researched was being understood from various points of view and ways of knowing (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This added to the credibility of the research and its findings.

To ensure trustworthiness in research, the researcher has to incorporate and employ the appropriate methods for data collection and analysis. The field notes collected throughout the research process; the audio recordings from interviews, the interview transcripts, observation checklists and schedules enabled me to provide a detailed account of the research process. This all contributed to the creation of the audit trail. This audit trail will allow other researchers or interested parties to understand the

process taken during the research and thereby judge the trustworthiness of its outcomes (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

The quality of the research can also be measured by the dependability of the research. Dependability is concerned with the reliability of the findings and considers whether or not the same findings would have emerged if the study was to be repeated or conducted by another researcher (Bosman, 2020). This was ensured by thoroughly documenting the research process and ensuring that I had gone through all the necessary research steps.

Lastly, the trustworthiness of the research was increased by ensuring that the data collected was, in fact, an actual representation of the research participants. This is known as authenticity. Authenticity is used to determine whether or not the researcher provided a balanced view of the various perspectives, beliefs and values of the participants (Bosman, 2020).

## 3.7. Conclusion

This chapter introduced the focus of the study through the analysis of teachers and their EFAL pedagogical practices. It provided a detailed account of the research methodology, data analysis and ethical considerations. The results rendered from this study would be analyzed through a PLM lens and against the CAPS curriculum to establish whether teachers were implementing the appropriate strategies to encourage positive link-making amongst EFAL learners.

# CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF DATA

## 4.1 Introduction

Chapter four aims to outline the research participants and present the general findings from the data collection process. The data collection process incorporated the use of a lesson plan analysis, EFAL lesson observations and a semi-structured interview with four Grade 3 educators within two non-English schools in the Western Cape. This information would provide insight into the pedagogical choices made by educators to assist and enhance their EFAL lessons to develop language and literacy.

## 4.2 Data Collection

The data collected for this research project was obtained from four Grade 3 educators in two non-English Western Cape schools. These educators were required to submit two EFAL lesson plans which would later be analyzed in terms of EFAL CAPS, undergo observation of two EFAL lessons and thereafter engage in a semi-structured interview.

The lesson plan analysis aimed to identify whether the participant educators designed their EFAL lessons in accordance with the EFAL CAPS document. Thereafter, the lesson observations aimed to identify the key pedagogical actions that teachers utilized throughout their EFAL lessons. These actions would later be analyzed to identify their efficacy in terms of PLM. Lastly, the semi-structured interviews were used to gain insight into the teachers' pedagogical actions and their opinions regarding EFAL literacy and the EFAL CAPS document.

### *4.2.1 Synopsis of Research Site*

In order to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the research sites and their participants, the following pseudonyms were used for the participants in this study.

*Table 3: Pseudonyms for the research participants*

| **Pseudonyms for the schools and participants** | |
|---|---|
| **Schools** | **Teachers** |
| School 1 | Teacher A and Teacher B |
| School 2 | Teacher C and Teacher D |

#### 4.2.1.1 School

The research was conducted within two primary schools in the Western Cape. The LoLT in these schools in Grades 1-3 was isiXhosa. Many of the learners that attend these schools come from a home environment whereby they speak isiXhosa as their first language and English as their first/second additional language. These learners were afforded the opportunity to attend schooling in their HL and thereafter have to transition to English as the LoLT in Grade 4.

#### 4.2.1.2 Teachers

The Grade 3 teacher participants were purposively selected as the aim of the research was to analyze the Grade 3 teachers' pedagogical choices to ensure that learners had adequately acquired English as a FAL to ensure academic success from Grade 4 onwards.

The selected teachers were observed during two EFAL lessons. Each teacher was required to provide a lesson plan for the presented lessons and provide insight into the lessons during a semi-structured interview.

Table 4 expands on the demographic information of each participating educator. The participants' demographics, teaching position, highest teaching qualification, total teaching experience, teaching time at their particular school and their HL. This information provided additional insight into the participant educators and was used to differentiate the teachers.

*Table 4: Demographic information of the participants*

| **Demographic information of the teachers who were interviewed** | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **School's name** | **Teacher's name** | **Current teaching position** | **Highest teaching qualification** | **Total teaching experience** | **Teaching time at the current school** | **Home language** |
| School 1 | Teacher A | Grade 3 educator | Bachelor's degree in Education | 10 years | 8 years | isiXhosa |
| School 1 | Teacher B | Grade 3 educator | Bachelor's degree in Education | 6 years | 6 years | isiXhosa |
| School 2 | Teacher C | Grade 3 educator | PGCE (post graduate certificate in education) | 8 years | 7 years | isiXhosa |
| School 2 | Teacher D | Grade 3 educator | Higher diploma in education | 24 years | 4 years | isiXhosa |

### *4.2.2 General Feedback of the Participants*

The Grade 3 teacher participants conducted their EFAL lessons daily in the morning. The lessons ranged from 30-60 minutes long. The teachers planned their lessons according to the EFAL CAPS curriculum to ensure the learners are adequately prepared for the transition to English as the LoLT in Grade 4. However, despite their efforts, all the participants shared the same sentiments that their learners would not be adequately prepared for this transition due to the lack of exposure to English and English literacy.

## 4.3 Lesson Plans

The WCED mandated the EFAL CAPS document which acts as a guideline to assist teachers in navigating the grade and subject/learning area. The document outlines the objectives for each subject/learning area throughout the term. Teachers are required to use this guide to develop adequate lesson plans that may support teaching and learning (Western Cape Education Department, 2022).

The selected participants provided a detailed lesson plan for each EFAL lesson observed (eight lesson plans in total). These lesson plans should have been based on the goals and objectives provided within the EFAL CAPS document. These lessons were conducted in term 3, weeks 1-5. The lesson plans were in turn analyzed according to the designed lesson plan checklist criteria (*see Appendix 3*).

A lesson plan provides a detailed structure of the lesson. It outlines what the learners will learn during the lesson (objectives), how the lesson will be taught and how the learner will be assessed to check for conceptual understanding (Shalem et al., 2018).

The aim of a lesson plan is to translate the curriculum into learning activities. The teachers used their lesson plans to guide their lessons and ensure that they were adequately prepared to teach new concepts and engage their students accordingly. All four teacher participants used the EFAL CAPS document and the Grade 3, term 3 EFAL lesson plan book provided by DoBE to guide their lesson planning.

Teachers will set lesson objectives to outline what the learners will be able to do and/or have achieved at the end of the lesson. Teacher A clearly indicated what he expected from learners at the end of the lesson. Whereas Teachers B, C and D did not indicate the main objectives of the lesson.

The strategies, materials and assessments used in the lesson are determined by, and must align with the lesson's objective (Kolling & Shumway-Pitt, 2019). This is an important element of the lesson plan as it assists the teacher in ensuring that they develop a purposeful lesson, and it can be used to assist in guiding formal and informal assessments.

Their lesson plans indicated the various materials/resources needed to conduct the lesson. The use of visual and/or teaching aids are used to support teaching and learning and encourage understanding. During the observed lessons, the teachers used visual aids such as cue cards, Big Books, textbooks, and pictures to enhance learning and understanding.

In addition, lesson plans are required to include an assessment tool to allow the teacher to check for understanding. All the teacher participants included informal assessment tools at the end of either one or both of their lessons.

In the FP, the EFAL CAPS document is broken up into three main components: *Listening and Speaking, Reading and Phonics,* and *Writing and Language use*. Teachers must incorporate these components into their EFAL lessons to adequately develop their learners' language skills.

*Table 5* identifies if the participating educators' lesson plans aligned with EFAL CAPS for term 3, weeks 1-5 in terms of the three components.

*Table 5: Lesson plan alignment in terms of EFAL CAPS document*

| **Teacher participants:** | **Components:** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Lesson:** | ***Listening and Speaking*** | ***Reading and Phonics*** | ***Writing and Language use*** |
| Teacher A | Lesson 1: Phonics- letter "a" | YES | NO | YES |
| | Lesson 2: Pronouns | YES | NO | YES |
| Teacher B | Lesson 1: Verbs | YES | NO | YES |
| | Lesson 2: Reading | YES | YES | NO |
| Teacher C | Lesson 1: Big Book first read | YES | NO | NO |
| | Lesson 2: Big Book second read | YES | YES | YES |
| Teacher D | Lesson 1- "ow" sound introduction | YES | YES | NO |
| | Lesson 2- "ow" sound consolidation | YES | YES | YES |

### *Listening and Speaking*

It was evident in all four participating teachers' lesson plans that emphasis was placed on *listening and speaking* in their EFAL lessons. They all incorporated a song/rhyme

at the beginning of the lesson as the lesson introduction and all made use of visual representations to aid their lessons. In addition, Teachers B and C included the use of a story in their lesson plan to encourage *listening and speaking*.

***Reading and Phonics***

Teachers B, C and D incorporated reading into their lesson plans and placed emphasis on English reading. They planned to integrate reading into the lesson through shared reading and/or group-guided reading. Teachers B and D incorporated group-guided reading into their lesson plans whereby they would work with small, same-ability groups for a group-guided reading session.

***Writing and Language Use***

Teachers A and B incorporated a written activity worksheet to consolidate lesson one. Thereafter, for lesson two, Teacher A provided learners with the opportunity to practice the new vocabulary in their workbooks and Teacher B planned to use the learners' DBE (Department of Basic Education textbook) books to consolidate the lesson. During Teachers C and D's first lesson plan, they did not incorporate a written activity. However, in their second lesson plan, they incorporated a written worksheet activity to consolidate the new concept.

The lesson plan checklist was used to analyze the teachers' two EFAL lesson plans. The checklist criteria were designed in accordance with the PLM approaches to ensure that the educators were developing lessons that would enhance teaching and learning.

Teachers B, C and D's lesson plans were aligned with the CAPS document. Teacher A's lesson plan, however, did not align with the prescribed lessons set out by the DoBE for term 3. He attributed this to his class moving slower than anticipated. He felt the need to consolidate the single sounds first as opposed to progressing to digraphs.

## 4.4. Classroom Lesson Observations

I observed two EFAL lessons with Teacher A and Teacher B at School 1 and two EFAL lessons with Teacher C and Teacher D at School 2. Altogether, a total of eight EFAL lessons were observed. During each lesson, I recorded each event that the

teacher did, as well as the learners' responses to these events on the observation schedule. This provided the necessary data needed to unpack the various teachers' strategies and pedagogical choices in teaching EFAL and its efficacy for PLM which will be further discussed in Chapter five.

### *4.4.1. Lesson descriptions*

Teacher A

Teacher A introduced both of his lessons with a song. The first lesson was a phonics lesson and was based on the revision of the letter "a". Lesson two was based on language structure. The teacher revised a previously taught subject- "nouns" and used this as scaffolding for the introduction of the new topic- "pronouns". During both lessons, he encouraged learner participation by asking different learners for examples and then wrote the learners' responses on the chalkboard. He concluded the lessons with a written activity. Lesson 1 required learners to match the correct picture and word. Lesson 2 required learners to follow the instructions from the chalkboard. The teacher wrote the required sentences and the learners had to correct the sentence using their acquired knowledge of the topic.

Teacher B

Teacher B introduced both of her lessons with a rhyme as an icebreaker. Lesson one revised the concept of "verbs". The teacher used visual aids and cue cards to introduce the topic. Thereafter, she encouraged all the learners to participate, using their whole bodies to re-enact the verb. She consolidated the lesson with a written activity that required the learners to fill in the correct verb for each image. Lesson 2 included a story from the Grade 3 DBE workbooks. The teacher read the story while the learners followed along in their own books. The teacher gave the learners an opportunity for them to discuss what they knew about the topic and what they could identify from the picture. She concluded the lesson with a song and a written activity in the DBE book. As the class completed the written activity, Teacher B called a small group of learners for group-guided reading practice. Here, she sat with a few learners and consolidated the lesson by rereading the story and checking for understanding.

Teacher C

Teacher C introduced both lessons by greeting the learners in English. Thereafter, the learners learnt a new song in lesson one and practised the song again as the icebreaker in lesson two. Lesson one incorporated the introduction of a story from a Grade 3 Big Book. A “Big Book” is a larger version of a story that is used in FP classes to share the story with the whole class. The Big Book includes story images and often simplified sentences to assist learners in reading. The teacher introduced the book by showing the pictures and giving learners the opportunity to predict the story. Learners were encouraged to participate through probing questions about the story. The following lesson was a continuation of the previous lesson. During lesson two, she read the story and asked the learners questions about the story. She explained a concept and asked the learners to repeat it or explain it back to her in isiXhosa. Thereafter, she concluded the story with a written activity that required learners to read the sentences and sequence the story correctly.

Teacher D

Teacher D introduced both lessons by greeting the learners in English. Thereafter, the learners recited a rhyme as the icebreaker. Both lessons incorporated the digraph- “ow”. Lesson one introduced the new digraph- “ow” and lesson two was a continuation whereby the teacher consolidated the new concept. She introduced the new sound with visual aids and word cue cards. The learners were encouraged to participate through the teacher’s probing questions, continuous repetition and teacher modelling. In addition, they were encouraged to participate during the whole class activity whereby she selected learners to place the correct image and word on the chalkboard. During this activity, she used differentiation as she provided the “answer” in three different forms. This first form (easy) was a segmented word (e.g. b-l-ow), the second form was the full word (e.g. blow) and the last form was the sentence with the new word (e.g. I can blow my candles). She concluded lesson two with a small group of learners for group-guided reading. Here, she sat with a few learners and revised a simplified worksheet of the new vocabulary to consolidate the new sound and check for learner understanding.

The lessons were analysed through the use of an observation checklist (*see Appendix 1*) which guided the key elements that I looked out for during each lesson observation. The checklist criteria were designed in accordance with the PLM approaches. The use of the checklist was to ensure that all four educators and their lessons were analysed using the same criteria and would form the basis for finding the most promising pedagogical actions used by the educators during the EFAL lessons. If the category (C1-15) was present in the lesson it was marked accordingly (yes/no)

*Table 6:* illustrates the observed lessons in accordance with the observation checklist

| Code: | Teacher A | | Teacher B | | Teacher C | | Teacher D | | TOTAL: |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Lesson 1 | Lesson 2 | Lesson 1 | Lesson 2 | Lesson 1 | Lesson 2 | Lesson 1 | Lesson 2 | |
| **C1** | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | 8 |
| **C2** | YES | YES | YES | YES | NO | NO | YES | YES | 6 |
| **C3** | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | 8 |
| **C4** | YES | NO | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | 6 |
| **C5** | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES | 7 |
| **C6** | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | 7 |
| **C7** | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | 8 |
| **C8** | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | 2 |
| **C9** | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | 8 |
| **C10** | NO | NO | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | 5 |
| **C11** | NO | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | 6 |
| **C12** | YES | YES | NO | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | 6 |
| **C13** | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | 8 |
| **C14** | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | 8 |
| **C15** | YES | YES | YES | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES | 5 |

## 4.5. Pedagogical actions

### *4.5.1. The most commonly occurring pedagogical categories*

The observation checklist provided a checklist of categories that were observed during the lesson observations. The most commonly occurring categories that were evident in all the participating educators' lessons were C1- Is the teacher well prepared for the lesson?, C3- Does the teacher create emotional engagement- grab and retain learners' attention?, C7- Does the teacher use code/language switching to assist learner understanding?, C9- Does the teacher use visual aids to support understanding?, C13- Does the teacher check for understanding? and C14-Guided practice- Does the teacher provide learners with the opportunity to use the FAL (written and verbal) under direct teacher supervision?.

***C1- Is the teacher well prepared for the lesson?***

All of the participating educators were well prepared for their EFAL lessons. They had well-detailed lesson plans and incorporated the use of various appropriate resources such as visual aids, songs, games, etc.

***C3-Does the teacher create emotional engagement- grab and retain learners' attention?***

The participating educators were required to grab and retain learners' attention and interests throughout the lesson to ensure that the learners adequately grasped the new concept being taught. This category was evident amongst all the participating educators during both their EFAL lessons. These educators used various pedagogical actions throughout their lessons to enhance emotional engagement.

Teachers C and D started their EFAL lesson by greeting the learners. This simple greeting was initiated by the teacher and the whole class responded in uniform. It was evident that this conversational starter was used at the beginning of every EFAL lesson as the learners were confident in their responses. Teachers A, B, C and D, all introduced their lesson with a song/rhyme. This action evoked excitement among all the learners and retained their attention for the EFAL lesson that would follow. Teacher B incorporated a fun game activity in lesson 1 that encouraged all the learners to

participate using their whole bodies. Teachers A and D retained learners' interests by using visual aids that enabled the learners to visualize the new concept and respond accordingly. Teachers B and C evoked the learners' attention in their lessons using a storybook. The learners were intrigued by the storybook and eager to find out more about the story.

***C7-Does the teacher use code/language switching to assist learner understanding?***

Code-switching occurs when the teacher alternates between two or more languages. All the teachers code-switched between isiXhosa and English and used both languages interchangeably during the EFAL lesson. This pedagogical action was apparent throughout the EFAL lesson. There were four "types" of code-switching evident in the participants' lessons.

Code-switching occurred when Teacher A used English throughout the lesson and only code-switched between English and isiXhosa when he could see that learners did not understand the task/question at hand. Secondly, code-switching occurred when the teacher would say the word/sentence in English and would directly translate it back into isiXhosa so that the learners could relate the English word with the isiXhosa word. Teachers C and D used English and isiXhosa throughout the lesson as they translated and repeated most of the lesson from English to isiXhosa. For example, they would say the sentence and immediately after, they would repeat the same sentence in isiXhosa. This was also the case when the teacher used images. The teacher would say the word in English and show the picture. Thereafter, the teacher would repeat the word in isiXhosa so that the learners could relate the English word with the isiXhosa word and have a visual representation of the word. Thirdly, code-switching was used by Teacher B whereby she used isiXhosa throughout the lesson and used English less frequently. She would speak the majority of the lesson in isiXhosa and only translated parts of the lesson into English. Lastly, Teacher C asked the *learners* to code-switch and interchange between isiXhosa and English.

***C9-Does the teacher use visual aids to support understanding?***

The participant teachers all used a variety of visual aids to support learner understanding. Teachers A and D used cue cards with the new vocabulary word and a picture to encourage comprehension of the new vocabulary. Teacher B used images of the verb actions in lesson 1 so that learners could cross-identify the picture and the action word. In lesson 2, she used a storybook. The learners had the same copy of the story in their workbooks and could follow along as she read the story. Teacher C used the Big Book in lessons 1 and 2 and learners were able to listen to the story and follow the pictures in the storybook.

***C13-Does the teacher check for understanding?***

The participating educators checked for understanding throughout their EFAL lessons to ensure the learners were grasping the new concept. These educators used various pedagogical actions such as teacher modelling, unfinished sentences, comprehension style questions/answers, probing questions and guided/independent practice to check for and reinforce learner understanding.

***C14-Guided practice- Does the teacher provide learners with the opportunity to use the FAL (written and verbal) under direct teacher supervision?***

All the teachers asked learners a variety of probing questions throughout the lesson which encouraged the learners to use the new vocabulary with the help of the educator. Teacher A asked various learners to come to the front of the class and identify the cue card image. During Teacher B's verbs lesson, individual learners were encouraged to use the new vocabulary during the whole class activity. Teacher C gave learners the opportunity to use the FAL when answering questions and making predictions about the story. Teacher D allowed the learners to use the new vocabulary throughout the lesson through teacher modelling and repetition. Thereafter, during the activity whereby learners were required to match the picture and word, the learners were given the opportunity to try independently but still with the help of the teacher. Lastly, Teachers B and D provided the opportunity of guided practice during the small group-guided reading session whereby learners were able to practice reading with the guidance and support of the educator.

### *4.5.2. Other impactful pedagogical actions*

Teachers B and D incorporated group-guided reading into their EFAL lessons. At the end of their lesson, they called small, same-ability groups for group-guided reading. Teacher B called the lower-level reading group to the carpet and used this opportunity to repeat and revise the lesson and ensure that they all grasped the new concept. Similarly, Teacher D revised the lesson with a simplified worksheet that required the smaller groups to practice the new vocabulary again. This had a positive contribution to their lesson as the teachers could use this opportunity to check for learner understanding and assist the learners that were still struggling with the new concept. This is particularly beneficial in large classes where the teachers may not always be able to ensure that every learner is participating to their full potential. The small-group interaction consolidated the new concept and would promote the retention of the new concept/vocabulary.

### *4.5.3. The least commonly occurring pedagogical category*

The least commonly occurring category was C8- *Does the teacher use varied resources to cater for different learner interests?.*

***C8-Does the teacher use varied resources to cater for different learner interests?***

The teachers utilised visual aids and resources that they had at their disposal, however, many of the lessons were not necessarily adapted to learners' interests. Thorn (2020) states that learners' interests should be incorporated into lessons to ensure learner engagement. Teachers may include learners' interests in lessons by allowing them to speak about things that interest them, developing positive habits, choosing texts or tasks that appeal to their interests, allowing learners to find different pictures of their interests and/or encouraging a "show and tell" where learners can bring items of interests from their home to discuss.

In addition, teachers should use varied techniques and/or resources such as the promotion of project-based learning, the incorporation of ed-tech and adaptive learning tools, providing alternate testing options, etc. (Thorn, 2020). However, this is not

always available in many schools across South Africa as they do not have access to a variety of resources.

## 4.6. Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with each Grade 3 teacher after the two observed EFAL lessons. The beginning of the interviews gave general insight into the teachers' demographics and personal details such as their highest teaching qualification, teaching experience in the profession and at their current school, as well as their home language. Their personal HL played a significant role as their HL aligned with the language of instruction and they too were required to teach and conduct lessons in their first/second additional language. An example of the teacher interview transcript can be found in Appendix A, B, C, D, E and F.

The teachers were asked to elaborate on their learners' English proficiency levels and particular learners' struggling areas. This later provided the opportunity for the teachers to elaborate on how they have adapted their practice accordingly to aid language and literacy development, lesson differentiation, as well as intervention programmes they or the school may have implemented. The information from the educators would give insight into their actions, and pedagogical choices during their EFAL lessons. The interview concluded with questions regarding the EFAL CAPS document, curriculum planning and support which enabled the teachers to give their opinions regarding the efficacy of the document in terms of teaching and learning. The interviews will be discussed in line with the four main discussion points that arose from the interviews. These included- challenges to teaching and learning in EFAL, actions to overcome the mentioned EFAL challenges, support from EFAL CAPS and recommendations from teachers on improving EFAL language and literacy development.

### *4.6.1. Challenges described*

The educators experienced various challenges pertaining to teaching EFAL. Their challenges expressed included the learners' inability to read, in both their HL and EFAL, lack of access to resources, inadequate English teaching time/minimal exposure to English and large class sizes.

Teachers C and D stated that their challenges in teaching stemmed from their learner's inability to read. The learners struggle in reading and comprehension and therefore struggle to grasp more advanced language lessons because they do not know the basic language structure.

**Teacher D interview transcript:**

*ERN 136: "It's difficult. It's difficult to teach them English. Because when they are in grade 1, they can't read and write. It only instructions. When they are in grade 2, its where they learn."*

Teacher C emphasized that learners are able to speak basic English through exposure to the language through media such as TV, YouTube and social media, however, they struggle with writing. Comparably, Teacher A believed that non-English learners do not have enough exposure to EFAL to ensure the level of proficiency needed for the transition to English in Grade 4. He believes that the learners speak isiXhosa at home and at school and only speak English for 30-60 minutes a day during the allocated English lesson timeslot. Similarly, learners are tested in isiXhosa and therefore are not exposed enough to English in a more formal verbal and written testing capacity.

Teacher B stated that she believed that she is unable to give her learners enough English support due to large class sizes and insufficient teaching and learning time. This is particularly relevant as she feels that she is unable to work with individual learners that may be struggling in the "more important" academic areas-mathematics and HL.

***Teacher B interview transcript:***

*ERN 14: "…like it's going to take to so much time because of I've got 40 learners. So, in order for me to interact with everyone, especially the groups, that I see that are struggling…"*

Large classes often also have detrimental consequences on resource distribution. Teachers A, B and D affirmed that they do not have enough reading resources to support reading.

***Teacher B interview transcript:***

*ERN 105: "The reading books. My reading books are not enough."*

***Teacher D interview transcript:***

*ERN 139: "More reading books with pictures."*

Although these classrooms and schools lacked sufficient reading material, Teachers A and B advised parents and learners to attend the local library. However, despite their attempt to increase and support learner reading, they believe that the parents do not provide their children with the much-needed support to succeed at school.

***Teacher B interview transcript:***

*ERN 55: "They are weak in isiXhosa as well. Reading, it's a problem, let's just say. Reading, it's a problem. Even if you encourage them to get a library card, to become members, so that if a parent doesn't push, then I can tell you."*

Similarly, Teacher B stated that he does not believe that many parents take their children to the library. In contrast, the parents that do take their children, he could see a noticeable improvement in their reading.

The participants all confirmed that the parents are often unable to assist at home by providing additional support in English or in assisting with homework. This is attributed to many parents not being able to speak English themselves or being illiterate.

**Teacher D interview transcript:**

*ERN 86: "Yes, but even if, it's difficult because even if you give them homework. The parents, they are illiterate. They can't do the homework for them. when they come to school, the only learners that are good, it's the only parents that they help. Because you see that maybe some of the parents, they are illiterate. They don't even know, they can't even read, so it's just sometimes a waste of time to give them homework."*

*ERN 88: "In fact, they don't speak English…"*

### *4.6.2. Actions to overcome*

Teachers were asked about the strategies and interventions that they or the school had introduced to overcome the challenges discussed above and to support EFAL development. The teachers elaborated on classroom support which included lesson differentiation, individual/group support and school support initiatives.

The participating teachers stated that they try to provide learners with additional English support in their classes through various means. Teachers B, C and D stated that an effective intervention strategy to bridge this gap was to incorporate and place emphasis on daily reading, in learners' HL and EFAL. Reading was encouraged through group-guided reading, shared reading and/or independent reading.

***Teacher B interview transcript:***

*ERN 93: "I encourage reading. We've got that English books there at the back. I tell them, they must go and pick up whatever book that they want to read, then I will sit with them on the carpet."*

***Teacher C interview transcript:***

ERN 62: "*I help them. we can call it a group guided. You can guide because you are reading for them*."

***Teacher D interview transcript:***

*ERN 22: "To read, each and every day in the morning we have 10 minutes of reading in the morning."*

Thereafter, teachers were asked about their use of differentiation in their EFAL lessons. Differentiation in teaching and learning refers to the use of a wide variety of teaching techniques and lesson adaptations that educators may use to instruct a diverse group of learners, with diverse learning needs (Great Schools Partnership, 2013). It involves processes of modifying, changing, adapting, extending and varying teaching methodologies, teaching strategies, assessment strategies and the content of the curriculum (Department of Basic Education, 2014b). Differentiation is seen as

one of the main criteria of inclusive education mandated by the DoE. The DoBE's "*Policy on screening, identification, assessment and support 2014*" document, aims to support curriculum differentiation that will meet the needs of diverse learners which includes adjustments and accommodations in teaching and learning, assessments and the provision of additional support.

Teacher A stated that he differentiated his lessons during mathematics lessons but did not provide an example of differentiation in EFAL lessons. Teacher B provided additional support by repeating and revising the taught lesson in smaller groups as a means to consolidate the new concept. Teachers C and D stated that they differentiated their lessons according to their different learners' ability groups and gave the different groups the required assistance according to their ability and/or needs.

Another means of providing learner support was through whole-school initiatives. School 1 offered an after-school programme that is run by an external organisation that assists struggling learners with mathematics and reading. Teachers A and B stated that they believed that the programme was beneficial and that they could see noticeable improvements in the participating learners.

***Teacher B interview transcript:***

*ERN 65: "…I would have to praise the Department of Education with them helping us with this group of youngsters that are coming to our school for aftercare. (Yeboneers NGO). So, they are also helping us with maths and English."*

*ERN 67: "… I can tell you I've seen a lot of difference in our learners, yeah."*

Although School 2 did not provide after-school assistance such as extra classes, all four educators believed that learners would benefit from additional support both in and out of the classroom.

### *4.6.3. Support from CAPS*

All the participating educators utilized the EFAL CAPS document to guide their lesson planning, lessons, and assessments. They all agreed that the EFAL CAPS document provided a detailed outline of what is expected from learners and how educators can

achieve these outcomes. Therefore, these teachers seemed to be well familiar with what is expected from them in terms of teaching and learning EFAL.

Teacher D, however, stated that although she thinks the EFAL CAPS document is suitable, she believes that the DoBE changes the curriculum too often and does not give new programmes sufficient time to be effectively implemented and tested.

***Teacher D interview transcript:***

*ERN 142: "…You know the problem is, when we're trying to get engaged, they change. Maybe you're trying to be engaged on CAPS neh, they change."* (A15)

Although the EFAL CAPS document provides a detailed outline of its outcomes, the participants believed that they are often unachievable and not realistic.

***Teacher C interview transcript:***

*ERN 102: "Yes, it tells us what would be the outcomes, but sometimes the outcomes, you don't reach here."* (A16)

Teacher B stated that although her lessons and assessments are guided by the EFAL CAPS document, she needs to revise her teaching and learning according to her class's needs and the knowledge/level of her learners. She believes that the curriculum is too fast-paced and does not provide educators with enough time to consolidate and reinforce new concepts.

***Teacher B interview transcript:***

*ERN 127: "Um, when it comes to assessment, you kind of like do according to what you did in class. It won't do any justice because of now I must do it because of CAPS or ATPs sake. Yet, I didn't even cover that. You need to assess them according to what we did in class, yeah."*

*ERN 119: "It's too much. Not for the little ones, it's too much. Because of now, we had to do everything rush, rush, according to the ATP. Because if they come and tell you, you are supposed to be in week 8 and you are in week 5. You see the imbalance?"*

### *4.6.4. Recommendations from teachers*

The participating educators were asked about what they believed they could do to improve their teaching and EFAL lessons. Teacher A believed that he would benefit from more professional development workshops that would provide support for teaching and learning in English.

Teachers A and B stated that changes in the Grade 3 curriculum would prove beneficial to teaching and learning. Teacher A believed that the Grade 3 isiXhosa curriculum should include more English in order to adequately prepare learners for the English transition. Teacher B believed that the curriculum should be reduced in order to cover and consolidate different topics and learning areas without the feeling of being "rushed".

***Teacher B interview transcript:***

*ERN 119: "It's too much. Not for the little ones, it's too much. Because of now, we had to do everything rush, rush, according to the ATP."*

Similarly, Teachers B, C and D stated that more time should be allocated to reading to improve reading proficiency in the HL and EFAL.

## 4.7. Conclusion

This chapter has presented the results from the data collection process and has provided insight into the similarities and differences apparent amongst the participating educators within their lesson plans, lesson observations and semi-structured interviews, as well as the common discussion points that have emerged. Chapter five will analyse the presented results through the PLM framework and use this lens to identify the most promising pedagogical choices and actions used by educators to establish meaning when teaching EFAL.

# CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

## 5.1. Introduction

Chapter four gave rise to the most commonly occurring categories evident in EFAL lesson observations. Chapter five will identify and elaborate on the key pedagogical actions that were observed and whether they were effective in terms of learner response. Thereafter, these pedagogical actions will be analysed through the lens of PLM to see how teachers adapt their pedagogical strategies to develop meaning amongst learners. Through the use of the PLM lens, we can evaluate the teachers' pedagogical actions' efficacy and thereafter establish which pedagogical actions observed may hold the most promise in EFAL acquisition. By recognizing the most powerful PLM actions in the classroom, we can use this knowledge to better equip educators to assist EFAL learners' language and literacy acquisition.

## 5.2. Key pedagogical actions observed

As previously mentioned in Chapter four, the commonly occurring categories that were evident in all the participating educators' lessons were C1-Is the teacher well prepared for the lesson?, C3-Does the teacher create emotional engagement- grab and retain learners' attention?, C7-Does the teacher use code/language switching to assist learner understanding?, C9-Does the teacher use visual aids to support understanding?, C13-Does the teacher check for understanding? and C14-Guided practice- Does the teacher provide learners with the opportunity to use the FAL (written and verbal) under direct teacher supervision?.

The most commonly occurring actions observed in the lesson observations included the use of songs/rhymes, visual aids, incorporating fun games/activities, code-switching, checking for learner understanding through techniques such as teacher modelling, unfinished sentences, comprehension style questions/answers, probing questions and guided practice. These pedagogical actions were used universally by the participating educators and evoked a strong sense of emotional engagement. Therefore, they could be categorised as promising actions in developing EFAL and literacy.

Shabiralyani, Hasan, Hamad and Iqbal (2015) state that learning occurs and is retained when all of one's senses are provoked. They state that "people generally remember, 10% of what they READ, 20% of what they HEAR, 30% of what they SEE, 50% of what they HEAR and SEE, 70% of what they SAY and 90% of what they SAY as they DO a thing" (Shabiralyani et al., 2015). Therefore, lessons that incorporate more than one sense should be seen as more promising in promoting language development.

***Songs/rhymes***

All the participating teachers used a song/rhyme to introduce the EFAL lesson. This was an effective tool as it encouraged the learners to use their whole body through the use of actions and incorporated the use of EFAL. The learners were excited to perform the song/rhyme and use the "new" language. According to Shabiralyani, et al (2015) this action should enable learners to remember 90% of the new vocabulary when presented in this way.

Millington (2011) states that the use of songs is a valuable pedagogical tool as it can help young learners improve their listening skills and pronunciation, and therefore help them improve their speaking skills. In addition, songs can be useful tools in the learning of vocabulary, sentence structures and sentence patterns. This would be essential to assist learners in later literacy development (Millington, 2011).

The use of the song/rhyme builds the oral use of the new language but is also a fun activity that grabs the learners' attention and keeps them emotionally engaged for the new lesson. The use of songs brings variety into the classroom routine and thereby stimulates interest and attention, which helps classroom motivation and increases levels of achievement (Millington, 2011).

Teachers B and C stated that the use of this pedagogical tool was to encourage the learners and excite them for the lesson to come. Their reasoning for this pedagogical action may not have necessarily been as a learning tool, but rather to develop better emotional engagement for the next topic.

***Teacher B interview transcript:***

*ERN 12: "It's just to boost their morality first to know that we are moving from maths because some of them tend to find the maths boring and draining. So just to boost them and say OK fine, we are moving from A to B…"*

***Teacher C interview transcript:***

*ERN 14: "To introduce the lesson. I want the learners to be in a good mood for the for the lesson, so to give the intro so that they can be in good mood."*

The memorization and performance of simple poems, action rhymes and songs are also required in the Grade 3, term 3 EFAL CAPS document. The University of Washington (2022) emphasizes the importance of creating emotional engagement at the beginning of a lesson as it may increase learners' attention, maintain focus, and motivate them to engage in higher-level critical thinking. The performance of simple poems, action rhymes and songs promotes active learning whereby learners are encouraged to actively participate in the learning process (University of Washington, 2022). Active learning in an FP class is vital in ensuring adequate language and literacy acquisition.

The learners could recite the song/rhyme easily and perform it without the teacher's help. The learners' fluency was an indication of their continuous practice and repetition. The songs/rhymes were taught, learnt and continuously repeated until the learners could recite them independently and confidently. Millington (2022) solidifies that the use of songs helps to create a relaxed and informal environment that reduces anxiety evoked by the use of the new language.

According to the Academy of Learning Career College (2022), there is a correlation between confidence and language learning. The more you practice the new language, the more comfortable you will feel. Therefore, you will be more likely to speak the language and will learn it much quicker. This activity built learner confidence and increased their English proficiency.

***Visual aids***

All the participating educators used various forms of visual aids to support teaching and learning. During the observed lessons, the teachers used visual aids such as cue cards, Big Books, textbooks, and pictures to enhance learning and understanding. The use of visual and/or teaching aids was a valuable pedagogical action used to support teaching and learning and encourage understanding.

Shabiralyani, et al. (2015) states that this action should enable learners to remember 50% of the new vocabulary/concept when presented in this way. They advocate for the use of visual aids as a tool to make a lesson clearer and easier to understand as it makes the learning experience more real, more accurate and more active (Shabiralyani et al., 2015). This is particularly useful in language and vocabulary development so that the children can relate the images to their existing knowledge. Visual aids were used to assist with learner understanding as they can be used to simplify a definition and/or as a means of association between the picture and English word/definition. It was evident by the learners' participation, that the use of visual aids was beneficial to the lesson as the learners were able to associate the picture with the word they already knew in the HL and the new vocabulary in English.

The Victoria State Government (n.d.) in their Education and Training document states that emergent literacy development requires a combination of child-led, guided and adult-led learning to enhance meaningful learning. Throughout the various teaching and learning modes, teachers play a prevalent role in making meaning and expressing ideas through texts. Educators can achieve this during reading and writing experiences, by scaffolding children's emergent reading comprehension and emergent writing expression (Victoria State Government, n.d.).

Teachers B and C included the use of stories in their EFAL lessons to enhance language development. Teacher C used a Big Book to guide the EFAL lesson and used the pictures in the book as an aid for learners to respond and elaborate on the picture and the story. The use of the book encouraged learner participation and engagement. The teachers maintained emotional engagement throughout the lesson by reading the stories enthusiastically while the learners followed the pictures in the book.

Teacher C's Big Book lessons encouraged the learners to make predictions about the story and therefore enticed excitement as to how the story would unfold. The learners enjoyed following the story and looking at the pictures. The story was relevant and relatable as the learners could relate to the characters and the storyline. The level of enthusiasm among the learners was evident through their participation and engagement throughout the lesson.

During Teacher B's lesson 2, she read a story about "camping". This was a good activity as the learners could follow the words as she read the story aloud. This encouraged the learners to associate the verbal word being read with the written word in their workbook. The learners were engaged in the story due to the teacher's enthusiasm when reading and the images within the story. However, this story was less relatable to the learners as this topic was not something familiar to the learners as none of the learners had ever been camping. The EFAL CAPS document (2011) states that texts should relate to the learners' own experiences. Similarly, Briggs (2014) argues the importance of making a personal connection to the material otherwise students may become disengaged, quickly forget, or lose motivation. The act of keeping learners actively engaged throughout the lesson was a key component toward the success of the lesson and therefore the conceptual literacy acquisition.

The use of visual aids is also strongly advised by the DoBE. In terms of inclusive education, the Department states that teachers need to adapt their lessons to cater for learners' diverse needs and ensure that they produce learners that are able to communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

It was evident within all the EFAL lessons presented by the participating educators that the use of visual aids was a valuable pedagogical action that kept learner engagement and promoted learner understanding. This was confirmed by Teacher D that strongly advocated for the use of pictures in reading as she believed it assisted with comprehension and the solidification of the new vocabulary.

***Teacher D interview transcript:***

*ERN 52: "Because if you just put only words, they will know the words, but they won't know the meaning of the words. But for you or for them to know the words, there must be a picture of the word. Picture with word so that they can understand the meaning. But if you use only the word, they can know the words but they don't know the meanings of the word."*

***Fun activities/games***

The use of fun activities/games in EFAL lessons also proved as a useful pedagogical action to enhance language development and learner engagement. Gari and Vidyalayam (2020) argue that participation in various activities is an effective way to develop communication and language skills as they help learners feel socially comfortable. Similarly, as previously stated, learning that incorporates speaking and doing (when a learner speaks and does the action), should remember 90% of the new concept (Shabiralyani et al., 2015).

Teacher B incorporated a fun game activity during the EFAL lesson (lesson 1) that encouraged active participation and enhanced emotional engagement amongst all the learners. The learners were given the opportunity to participate and perform different actions (verbs). The learners were eager to participate as well as guess the actions performed by their peers.

This was an effective pedagogical action as the emotional engagement was evident as all the learners were actively involved in the learning process and it encouraged the spontaneous use of the new language. The activity encouraged communication and learner interactions which would aid a positive attitude, collaboration and team spirit among peers (Gari & Vidyalayam, 2020).

***Code-switching***

The pedagogical action of interchanging between isiXhosa and English was used by all the participating educators. The teachers code-switched between the two languages and used both languages interchangeably during the EFAL lessons. There were four levels of code-switching evident in the participants' lessons. These included

the lesson being conducted in English and only seldom incidents of translation from English to isiXhosa (Teacher A), regular translation between English and isiXhosa (Teachers C and D), lessons being conducted in isiXhosa and only seldom incidents of translation from isiXhosa to English (Teacher B) and lastly, asking the learners to code-switch between isiXhosa and English to check for understanding (Teacher C).

Teacher A conducted his lesson in English and only code-switched when necessary to ensure that all the learners fully understood the task/question. Throughout his lesson, he reminded the learners that they were only allowed to speak English during the English period. Therefore, when communicating with peers at their tables or asking to go to the toilet, they had to do so in English. This was an effective tool as it encouraged the learners to use the language informally and allowed them to practice basic vocabulary. It also ensured that no learners were to feel embarrassed or uneasy speaking the new language as all the learners were required to speak it. He stated that learners should be exposed to English more often if they wanted to develop the level of proficiency needed for Grade 4. He believed that this was particularly important in non-English schools as often the learners do not have adequate exposure to English outside of the school/lesson.

Teachers C and D both used English and isiXhosa interchangeably throughout the lesson and often translated each sentence or word. During the interviews, the educators all emphasized the importance of code-switching to ensure that the learners were all able to fully comprehend the lesson. The teachers believed that code-switching was a valuable pedagogical approach to EFAL as it ensured conceptual understanding for all learners. Although many of the learners were able to speak English, they were more comfortable in their HL. Therefore, to ensure that all the learners adequately grasped the new concept and/or understood the questions/instructions, the teacher code-switched between English and isiXhosa.

***Teacher C interview transcript:***

*ERN 22: "So, if you say it in English, and you repeat it in isiXhosa, so they will have chance to understand also and not only those ones who know".*

All the participating educators stated that if they did not translate from English to isiXhosa, their learners would not be able to understand.

***Teacher C interview transcript:***

*ERN 16: "Because our learners, the lot is Xhosa and their language is Xhosa, so English is not their language. So, they do not know most of the words in English. So, for them to understand, we must code-switch."*

Teacher B however, used English less frequently and conducted most of the lesson in isiXhosa. She stated that because the learners did not fully comprehend English if she conducted the lesson in English, they would not understand. However, because she conducted most of the lesson in isiXhosa, the learners often responded to questions posed in isiXhosa, as opposed to in the new desired language.

***Teacher B interview transcript:***

*ERN 25: "It's because of, if I am doing straight in English, they won't move. It will be for me; I'm speaking a different language. It will be like "what is she saying?" No one is going to give me any answer yet at the back of their mind, they know what I'm saying to them. They know what I'm asking. So, that is I'm trying to meet them in the 1/2 way so that they can know, even if I re-emphasize on the second lesson they will know, they will be able to move instead of just doing the English lesson. Now, remember, English is not something that they are used to. It's not something that they speak every single day. They only get English when we in English, period and then they're done. They forget about it up until the following day when we do the English again. You get me? We need to be realistic. Our kids, and they don't, when they get home, they don't even read, you know."*

This is a contentious approach to EFAL education as it did not adequately expose the learners to new vocabulary nor give them sufficient opportunities to use and practice the new vocabulary. Al-Zoubi (2018) states that there is a strong correlation between language exposure and language acquisition. Therefore, in order to ensure adequate language development, it is recommended that learners are continually exposed to

English and practice English on a daily basis to improve fluency and proficiency (Al-Zoubi, 2018).

I believe that the use of English less frequently during the EFAL lesson discouraged the use of the new language as it did not adequately expose learners to new vocabulary nor give them sufficient opportunities to use and practice the new vocabulary.

Teacher C used isiXhosa and English interchangeably throughout her EFAL lesson whereby she would translate English words/instructions into isiXhosa. However, another technique she used was saying the word/instruction in English and asking the learners to repeat the word/instruction back to her in isiXhosa. She used this technique to check for learner understanding.

***Checking for learner understanding***

Throughout all the lessons, the educators were continuously interacting with all the learners and used a variety of techniques to check for learner understanding The teachers used pedagogical actions such as teacher modelling, unfinished sentences, comprehension style questions/answers, probing questions and guided practice to check for and reinforce learner understanding. Thereafter, the teachers would check for learner understanding through formal and informal assessment tools.

All the teacher participants gave learners various opportunities to speak and read with the teacher. The teachers read the English words on the board, cue cards or in the Big Book. They modelled the correct words and encouraged continuous repetition throughout the lesson.

The pedagogical action of repetition is widely used throughout education as an essential tool for learner understanding as it hastens and deepens the engagement process. In terms of literacy and language development, the action of repetition is widely used as it is still considered one of the most effective ways to teach an additional language (Ghazi-Saidi & Ansaldo, 2017). Bruner (2001) emphasizes that teachers should incorporate repetitive engagement during their lessons as it is an important element of learning and supports important educational goals such as self-

paced discovery, ability to reflect, consistency and clarity of thought which in turn promote deep learning (Bruner, 2001).

Teacher modelling is an instructional strategy used by teachers in which the teacher demonstrates a new concept or approach, and students learn by observing. The learners will then repeat the new vocabulary. Teacher modelling and continuous repetition of the new vocabulary were used universally by the participating educators. The teachers often modelled the new vocabulary more than once and then gave the learners the opportunity to do it independently. The learners that were able to reproduce the new vocabulary independently, were an indication that they had absorbed the new vocabulary/concept adequately. The modelling technique ensures that the learners grasped the correct vocabulary and enhance fluency. Teacher D used repetition and teacher modelling throughout the lesson and stated that this was a valuable pedagogical approach as it enhanced fluency.

***Teacher D interview transcript:***

*ERN 20: "I did that because when we are doing reading, the only thing I want is the fluency. They can read, they can decode, they can segment the words, they can read fluently."*

Another way that she encouraged fluency in her classroom was through daily reading, in their HL and EFAL. During this period, learners were encouraged to read independently, together as a class and with the teacher. This repetition provided learners with a sense of familiarity and assisted them in developing their literacy skills.

***Teacher D interview transcript:***

***ERN 21 Interviewer**: "So, what do you do to them to encourage them to become fluent?"*

***ERN 22 Interviewee**: "To read, each and every day in the morning we have 10 minutes of reading in the morning."*

The participant teachers used unfinished sentences, comprehension-style questions, and probing questions throughout the lesson to encourage learners to engage in

deeper conversations around the topic. The teachers used unfinished sentences as a means to check for understanding as they would say an incomplete sentence and the class would be required to complete/finish his/her sentence/train of thought.

Comprehension-style questions enabled the teacher to see that the learners had comprehended the concept/story/instruction. Learners could provide simple answers to these questions. An example of a comprehension-style question during Teacher C's Big Book lesson included: Teacher question: "Why do you think the children are scared?", learners answer: "Because of the thunder". This questioning technique enabled the teacher to see that the learners comprehended the story and retained the new vocabulary from the story. Probing questions included asking for more detail on the topic through follow-up questions. An example of a probing question included: Teacher question: "Why do you think it made them scared?" or "What makes you scared?". Different learners responded with various things/experiences that may scare them. This type of question required learners to think about the question and formulate an answer in English. They needed to access their range of English vocabulary to formulate their answer and in turn assisted in further developing their language acquisition.

***Teacher B interview transcript:***

*ERN 79: "First, you need to question, if they understood what you did and then you kind of like have the one-on-one so that they can explain where did they understand or where, where are they struggling and then you take it from there with that person."*

***Teacher D interview transcript:***

*ERN 60: "… I read a portion and then I stop and then ask the questions to know if they understand. And then you see "oh, they understand the story". And then I will read a portion and then I will stop and ask the questions and see if they will listen or if they understand the story. And then I will see that some of them, they don't understand. I will read a portion by portion and ask a question…"*

During the lesson observations, there were learners that were eager to respond, however, they did not fully comprehend the concept or question at hand. Despite some

learners' inability to answer the question correctly, the teachers still categorized this as a positive contribution as learners were still interacting and trying to use the new language.

Thereafter, another action to check for learner understanding was the use of assessment. Teachers B, C and D stated that they use assessments, both verbal and written, through informal and formal assessment tools to check for learner understanding and thereafter use this knowledge to guide future lessons and intervention plans.

***Teacher C interview transcript:***

*ERN 66: "By assessing them. You assess them verbally and the recent assessment, informal."*

***Teacher D interview transcript:***

*ERN 97: "And then once you've done the assessment and you get your results to see the areas where your children are struggling. Do you then next term do that again or what do you do?"*

There was evidence of informal and formal assessment for *listening and speaking* used during the observed lessons. The informal assessment was included using questions and answers and the following of instructions. The participant teachers used probing questions and open-ended sentences throughout the lesson to check for learner understanding. In addition, although the teachers did not formally assess learners and record mark allocations, all the participating educators made use of formal assessment tools throughout their lessons. Teachers B and C read the story aloud and allowed the learners to answer comprehension questions orally. Learners were given the opportunity to engage with the story. Similarly, Teacher D required learners to demonstrate their understanding of the new oral vocabulary by pointing to the "ow" word and pictures. These were all good activities as it gave learners the opportunity to practice the type of activity which could be presented as a formal assessment activity later in the term.

***Guided practice***

Guided practice is a teaching practice that entails firstly, the teacher modelling the desired task, followed by the learner doing the task with the teacher and then the learner performing or practicing the task independently- *"I do, We do, You do*" method (Drew, 2022). The participant teachers gave learners various opportunities for guided practice, where learners were encouraged to speak in English and use the newly acquired vocabulary and concepts. This practice was under direct teacher supervision and guidance.

The guided practice took place during the whole class activity when the teachers used verbal techniques such as questioning, assisted/guided reading, teacher modelling and during small group-guided reading sessions. The guided practice, supported by the teacher, allowed learners to feel safe and confident enough to use the newly acquired language.

The guided practice was evident during all the participants' lessons through the teachers' use of questioning (probing and comprehension-style questions). Probing and comprehension-style questions used throughout the lesson encouraged learners to listen to the question/instruction, comprehend the new English vocabulary by the teacher and formulate the correct English response. This technique, therefore, required learners to access the previously acquired knowledge needed to answer the question correctly. This was the main technique used by Teacher A to implement the guided practice in his lessons.

Another form of guided practice was evident in Teachers B and C's lessons during the storytelling. During the story lessons, learners were encouraged to follow/read the story with the guidance of the teacher. The act of the teacher and learners reading aloud together enabled the learners to feel at ease and comfortable reading with the help of the teacher.

Teacher D encouraged guided practice by assisting learners in the reading of the new vocabulary. This action included the teacher modelling the correct way to read the word. She assisted learners in reading by breaking words into segments and orally sounding out the segments of each word in order to read the fully blended word. This

action was repeated by allowing learners to read and repeat the word with the teacher. Thereafter, the teacher wanted to check for understanding by giving them the opportunity to practice the new vocabulary but still with the help of the teacher. The learners were encouraged to segment and read the words individually. Lastly, she gave individual learners the opportunity to interact with the new vocabulary by having them come to the front of the class and match the word and sentence to the correct picture. This fun activity encouraged the participation of all learners, enhanced emotional engagement, increased reading fluency and solidified the new vocabulary.

Thereafter, Teachers B and D called small groups for assisted group-guided reading sessions. This was an effective pedagogical tool as it enabled the teachers to work with fewer learners at a time. This activity gave learners the opportunity to practice the new concept and language with the guidance of the teacher and enabled the teacher to check for learner understanding, establish where learners may be struggling and provide additional intervention.

***Teacher D interview transcript:***

*ERN 122: "I wanted to see who struggles because if I take the whole group every time, I won't see who is struggling. So, if I can take the small group, I can even see who can read and who can't read."*

Introducing group-guided reading was also an effective differentiation tool as the teacher could separate learners into the same-ability group and guide intervention according to their varied abilities.

***Teacher D interview transcript:***

*ERN 114: "You know sometimes, there are learners that can read the whole sentence. There are learners that can read letters. There are learners who can read single consonants. So, maybe first group, they can read the whole sentence. The second group, they can read one word. The last group, they can read single consonants."*

*ERN 116: "…if can see, there are five groups- pineapples, peach, strawberries, grapes. According to their ability groups. I can't mix the stronger child with the weaker*

*one. I mixed the weaker groups together so that they can gain confidence because if I mix them with the stronger and the weaker, they will be overpowered by the strong."*

Teaching Strategies (2021) states that a beneficial way to support literacy development is to ensure that adequate time is given to read aloud with children in small groups. Small group-guided reading aids to develop stronger comprehension skills, ask and answer more questions, and comment more on the text. This is particularly useful in an EFAL context so that learners are encouraged to use the new language to ask, answer and comment on the text in a more secure setting.

At the end of the whole class activity, the teachers would give learners the opportunity to practice the new concept independently through an individual written activity. This would act as a means to check for learner understanding and see where learners may still be struggling. This in turn would be used to guide future lesson planning and intervention strategies.

## 5.3. Pedagogical Link Making (PLM) as an evaluation tool

The Pedagogical Link-Making (PLM) framework was used as a lens to establish the effective pedagogies used by Grade 3 educators to establish meaning amongst their learners. Scott, et al. (2011) states that through a constructivist perspective, learning conceptual knowledge requires learners to make active links between their existing knowledge and new concepts. Therefore, to develop new knowledge in learners, the teacher must bring them into contact and develop links between the new and existing ideas. The depth and extent of learner understanding will depend on the number and quality of the links made.

To summarize from Chapter 2, Scott, et al. (2011) further elaborates on three forms of links that may support meaningful learning. These include the *need to support knowledge building (Form 1)*, the *continuation of teaching and learning (Form 2)*, and the *encouragement of emotional engagement (Form 3)*. The first form- to *support knowledge building*, can be segmented into six approaches. The first approach (Approach 1) to *support knowledge building* is to *make links between every day and scientific ways of explaining*. Approach 2 focuses on making links between scientific concepts. Approach 3 focuses on making links *between scientific explanations and*

*real-world phenomena.* Approach 4 focuses on *making links between modes of representation*. Approach 5 focuses on *moving between different scales and levels of explanation* and lastly, Approach 6 includes *analogical link-making.*

Form 1 incorporates the six approaches and the various links that can be made to *support knowledge building*. Scott, et al. (2011) states that learning occurs every day in spontaneous ways and should include a variety of ways of talking and thinking about a concept. All the approaches require knowledge to be presented in a variety of ways to ensure conceptual understanding. This is particularly important within an inclusive classroom with diverse learners. Teaching and learning, particularly in the FP, should aim to make lessons relatable and relevant so that knowledge can translate from an abstract concept to a concrete concept. In the particular case of EFAL learners, the process of meaning and understanding is not only about the concept, but also about the language which describes the concept.

Victoria State Government (n.d.) refers to multimodal literacy which states that meaning can be conveyed in multiple modes (written language, spoken language, visual, audio, gestural, tactile and spatial systems of meaning) (Victoria State Government, n.d.). Therefore, an important precursor to a child's reading and writing development is to establish meaning and support knowledge building by engaging with multimodal texts. Teachers should incorporate multimodal texts and adopt appropriate pedagogical actions that will promote links to support knowledge-building and enhance meaningful learning amongst all learners.

Form 2, to *promote continuity,* involves the development of links and building on previous links to develop a new concept. Therefore, to establish meaning amongst learners, teachers need to incorporate and establish these links in teaching and learning. This is particularly important in literacy development as teachers need to build on learners' various oral language skills and emergent literacy skills of English to expand their vocabulary, grammar and comprehension needed for the Grade 4 transition.

OECD (2017) confirms that continuity in curricula and transition practices within early childhood development has a positive impact on a child's later academic and social success. Pedagogy plays a significant role in this development as the instructional

techniques and strategies enable learning to take place in educational settings. Teachers, therefore, must ensure continuity and consistency within curricula and everyday classroom routines.

Form 3, the *encouragement of emotional engagement*, is a vital link needed in teaching and learning. OECD (2017) states that high-quality emotional engagement and support has positive outcomes on teaching and learning as it encourages reciprocal learning discussions, provides support for deeper thinking skills, and expands understanding in maths and language skills. In addition, research has shown that higher-level of child-centred teaching practices is associated with better reading skills, and improved socio-emotional development and may contribute to higher motivation for maths and literacy (OECD, 2017).

This link is particularly important in literacy and language development within a South African context due to our poor literacy rates. This can be attributed to learners often feeling discouraged in reading, whether it be in the HL or FAL. This in turn will have a lasting effect on their educational progress and development. Teachers, therefore, must adopt positive pedagogical actions that may enhance emotional engagement and increase the chance of developing real and meaningful learning within students.

Teachers need to have deep insights into the subject matter, how one subject matter may link with another and how to engage learners emotionally in addressing the subject matter (Scott et al., 2011). Thus, in order to generate real meaning among learners and develop a full repertoire of pedagogical link-making, educators need to address all of the forms of knowledge, along with the ability to sustain continuity and to emotionally engage all learners (Scott et al., 2011).

PLM as an evaluation tool can therefore identify these different forms and methods that educators use to produce real understanding and meaning in the learners. Pedagogical actions can engage multiple forms and approaches of PLM. Therefore, if a pedagogical action can engage multiple forms and approaches of PLM, it increases the chances of establishing real meaning and understanding within the learners. To this end, this study will analyze the key pedagogical actions observed in relation to PLM to find which of the observed actions hold the most promise in helping EFAL learners generate real meaning and understanding in their second language.

## 5.4. Key actions analyzed using PLM

Scott et al. (2011) state that the depth and extent of understanding depend on the number and quality of links made. Therefore, a pedagogical action that consists of all three forms would promote deeper processing and evoke meaningful learning. This pedagogical action would be deemed valuable to use in teaching and learning.

The most commonly occurring actions observed in the lesson observations included the use of songs/rhymes, visual aids, incorporating fun games/activities, code-switching and checking for learner understanding through techniques such as teacher modelling, unfinished sentences, comprehension style questions/answers, probing questions and guided practice. These pedagogical actions were in turn analysed in terms of PLM to establish the prevalence of the three forms in each action and therefore evaluate their efficacy in terms of language and literacy development.

Table 7 summarizes the results of the analysis and identifies the occurring PLM forms/approaches in the most promising pedagogical actions.

*Table 6: evidence of the PLM form/approach in each pedagogical action*

| Observation Checklist | Form one | | | | | | Form two | Form three |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Approach 1 | Approach 2 | Approach 3 | Approach 4 | Approach 5 | Approach 6 | | |
| Action 1: song/rhyme | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Action 2: Visual aids | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Action 3: fun activity/game | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Action 4: Code-switching | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Action 5: Checking for learner understanding | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Guided practice | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ |

***Action 1: Song/rhyme***

The use of songs/rhymes in EFAL lessons is strongly advised by literature due to its benefits in language development, particularly in FP teaching and learning. This action, evident in the EFAL lessons activated Forms 2 and 3.

Form 2- *continuation of teaching and learning,* was apparent in two aspects of the lessons. The first aspect of *continuation* in song/rhyme was using this technique as the introduction to every EFAL lesson, every day. Consistency and continuity within daily curricula are strongly advised in literacy development (OECD, 2017). This was apparent within all the participating educators' EFAL lessons. This act encouraged the formation of an EFAL routine that increases a comfortable learning environment as learners know what to expect in the upcoming lesson.

The second aspect of *continuation* with songs/rhymes is consistency and repetition evident within the lyrics/words of the chosen songs/rhymes. This was evident in Teacher A's lesson introduction whereby the learners sang the song- "If you're happy and you know it". This song consisted of the main line "If you're happy and you know it…" and changed one word in each new subsection. Therefore, the same line was repeated throughout the song creating a sense of familiarity and consistency. Bsharat, Barahmeh and Turkman (2021) state that research has shown that lexical objects must be repeated several times before a child can internalize them. The most significant trait of songs/rhymes, particularly those used in the FP, is repetition. Songs contain language patterns, but they also improve listening ability, rhythm and pronunciation (Bsharat, et al., 2021). Therefore, songs can act as an effective means of repeating, improving, and expanding vocabulary.

The use of songs/rhymes in the EFAL strongly appealed to Form 3- *encouragement of emotional engagement.* This pedagogical action evoked the most learner engagement and participation during the observed lessons and was strongly supported by the participants. According to Sandberg, Hasen and Puckett (2013), all learners benefit from full body and brain experiences that increase attention and engagement. Therefore, integrating music and movement activities into literacy instruction may enhance literacy development among learners.

***Action 2: Visual aids***

The use of visual aids in the EFAL lessons helps teachers to establish, explain, connect and associate ideas and concepts to make the process of learning more interesting, enjoyable and effective (Ipatenco, n.d.). This is a powerful way to build learner engagement and enable knowledge retention. This pedagogical action activated all three Forms of PLM.

The use of visual aids is beneficial in supporting knowledge building (Form 1) as it provides learners with supplementary information (Ipatenco, n.d.). This is particularly important in an EFAL context as learners need additional support in their knowledge building of their HL, and thereafter, in EFAL. This action enables teachers to assist learners in making links between every day and different ways of explaining (Approach 1) as well as between the explanation and real-world phenomena (Approach 3). The use of visual aids is beneficial in bridging the gap between the HL and EFAL as it enables learners to connect the topic/concept/word with what it looks like. This was particularly evident in Teacher A's "a" lesson (lesson 1) where he showed the learners images of the letter "a" words. These images included items such as an "axe" and an "ambulance". These were tricky English words for the Grade 3 learners, but the use of the visual aids helped learners bridge the gap between the image, the word they knew in isiXhosa and the new vocabulary in English. This action can aid and promote deeper thinking and build overall critical thinking skills.

In addition, this acts as a multimodal form of literacy as meaning is conveyed in more than one mode. Therefore, the teacher is making links between different modes of representation (Approach 4) as this action incorporates iconic representation (based on images) and symbolic representation (based on language) to ensure cognitive development. This action enables learners to absorb much more information from the teacher as the use of visual aids brings the subject to life and makes it more meaningful. This technique is also beneficial for lesson/learner differentiation as struggling learners can use images to enhance their understanding and enhance link-making through *moving between different scales and levels of explanation (Approach 5).* The use of images may support learner understanding by linking new or unfamiliar concepts with already-known knowledge.

The use of visual aids appeals to Form 2 as it may act as a reinforcing factor for learners to associate the image, the isiXhosa word, and the English word. The consistency and repetition of visual aids are useful in literacy development as they may consolidate the new English vocabulary/concept. The use of the visual aid and the English words was also apparent in all the participating educators' classrooms where they had various displays on their walls that included the English word and the isiXhosa word. Placing these visual displays in and around their classrooms, continuously exposed learners to both languages.

Thereafter, the use of visual aids also activates Form 3 as it enhances learner interest and engagement. Using visual aids such as props, images, maps/charts, etc. can help learners get excited about a particular topic. This was apparent in all the observed lessons as learners were able to use the images to guide and aid their understanding. Ipatenco (n.d.) states that the use of visual aids is also particularly useful within an inclusive learning environment with learners with various abilities as some learners may learn visually and may struggle to become engaged in the general classroom setting. Within an EFAL context, this is beneficial for learners that struggle more with EFAL as they can use the images to aid their understanding and comprehension when they do not understand the used English vocabulary.

***Action 3: Fun activity/game***

The use of a fun activity/game in the EFAL lessons activated Forms 1 and 3. The fun game/activity brings the lesson to life by encouraging the learners to actively engage with the content. Games offer a fun-filled, relaxed environment where learners can practice the new vocabulary/concept and are free to express themselves. Participating in recreational literacy activities is an effective way to develop language and communication skills as it enables learners to identify and use the new language in context (Approach 3). The use of a fun game/activity incorporates the new concept/vocabulary and delivers it to the learners in a different manner and therefore activates Approach 4. This was apparent in Teacher B's verbs lesson (lesson 1) whereby the learners were encouraged to speak and act using the new vocabulary. This game, therefore, incorporated two modes of learning (verbal and action).

This pedagogical action is a fun and engaging way to teach or consolidate a new concept and increases emotional engagement (Form 3). This action seemed promising in the EFAL lesson as the learners were engaged, motivated and eager to use the new language. Teacher B affirmed this as she stated that the learners really enjoyed the activity and allowed everyone to participate (Teacher B, ERN 18 Interview).

***Action 4: Code-switching***

Code-switching was a valuable pedagogical action used throughout the educators' lessons and was deemed one of the most important pedagogical tools needed for learner success. The pedagogical action of code-switching in the EFAL lessons activated Forms 1 and 2. This action was vital to support knowledge building (Form 1) so that learners could fully comprehend and understand the new concept in the new language. Memory, Nkengbeza and Liswaniso (2018) confirmed that code-switching helps learners understand what they are taught and thereby acts as an essential tool for language and literacy acquisition.

The teachers used code-switching to assist in making links between every day and scientific ways of explaining (Approach 1). Learners are given the opportunity to use the new language in informal settings before they extend it to more complicated settings. In doing so, they may also move between their HL and EFAL if they do not know the required English word. Similarly, teachers use both languages to adequately enforce the new concept. When teaching a new concept in EFAL, the teacher will use the learners' previously acquired knowledge in their HL and relate it to the same concept in the EFAL lesson. This technique enables the teacher and learners to make links between different scientific concepts and relate them to real-world phenomena that the learners previously learnt in their HL (Approaches 2 and 3). This action can also be identified as making links between modes of representation as the teacher is presenting the concept in two "different ways" (isiXhosa and English). This action was beneficial in the EFAL lessons as it gave learners that struggled in English/lower performance a better opportunity to comprehend and understand the presented lesson. This action, therefore, activated Approach 5 as it allowed the teacher to move between different levels of explanations and differentiate the lesson according to the variety of learner needs.

***Action 5: Checking for learner understanding***

The pedagogical action of checking for understanding activated all three Forms of PLM. Checking that all the learners have adequately grasped the new concept is vital in ensuring the support of knowledge building. Berger, Rugen and Libby (2014) state that checking for learner understanding is a key component of providing learners with support and building life-long skills of self-assessment. The skill of self-assessment enables learners to understand what they are learning and encourages learner growth and development.

This pedagogical action was done in more than one way. Teachers used techniques such as teacher modelling, unfinished sentences, comprehension style questions/answers, probing questions and guided practice. The teachers activated Form 1, Approach 4 by using a variety of understanding techniques to represent and enhance the new concept. The teacher will teach the new concept verbally (symbolic representation) and accompany it with visual aids (iconic representation) to aid understanding. The act of checking for understanding appeals to enactive representation as it is based on an action. Learners will respond to the teachers' modelling, unfinished sentences, questions or practice and thereby indicate to the teacher, the learners' level of understanding.

The act of checking for learner understanding is valuable so that the teachers can see what the learners do and do not understand. Thereafter, they can revise these techniques to see if learners have adequately made links between the scientific concepts (Approach 2) and fully understand the concept in relation to real-world phenomena (Approach 3). In addition, teachers may differentiate their techniques to appeal to the different learners' abilities. Therefore, this activates Approach 5 as it enables the teacher to move between different scales and levels of explanation. This is a very important step in the literacy lesson so that teachers understand where learners may be struggling and thereafter provide additional support where needed.

Checking for learner understanding activated Forms 2 and 3 as the teachers were actively involved with the learners throughout the lesson. The teachers used the same techniques throughout their lessons, irrespective of their lesson topic. This was an indication that the techniques used to check for learner understanding were consistent

(Form 2). In addition, the techniques used by the teachers required active participation and engagement from all learners and therefore promoted active learning and emotional engagement (Form 3).

***Action 6: Guided Practice***

The pedagogical action of incorporating guided practice in the EFAL lessons activated all three Forms of PLM. The guided practice provided the learners with the opportunity to use the new vocabulary with assistance and guidance from the teacher and thereby enabled knowledge building (Form 1). This action enabled learners to be actively involved in the learning process and develop their own links between the scientific concepts (Approach 2). The act of learners participating and practising the new concept/vocabulary enabled the learners to make their own links between the scientific explanations first taught by the teacher and then with the real-world phenomena (Approach 3). During the guided practice, the teacher can establish whether learners have adequately made these links. This action also activates Approach 4 as it incorporates making links through different modes of representation. The teacher presents the lesson verbally (symbolic representation) and visually (iconic representation) and thereafter learners are required to interact with the new concept. During the guided practice, learners will enhance their cognitive development through enactive representation as they participate in the new concept, such as performing the verbs during Teacher B's lesson 1, iconic representation by linking the new vocabulary and the pictures, such as in Teacher C's "ow" activity, and lastly, symbolic representation as the learners use the new language and vocabulary.

Guided practice entails the repetition of the previously presented lesson, to consolidate the lesson. *Continuation* is used throughout the EFAL lesson and therefore are also apparent in the guided practice. The "*I do, We do, You do*" method emphasizes the continuation of the same activity. For example, the teacher will say the word "cow" (pointing to the image of the cow), the teacher and learners will repeat the word "cow" and the learners with independently say the word "cow". Therefore, "cow" is being repeated. Verbal repetition is the continued articulation of a word after hearing it. The teacher is consistent in her technique by reinforcing the word "cow" through the "*I do, We do, You do"* method. This technique reinforces the new vocabulary/concept and therefore aids literacy and language acquisition. Ghazi-Saidi

and Ansaldo (2017) affirm that repetition is the most effective way to learn an additional language.

Lastly, guided practice activates Form 3. Learners are kept engaged when performing the action during the "*We do*" and "*You do*". This was apparent in all the participants' lessons as the guided practice was used universally during the EFAL lessons. The learners were emotionally engaged throughout the lesson due to their active involvement and participation.

## 5.5. Conclusion

Chapter five elaborated on the most promising pedagogical actions observed by the Grade 3 educators during their EFAL lessons. These actions were analyzed in accordance with PLM as an evaluation tool to establish which pedagogical actions held the most promise in establishing meaning amongst learners and thereby promoting language and literacy development.

Action 2-visual aids, action 5-checking for learner understanding and action 6-guided practice would be deemed the most promising pedagogical actions as they appealed to all three Forms of PLM. These actions were used by all the participating educators during the lesson observations and evoked learner participation and language development.

# CHAPTER 6: OVERVIEW, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6.1. Introduction

Chapter 6 outlines the overview of the research and will answer the proposed main research question and sub-questions. Thereafter, it will summarise the limitations and recommendations based on the results of the research.

## 6.2. Relating Overall Findings to the Research Questions

The scope of this study was guided by one main research question and three sub-questions. This chapter will discuss how the findings related to the proposed questions to generate the most appropriate answers.

The following research question was proposed for this study:

*What are the most promising pedagogical practices that Grade 3 educators are using to facilitate literacy acquisition in EFAL learners?*

The following sub-questions were used as a guide in answering the primary research question:

1. *What pedagogical approaches are Grade 3 educators using?*
2. *How well do these pedagogical approaches meaning in students (using the PLM framework)?*
3. *How do these pedagogical practices align with CAPS?*

***What pedagogical approaches are Grade 3 educators using?***

The aim of this question was to establish the current pedagogical practices used by Grade 3 educators in non-English schools in the Western Cape. These teachers used a variety of teaching techniques during their EFAL lessons to ensure adequate English acquisition. The most commonly occurring pedagogical actions used by these teachers to assist EFAL language and literacy development included the use of songs/rhymes, visual aids, incorporating fun games/activities, code-switching,

checking for learner understanding through techniques such as teacher modelling, unfinished sentences, comprehension style questions/answers, probing questions and guided practice. These pedagogical actions were valuable as they activated various forms of PLM and therefore evoked different levels of meaning among their learners. These pedagogical actions in turn could be categorized as promising actions for teaching and learning a FAL and may be useful within our education system in providing FAL learners with adequate support.

***How well do* these pedagogical approaches *develop meaning in students (using the PLM framework)?***

Teachers are key in ensuring that they aid and support link-making within the classroom. Therefore, it is essential to identify specific pedagogical tools/strategies that might be employed in the classroom to support the link-making (Scott et al., 2011).

All of the commonly occurring pedagogical actions observed in the classroom evoked meaning amongst the learners and were seen as appropriate techniques by educators to teach EFAL literacy and language. The actions appealed to the various forms and approaches of PLM. However, in terms of PLM, some actions can be categorized as more promising than others when activating more than one form of PLM.

According to Scott et al. (2011), actions that activate all forms of PLM would be considered the most valuable pedagogical actions as they would evoke the most meaning amongst learners. Therefore, these particular actions would prove the most beneficial in terms of teaching and learning. Making these links will ensure that learners have a deeper conceptual understanding of the new concept and thereby would be most effective. This is in contrast to an action that creates fewer/no links which would be considered to evoke “shallow processing” and thereby be not as effective in teaching and learning (Scott et al., 2011).

***How do these pedagogical practices align with CAPS?***

The EFAL CAPS addresses inclusivity and the need to ensure that barriers to learnng are identified and addressed. This can only be achieved through support from the various structures within the school, such as the school community, teachers, district-

based support teams, institutional-level support teams, parents and special schools as resource centres. In order to address the various barriers to learning within the classroom, the teacher should use various curriculum differentiation strategies provided by the Department of Basic Education's Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning (2010) (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

However, I believe that the EFAL CAPS document does not provide teachers with explicit examples of pedagogical actions that will encourage language and literacy development among EFAL learners. Albeit, the document does provide an outline of the required skills that learners should have acquired throughout the academic year. This information enables teachers to adapt their pedagogical actions accordingly to ensure that learners have acquired these necessary skills.

The *Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning* (2010) state that in order for teachers to address the diverse needs of their learners, they need to be able to understand the content, the lagnauge of instruction, how their classroom is organised or managed, various teaching methods and processes, the recommeneded pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum, the learning material and the equipment needed, as well as how learning should be assessed (Department of Basic Education, 2010).

The most commonly observed pedagogical actions during the EFAL lessons included the use of songs/rhymes, visual aids, incorporating fun games/activities, code-switching, checking for learner understanding and guided practice.

The use of songs/rhymes, visual aids, the incorporation of fun games/activities and guided practice is closely aligned with the EFAL CAPS document as they appeared in the various components such as *Listening and Speaking* and *Reading and Phonics*. These pedagogical actions were encouraged by EFAL CAPS as it is important for teachers to expose learners to a huge amount of simple language in context, which in turn enables them to gradually absorb the grammar and vocabulary in the FAL as well as to use the new language accordingly (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

The pedagogical action of code-switching is only mentioned within the *Reading and Phonics* learning area. Despite the minimal reference to code-switching in the CAPS

document, it should still be considered a valuable pedagogical action needed for EFAL development as it was vital for learner understanding and therefore the acquisition of EFAL. Lastly, the pedagogical action of checking for learner understanding is not explicitly stated in the EFAL CAPS document. However, the document does emphasize various tools/activities that may be used for learners to show understanding.

The above-mentioned sub-questions aided the answering of the main research question.

***What are the most promising pedagogical practices that Grade 3 educators are using to facilitate language development and literacy acquisition in EFAL learners?***

Two of the main points of the teaching methodologies illustrated by the *Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning* (2010) is that teachers should be knowledgable about teaching methods and processes, as well as learning materials and equipment. The observed pedagogical practices speak to these points.

According to the data provided by this research, it can be concluded that the most promising pedagogical practices used by Grade 3 educators to facilitate EFAL language and literacy development would be action 2-the *use of visual aids*, action 5-*checking for learner understanding* and action 6-*guided practice*.

These three pedagogical actions encouraged the use of the new language and learner participation. In terms of the inclusive education framework, these actions are deemed valuable as the interests of the learners are considered, the learner is at the focal point of all teaching, learning and assessment, and the learners differences are an important resource for teaching, learning and assessment (Department of Basic Education, 2010)

In terms of PLM, these three actions evoked all three forms of PLM and would therefore be considered valuable pedagogical actions as they elicit the most meaning among learners. These pedagogical practices can be considered the most promising

actions to be used by Grade 3 educators to facilitate language and literacy development and acquisition amongst EFAL learners.

The identification of these valuable pedagogical actions can be deemed useful for teaching and learning as it can be incorporated into future curriculum planning and professional teacher development programmes. Teachers are exposed daily to the challenges faced by the learners. Therefore, they need to be at the forefront in assisting and developing curriculum adaptations that will support students' academic, physical, emotional, behavioural and social development in the best way possible.

In addition, this knowledge is significant as it has provided insight into pedagogical actions that promote EFAL teaching and learning and therefore can be used to help improve language and literacy development in EFAL students, a dire problem in our country.

This may be particularly useful within an inclusive education framework as more emphasis needs to be placed on learners that are perpetually excluded due to language barriers in education. This may aid inclusive education as teachers may have a better understanding on how to assit learners with a barrier to learning due to language.

## 6.3. Reflections

There were various methodological limitations that came to light during my research process and influenced the interpretation of the findings from the research. Inevitable limitations were evident however, they did not impact the value of this research study. The results were a true reflection of the defined context and observed educators. In retrospect, on my research process, these limitations included sampling location, time constraints and research bias. These shortcomings will be discussed in further detail to provide an impetus for future potential research. In addition, retrospection allowed me to learn from my mistakes for future research prospects. These learning curbs included the use of PLM as an assessment tool and the use of a semi-structured interview.

### *Sampling location*

Firstly, the scope of the research was limited to only four educators within two schools in the Western Cape. Therefore, a limitation of this study was the context in which the research was conducted. Due to the nature of the study and its focus on non-English schools, it provided some depth into similar economic stature and geographical areas of Western Cape schools. However, the sample size was small and did not necessarily provide a true reflection of the phenomenon in the district, province or country. In addition, these non-English schools were isiXhosa HL schools and therefore, Afrikaans HL schools and their EFAL learners were not represented in the study. The research was able to yield connections in the data, however, a larger sample size would be beneficial to ensure a more accurate representation of the phenomena within a greater South African context.

### *Time constraints*

The data collection process was bound by time constraints due to the time limit of the study. I had a limited amount of time within each school and with each participant. Therefore, I was only able to observe a select number of EFAL lessons. A longitudinal study would prove enlightening in order to gain insight into various pedagogical actions used by Grade 3 educators during EFAL lessons. In addition, this may be beneficial as you can cross analyse the pedagogical actions and the learners' long-term language and literacy acquisition in order to accurately establish promising pedagogical actions.

### *Research bias*

Abbadia (2022) states that due to cultural origin and opinions on observed events, researchers may carry biased opinions, which may influence the credibility of the research. In addition, the researcher may exhibit biases toward data and conclusions that are in favour of their argument (Abbadia, 2022). This may be apparent during the observation and interview process as pre-existing opinions regarding the phenomena could have shaped the conclusions drawn from the observations and questions/answers.

***PLM as an assessment tool***

The use of PLM as an assessment tool was previously used in the science field. This assessment tool brought an interesting element to the study but was accompanied with various challenges. These challenges included trying to transfer the "links" in PLM from a science teaching perspective into a language and literacy teaching perspective. The way in which I related the teachers' pedagogical actions to the various forms of links made can be seen as a form of research bias.

***Semi-structured interviews***

Lastly, the use of semi-structured interviews was an appropriate data collection tool as it enabled me to gain deeper insight into topics such as the challenges faced by teachers and learners, the EFAL CAPS document and learners' proficiency. However, in retrospect, I would have adapted my questions and aimed it more specifically at the educators' actions and the reasoning behind chosen actions, to gain a deeper insight into why teachers use specific pedagogical actions over others.

## 6.4. Recommendations for Future Research

This research study has provided insight into the pressing language issues still prevalent in South African schools. Therefore, the implications of this study for future research can further expand on these issues and help develop valuable solutions. Future studies may find suitable adaptations to address this study's limitations and expand on the issue of language and literacy acquisition amongst EFAL learners. The participating educators shared common challenges in terms of resource accessibility, adequate learner exposure to EFAL and effective training in teaching EFAL. Therefore, in order to address these challenges, I would recommend that further research should be conducted in these various fields.

The first recommendation would be into the use of PLM in literacy and language development. I used PLM as an analysis tool within literacy and language teaching and learning, but this would be considered "new" within the field. This arose as one of the methodological challenges faced within the data collection process as the PLM model was originally designed for examining the pedagogical practices within science

education. Therefore, this study had to adapt this model to provide initial insight into PLM patterns in EFAL pedagogical practices within language and literacy development. Further research into PLM would prove beneficial, particularly within an inclusive education framework as it may find new ways for educators to adapt their pedagogical practices to foster inclusion within their classroom and hinder the exclusionary practices faced by EFAL learners due to language barriers.

The second recommendation would be to analyse and expand on new initial teacher education programmes that are underpinned by inclusion and address issues that revolve around language and literacy. These teacher training programmes can be used to aid teachers with pedagogical practices that may assist them in developing more effective ways to teach a FAL. This is particularly important as teachers need to continuously find new and innovative ways to teach changing learners. Learners are faced with ever changing challeneges and therefore teachers need to adapt accordingly to ensure that all their learners are included. The *Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning* (2010) state that teachers need to be aware of various learning barriers and adapt their strategies in terms of learning, teaching and assessing, accordingly.

Heng, Quinlivan and du Plessis (2019) explain that teachers should “constantly contribute, listen to, clarify and negotiate with different ways of thinking about knowledge production” (Heng et al., 2019, 1023) and therefore should always be finding new ways to develop meaning amongst their learners.

My research and the use of PLM as a framework may prove beneficial to these programmes as it can identify the most promising pedagogical actions which teachers should be taught and thereby incorporate these actions into the daily teaching strategies. Similarly, the concept of PLM can also be taught within these programmes so that teachers are knowledgeable about how learners learn, absorb and retain information. Therefore, teachers can use this knowledge to incorporate PLM’s forms and approaches into all components within the classroom. This is particularly important through a constructivist lens whereby teachers should help learners to construct their own knowledge of language and its functions rather than just passively taking in the information.

The third recommendation should be the re-evaluation of EFAL within non-English HL schools and the South African education curriculum (EFAL CAPS). The EFAL CAPS document provides teachers with an adequate outline in terms of curriculum and assessment but it may be helpful to expand this, in an attempt to expose learners more to English. The participating educators all stated that the learners do not have adequate exposure to EFAL to ensure the success of English as the LoLT in Grade 4 and upwards. Therefore, it would be advisable to relook at the EFAL CAPS document and make the necessary adaptations to ensure English language and literacy proficiency. Similarly, it may be useful to include various pedagogical approaches to assist teachers to aid and promote language and literacy development.

Much research has been conducted into the positive and negative attributes of learning in your HL versus your FAL. However, a stronger stand should be adopted within South African education to ensure that learners are provided with the sufficient support needed to be academically successful. If the DoE aims to allow learners to continue in their HL from Grades 1-3 and transition to English as the LoLT from Grade 4 onwards, then they need to provide learners with the necessary support to develop a firm English foundation to ensure continued academic success.

The last recommendation would be to develop a quantitative data analysis that identifies literacy resource distribution amongst various schools in various districts and provinces within South Africa. This may provide insight into the available resources that may aid and develop language and literacy. Thereafter, the results may be used to establish any disparities within resource distribution such as books, reading materials and teaching aids, and therefore address the issues of inclusion/exclusion that may arise from the lack of accessibility.

## 6.5. Conclusion

This research study emphasized the current issues pertaining to language and literacy within many South African schools. One of the contributing factors to our poor literacy rates is that of learning in one’s first/second additional language as opposed to one's HL. This has perpetuated the exclusion of many South African learners that are required to navigate their schooling career in English/Afrikaans (their first/second additional language) exclusively. This is also mentioned in the *Guidelines for Inclusive*

*Teaching and Learning* (2010) where many learners are required to learn in a language that is rarely or never used at home and thereby compromises effective learning.

In order to mitigate this exclusion and promote inclusive education for all learners, regardless of their HL, teachers are required to provide a learning environment that supports language learning. Teachers should ensure that they have adopted appropriate inclusive pedagogical approaches to assist learners in literacy acquisition, particularly EFAL learners.

This research analysed the particular phenomenon within Western Cape schools in order to see its prevalence in the Western Cape and how these educators were addressing the issue of EFAL development. Through the use of the selected data collection instruments- lesson observation, semi-structured interviews and lesson plan analysis, I could collect a rich data source that provided insight into the current pedagogies used in the classrooms. The use of PLM as an analytical tool enabled me to analyse the efficacy of these pedagogical choices and actions and establish which actions may prove most beneficial in developing meaning amongst learners and thereby in teaching and learning for FAL literacy and language development. This may be used to realign pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning EFAL and thereby facilitate future discussions such as during teaching programmes or training that will provide teachers with new and innovative techniques to manage literacy challenges.

This can be considered a vital contribution to inclusive education in an attempt to hinder the exclusionary practices faced by many South African learners. It will prove fruitful in terms of Education White Paper 6 as its aim to ensure that all learners are fully included and will hinder any barriers to learning imposed by language. Therefore, the search for the most appropriate pedagogies in teaching EFAL would aid and facilitate the learning required by the *Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning* (2010) in an attempt to develop a fully inclusive learning environment.

# Reference list:


Abbadia, J. (2022, September 24). *What are the limitations in research and how to write them?* Mind the Graph. https://mindthegraph.com/blog/limitations-in-research/

Al-Zoubi, S. M. (2018). The Impact of Exposure to English Language on Language Acquisition. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, *5*(4), 151–162.

Astalin, P. (2013). QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGNS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK. *International Journal of Social Science & Interdisciplinary Research*, *2*(1), 118–124.

Biesman-Simons, C., Dixon, K., & Pretorius, E. (2021). *Reading in English as a First Additional Language: An annotated bibliography: 2017-2020*.

Bosman, L. (2020). *Foundation Phase Research Project* [PowerPoint Presentation].

Brink, S., & Nel, C. (2019). Contradictions within an activity of second language reading literacy. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, *9*(1). https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v9i1.687

Bruner, R. (2001). *Repetition is the First Principle of All Learning*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228318502

Bsharat, T., Barahmeh, M., & Turkman, J. (2021). The influence of music and educational songs on EFL students' achievement from their teachers' perspective in Jenin Region. *African Educational Research Journal*, *9*(3), 728–738. https://doi.org/10.30918/AERJ.93.21.106

Burgess, R. G. (Ed.). (1989). *The Ethics of educational research*. Falmer Press.

Chibaka, E. F. (2017, August 24).

Cilliers, L., & Bloch, C. (2018a). A reading project to improve literacy in the foundation phase: A case study in the Eastern Cape. *Reading & Writing*, *9*(1). https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v9i1.167

Cilliers, L., & Bloch, C. (2018b). A reading project to improve literacy in the foundation phase: A case study in the Eastern Cape. *Reading & Writing*, *9*(1). https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v9i1.167

Creswell, J. W., Hanson, W. E., Clark Plano, V. L., & Morales, A. (2007). Qualitative Research Designs: Selection and Implementation. *The Counseling Psychologist*, *35*(2), 236–264. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000006287390

De Sousa, D. S., & Broom, Y. (2011). Learning to read in English: Comparing monolingual English and bilingual Zulu-English Grade 3 learners. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, *1*(1). https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v1i1.70

De Sousa, D. S., Greenop, K., & Fry, J. (2010). The effects of phonological awareness of Zulu-speaking children learning to spell in English: A study of cross-language transfer. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *80*(4), 517–533. https://doi.org/10.1348/000709910X496429

Department of Basic Education. (2010). *Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning 2010: Education White Paper 6, Special Needs Education, Building and Inclusive Education and Training System*. Department of Basic Education.

Department of Basic Education. (2011). *Curriculum and assessment policy statement English first additional language. Grades 1-3:Foundation phase Grades 1-3 :Foundation phase*. Government Printers.

Department of Basic Education. (2012). *Education statistics in South Africa 2010.* Government Printers.

Department of Basic Education. (2014a). *Diagnostic Assessment: English Home Language Grade 3*. Government Printers. https://www.education.gov.za/DiagnosticTestItems.aspx

Department of Basic Education. (2014b). *POLICY ON SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT- 2014*. Department of Basic Education. https://wcedonline.westerncape.gov.za/Specialised-ed/documents/SIAS-2014.pdf

Department of Basic Education. (2014c). *Report on the annual national assessments of 2014. Grades 1-6 & 9. Grades 1-6 & 9.* Government Printers.

Department of Statistics of South Africa. (2019, May 28). *General Household Survey, 2018*. Stats SA. https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=12180

Diaz, L. (2020). *Subtractive Bilingualism vs. Additive Bilingualism: Supporting Your Child's Native Language at Home*. Bilingual Speechie. https://bilingualspeechie.com/blogs/for-parents/subtractive-bilingualism-vs-additive-bilingualism-supporting-your-child-s-native-language-at-home

Dixon, L. Q., Zhao, J., Shin, J.-Y., Wu, S., Su, J.-H., Burgess-Brigham, R., Gezer, M. U., & Snow, C. (2012). What We Know About Second Language Acquisition: A

Synthesis From Four Perspectives. *Review of Educational Research*, *82*(1), 5–60. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654311433587

Drew, C. (2022). *Guided Practice (I Do We Do You Do): Examples & Definition*. Helpful Professor. https://helpfulprofessor.com/guided-practice/

Dudovskiy, J. (2022). *The Ultimate Guide to Writing a Dissertation in Business Studies: A Step-by-Step Assistance (6th edition)*. Business Research Methodology.

Excell, L., & Linington, V. (2019). Chapter 10: Learning and teaching through play. In Mariana Naude & C. Meier (Eds.), *Teaching foundation phase mathematics: A guide for South African students and teachers*.

Fargas-Malet, M., McSherry, D., Larkin, E., & Robinson, C. (2010). research with children: Methodological issues and innovative techniques. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, *8*(2), 175–192. https://doi.org/10.1177/1476718X09345412

Foley, B. (2018). *Purposive Sampling 101*. Alchemer. https://www.alchemer.com/resources/blog/purposive-sampling-101/?sg=1

Frey, B. B. (2018). Document Analysis. In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation*. SAGE Publications, Inc. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781506326139.n209

Gari, B. P. R., & Vidyalayam, S. P. M. V. (2020). Activities—Enormous Importance in the Modern English Language Classroom. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, *5*(9), 428–430.

Ghazi-Saidi, L., & Ansaldo, A. I. (2017). Second Language Word Learning through Repetition and Imitation: Functional Networks as a Function of Learning Phase and Language Distance. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, *11*, 463. https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2017.00463

Great Schools Partnership. (2013). *Differentiation*. The Glossary of Education Reform. https://www.edglossary.org/differentiation/

Gunel, M., & Yesildag-Hasancebi, F. (2016). Modal Representations and their Role in the Learning Process: A Theoretical and Pragmatic Analysis. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, *16*(1), 109–126. https://doi.org/10.12738/estp.2016.1.0054

Hausfather, S. J. (1996). Vygotsky and Schooling: Creating a Social Context for Learning. *Action in Teacher Education*, *18*(2), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.1996.10462828

Heng, L., Quinlivan, K., & du Plessis, R. (2019). Exploring the creation of a new initial teacher education (ITE) programme underpinned by inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *23*(10), 1017–1031. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1625454

Ipatenco, S. (n.d.). *What Are the Benefits of Visual Aids?* Classroom. Retrieved December 4, 2022, from https://classroom.synonym.com/benefits-visual-aids-5040418.html

Kioko, A. (2015a). *Why schools should teach young learners in home language*. British Council. Why schools should teach young learners in home language

Kioko, A. (2015b). *Why schools should teach young learners in home language.* https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/why-schools-should-teach-young-learners-home-language.

Kolling, D., & Shumway-Pitt, K. (2019). Chapter one: Measurable Goals and Objectives. In *GSC Lesson Planning 101*. Granite State College. https://granite.pressbooks.pub/lessonplanning101/

Le Grange, L., & Beets, P. (2005). (Re)conceptualizing validity in (outcomes-based) assessment. *South African Journal of Education*, *25*(2), 115–119.

Lenyai, E. (2011). First additional language teaching in the foundation phase of schools in disadvantaged areas. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, *1*(1). https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v1i1.76

Lombardi, L. (2018). *How Analogies Challenge and Benefit the Gifted Learner*. National Association for Gifted Children. https://www.nagc.org/blog/how-analogies-challenge-and-benefit-gifted-learner

Macrotrends. (n.d.). *South Africa Literacy Rate 1980-2022*. Macrotrends.

Martin, C. D., & Ebrahim, H. B. (2016). Teachers' discourses of literacy as social practice in advantaged and disadvantaged early childhood contexts. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, *6*(2), 10. https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v6i2.454

Mayatula, S. (2006). Language in Education Policy: Briefing by Department. *Education Portfolio Committee*. https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/7281/

Maykut, P. S., & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide*. Falmer Press.

McLeod, S. (2019). *Bruner- Learning Theory in Education*. Simply Psychology. https://www.simplypsychology.org/bruner.html

Mcleod, S. (2023, July 26). *Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory Of Cognitive Development*. Simply Psychology. https://www.simplypsychology.org/vygotsky.html

McMillan, J., & Schumacher, S. (2010). *Research in Education: Evidence-Based Inquiry* (7th ed.). MA: Pearson.

Mda, T. V. (1997). Issues in the Making of South Africa's Language in Education Policy. *The Journal of Negro Education*, *66*(4), 366. https://doi.org/10.2307/2668164

Mertens, D. M. (2009). *Transformative research and evaluation*. Guilford Press.

Millington, N. (2011). Using Songs Effectively to Teach English to Young Learners. *Language Education in Asia*, *2*(1), 134–141.

Nathanson, R. R. (2008). *A SCHOOL-BASED, BALANCED APPROACH TO EARLY READING INSTRUCTION FOR ENGLISH ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN GRADES ONE TO FOUR* [Degree of Doctor of Philosophy]. Stellenbosch University.

Nel, M. (2015). *How to support English second language learners: Foundation and intermediate learners*.

Netten, A., Droop, M., & Verhoeven, L. (2011). Predictors of reading literacy for first and second language learners. *Reading and Writing*, *24*(4), 413–425. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-010-9234-2

OECD. (2017). *Starting Strong V: Transitions from Early Childhood Education and Care to Primary Education*. OECD. https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264276253-en

Patton, M. Q., & Schwandt, T. A. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*. SAGE Publications Ltd.

Peirce, B., & Ridge, S. (1997). Multilingualism in Southern Africa. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *17*, 170–190.

Pretorius, E. (2015). Failure to launch: Matching language policy with literacy accomplishment in South African schools. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *2015*(234). https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2015-0004

Price, P., Chiang, J., Leighton, D., & Cuttler, C. (n.d.). *Observational Research*. PressBooks. https://opentext.wsu.edu/carriecuttler/chapter/observational-research/

Probert, T., & De Vos, M. (2016a). Word recognition strategies amongst isiXhosa/English bilingual learners: The interaction of orthography and language of learning and teaching. *Reading & Writing*, *7*(1). https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v7i1.84

Probert, T., & De Vos, M. (2016b). Word recognition strategies amongst isiXhosa/English bilingual learners: The interaction of orthography and

language of learning and teaching. *Reading & Writing*, *7*(1). https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v7i1.84

Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). (2020). Chapter 4: International Comparisons. In *The Condition of Education*.

Rios, C., & Castillón, C. (2018). Bilingual Literacy Development: Trends and Critical Issues. *International Research and Review: Journal of Phi Beta Delta*, *7*(2), 85–96.

Robinson, C., & Vũ, T. A. T. (2019). Literacy, languages and development in Africa: A policy perspective. *International Review of Education*, *65*(3), 443–470. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-019-09785-2

Sarikas, C. (2020, January 4). *Vygotsky Scaffolding: What It Is and How to Use It*. PrepScholar. https://blog.prepscholar.com/vygotsky-scaffolding-zone-of-proximal-development

Save the Children. (n.d.). 6 Methods of data collection and analysis. In *Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)*. Save the Children.

Schaefer, M., & Kotzé, J. (2019a). Early reading skills related to Grade 1 English Second Language literacy in rural South African schools. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, *9*(1). https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v9i1.644

Schaefer, M., & Kotzé, J. (2019b). Early reading skills related to Grade 1 English Second Language literacy in rural South African schools. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, *9*(1). https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v9i1.644

Scott, P., Mortimer, E., & Ametller, J. (2011). Pedagogical link-making: A fundamental aspect of teaching and learning scientific conceptual knowledge. *Studies in Science Education*, *47*(1), 3–36. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057267.2011.549619

Shabiralyani, G., Hasan, K. S., Hamad, N., & Iqbal, N. (2015). Impact of Visual Aids in Enhancing the Learning Process Case Research: District Dera Ghazi Khan. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *6*(19), 226–233.

Shalem, Y., De Clercq, F., Steinberg, C., & Koornhof, H. (2018). Teacher autonomy in times of standardised lesson plans: The case of a Primary School Language and Mathematics Intervention in South Africa. *Journal of Educational Change*, *19*(2), 205–222. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-018-9318-3

Silverman, D. (2014). *Interpreting qualitative data: David Silverman* (Fifth edition). SAGE.

Singh, K. (2010). *Features, Advantages and Disadvantages of Observation*. MBA Official. https://www.mbaofficial.com/mba-courses/research-methodology/features-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-observation/

Smith, J., & Noble, H. (2014). Bias in research. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, *17*(4), 100–101.

Taylor, P. (2013). *Educational Research Paradigms: From Positivism to Multiparadigmatic.* Educational Research. https://www.hetl.org/educational-research-paradigms-from-positivism-to-multiparadigmatic/.

The Literacy Bug. (n.d.). *Stages of Literacy Development*. The Literacy Bug. Retrieved June 23, 2022, from https://www.theliteracybug.com/stages-of-literacy

Thibodeaux, W. (2020). *What Is an Open-Ended Interview?* Chron. https://smallbusiness.chron.com/openended-interview-23923.html

Thorn, C. (2020, May 28). *Supporting every teacher: How to build your learners' interests into your lessons*. Cambridge. https://www.cambridge.org/elt/blog/2020/05/28/supporting-every-teacher-how-to-build-your-learners-interests-into-your-lessons/

Tibane, E. (2019). *Pocket guide to South Africa, 2018/19*. Government Communications (GCIS).

Treagust, D. (2007). General instructional methods and strategies. In S. Abell & N. Lederman (Eds.), *Handbook of research on science edcuation* (pp. 373–392). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

University of Washington. (2022). *Engaging student in learning*. Center for Teaching and LEarning. https://teaching.washington.edu/topics/engaging-students-in-learning/

Venketsamy, R., & Sibanda, S. (2021). Exploring strategies teachers use to develop literacy skills among English first additional language learners in the foundation phase. *Perspectives in Education*, *39*(2). https://doi.org/10.18820/2519593X/pie.v39.i2.18

Victoria State Government. (n.d.). *Making meaning and expressing ideas (emergent literacy)*. Education and Training. Retrieved December 3, 2022, from

https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/learning/ecliteracy/emergentliteracy/Pages/makingmeaningandexperiencingideas.aspx#link5

*Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory*. (n.d.). Retrieved June 7, 2022, from http://www.ceebl.manchester.ac.uk/events/archive/aligningcollaborativelearning/Vygotsky.pdf

Walden University. (n.d.). *The Importance of Emotional Engagement in Elementary Education*. Walden University- Education for Good. Retrieved June 23, 2022, from https://www.waldenu.edu/online-bachelors-programs/bs-in-elementary-education/resource/the-importance-of-emotional-engagement-in-elementary-education

Walsham, G. (2006). Doing interpretive research. *European Journal of Information Systems*, *15*(3), 320–330. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ejis.3000589

Western Cape Education Department. (2022). *Foundation Phase Lessons*. Western Cape Government For You- EPortal. https://wcedeportal.co.za/lessons/foundation-phase

Wilson, L. (2022). *Madeline Hunter Lesson Plan Model*. The Second Principle. https://thesecondprinciple.com/essential-teaching-skills/models-of-teaching/madeline-hunter-lesson-plan-model/

# Appendices:

## Appendix 1: Observation Checklist

**School:**_____

**Lesson Date:** _____

**Lesson Time:**_____

| | |
|---|---|
| **C1** | Is the teacher well prepared for the lesson? |
| **C2** | The teacher focuses the learners' thoughts on what will be learned (scaffolding, revision of previous day's lesson) |
| **C3** | Does the teacher create emotional engagement- grab and retain learners' attention? |
| **C4** | The new knowledge, process or skill is presented to the learners in an effective manner (discovery, discussion, reading, listening, observing, etc.) |
| **C5** | Do the learners actively engage in the lesson? |
| **C6** | Modelling- Does the teacher demonstrate what is to be learned? |
| **C7** | Does the teacher use code/language switching to assist learner understanding? |
| **C8** | Does the teacher use varied resources to cater for different learner interests? |
| **C9** | Does the teacher use visual aids to support understanding? |
| **C10** | Does the teacher differentiate the lesson and provide different levels of explanation for different skilled learners? |
| **C11** | Does the teacher make use of analogies to make the lesson relatable to learners? |
| **C12** | Is the teacher consistent or make use of continuous repetition? |

| | |
|---|---|
| **C13** | Does the teacher check for understanding? |
| **C14** | Guided practice- Does the teacher provide learners with the opportunity to use the FAL (written and verbal) under direct teacher supervision? |
| **C15** | Independent practice- Does the teacher allow learners to practice on their own? |

Observation Checklist (continued)

| **Code:** | **Yes** | **No** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **C1** | | | |
| **C2** | | | |
| **C3** | | | |
| **C4** | | | |
| **C5** | | | |
| **C6** | | | |
| **C7** | | | |
| **C8** | | | |
| **C9** | | | |
| **C10** | | | |
| **C11** | | | |
| **C12** | | | |
| **C13** | | | |
| **C14** | | | |
| **C15** | | | |

***Observation Checklist sample:***

Site: School 2

Participant: Teacher D

Date: 30 August 2022

Lesson 1

| Code: | Yes | No | Comments: |
|---|---|---|---|
| **C1** | X | | Detailed lesson plan |
| **C2** | X | | This was a new lesson and the start of the introduction of a new concept, however, the teacher did appeal to the learners' previously acquired knowledge to ensure comprehension of the new concept. |
| **C3** | x | | Teacher grabs learners'' attention with the introduction song and retains learner attention through continuous learner engagement |
| **C4** | X | | Uses various techniques to introduce new knowledge- word cue cards (single word and segmented word), visual aids with picture and sentence<br><br>Learners are engaged through discussion, reading, listening and observing |
| **C5** | X | | Teacher encourages all learners to participate and asks all learners questions |
| **C6** | X | | Teacher uses modelling consistently throughout the lesson |
| **C7** | X | | Teacher code-switches between isiXhosa and English throughout the lesson to ensure that the learners understand the concept and instruction. |
| **C8** | X | | Provides various word examples to appeal to different learner interests. |
| **C9** | X | | Cue cards (single word and segmented word)<br><br>Picture and sentence |
| **C10** | X | | Teacher gives word cue cards and segmented word cue cards to ensure all learners can read. |
| **C11** | X | | Teacher relates the new words to learners'' everyday life and makes the words relatable |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **C12** | X | | Continuous repetition throughout the lesson |
| **C13** | X | | Use questions and incomplete sentences to check understanding |
| **C14** | X | | Teacher provides learners with the opportunity to practice<br>- When answering questions<br>- Matching picture and word/ matching word and picture/ word and word<br>- Reading sentences |
| **C15** | | X | |

Appendix 2: Observation Schedule

**School:**_____

**Lesson Date:**_____

**Lesson Time:**_____

| **Time:** | **Description of event:** | **Comments on event:** | **Learner reactions to event:** | **Checklist:** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

***Observation Schedule sample:***

Site: School 2

Participant: Teacher D

Date: 30 August 2022

Lesson 1: 11:00-11:30

| **Time:** | **Description of event:** | **Comments on event:** | **Learner reactions to event:** | **Checklist:** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11:03 | Teacher greets class in English and the learners greet in response. | The greeting response is an automated response that seems as if it is the start to all EFAL lessons. | Learners respond accordingly | C3, C5 |
| 11:04 | Learners start lesson with a song | The song was a good introduction to the lesson. The learners were able to incorporate the English vocabulary with an action. | Learners engaged with the song | C3, C5, C8, C14 |
| 11:06 | The teacher asks the learners about the weather today. The learners respond in full sentences. | Learners are knowledgeable about the vocabulary pertaining to different weather types. They were able to answer the teacher's questions in full sentences. | | C14 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11:07 | The teacher introduces the new sound “ow”<br><br>The teacher and learners repeat the sound more than once.<br><br>Teacher instructs learners to say the sound in a “silly” voice and in a “whisper” voice. | Having the learners repeat the sound many times reinforces the sound. The teacher uses repetition and consistency to introduce and consolidate the new sound.<br><br>By encouraging the learners to say the sound in different voices kept them engaged and interested as they found it amusing. | Learners enjoyed saying the word in different voices | C3, C5, C6, C12 |
| 11:07 | The teacher asks the learners where they may have seen the letters “ow”?<br><br>The learners respond by providing words that have “ow” in them -e.g., slow, cow | This encourages the learners to look around the class for a visual representation of the sound “ow” and it requires them to access their previous knowledge of the sound. | Learners are able to provide “ow” word examples | C2 |
| 11:08 | The teacher uses visual aids to introduce the new “ow” sound words. | Repetition<br><br>Visual aid assists learners in development of new vocabulary (tortoise) and to assist in reading | | C9, C4 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | A picture of a tortoise with the sentence “the tortoise is slow”<br><br>The learners read the sentence with the teacher, read together as a class, repeat and then teacher asks individual learners to reread. | the sentence with the new vocabulary (slow). | | |
| 11:09 | Teacher asks the learners to relate to the sentence.<br><br>e.g., the tortoise is slow<br><br>“what else can you think of that is slow?”<br><br>Learners reply: “a snail is very slow, Tshepo runs very slow” etc. | By enabling the learners to think of different sentences, the learners can relate to the new vocabulary and use their prior knowledge to form new sentences. | Learners are eager to answer and provide different sentences.<br><br>When the learner uses the word incorrectly, the teacher rectifies them by using the incorrect word in the correct context. | C11 |
| 11:10 | Teacher repeats this exercise with a picture and sentence of the word “grow”, “snow” and “mow” | The teacher is consistent with the introduction of the “ow” sound words and uses repetition throughout. | | C6, C12, C13 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | The teacher reads the sentence with the children and the whole class repeats the sentences. | Modelling the sentence- reading and fluency<br><br>The teacher checks for understanding by giving the learners and incomplete sentence and they must verbally complete the sentence. E.g., “the flower needs more water to… “<br><br>Learners respond “grow” | | |
| 11:12 | The teacher asks those learners that have not raised their hands to respond | The teacher uses nonresponsive learners to ensure that the whole class is engaged and actively participating. | Some learners repeatedly raise their hands and are eager to participate but some are not. | C5 |
| 11:14 | On my birthday, I … (blowing action) my candles.<br><br>Learners respond “blow”<br><br>Word is segmented into b-l-ow | Teacher uses the action to illicit the word response<br><br>New words are segmented into parts to assist learners to decode the word and read it | Learners are able to read the letter segments and put the word together to read the new word | C2, C4, C10, C12 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | b-l-ow, g-r-ow, m-ow, s-n-ow<br><br>Teacher constantly repeats the decoded words to assist with the reading and consolidate the new word. | | |
| 11:15 | "When the grass is tall, we have to do what?"<br><br>Learners give answer "cut, chop"<br><br>Teacher provides the answer "mow" | Teacher assists when learner do not know answer and repeats the new vocabulary to ensure that learners bank the new word. | Learners do not know the word, not a word in their vocabulary | C12, C13 |
| 11:17 | All the new words are on the board in the form of cue cards<br><br>The words are presented in two forms- the whole word (blow) and the segmented word (b-l-ow)<br><br>Learners are required to read and reread the words on the board | The teacher uses various questions to check for learner understanding.<br><br>To check for understanding of the new sound and vocabulary but also context, to ensure that the learner also knows and understands the meaning of the new words. | | C10, C13, C14 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | The teacher asks the learner questions – “what do we blow, what do we do to the grass, is it hot or cold when it snows?”<br><br>Learners are encouraged to answer the questions in full sentences | Practicing speaking in full sentences provides learners with the opportunity to practice their fluency. | | |
| 11:18 | The teacher shows the learners the picture and the sentence and individual learners have to read and then all the learners read together. | Repetition, consistency, and fluency practice | Learners are able to fluently read the sentence and are familiar with the association of the picture and the sentence. | C13, C14 |
| 11:21 | Teacher asks individual learners to match the given picture to the correct “ow” cue card on the board. E.g., Learner has to match the image of the tortoise to the word “slow”<br><br>The teacher selects nonresponsive learners to participate but gives them the instruction in isiXhosa and provides them with additional | Opportunity for guided practice with teacher’s assistance | Learners enjoy the opportunity and stand up in front of the class | C14 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | assistance. She gives the struggling learners the sentence and the picture and tells the learners to look for the matching word. | | | |
| 11:25 | Teacher removes the “ow” words off the board and leaves the pictures. Learners must now match the word to the picture and sentence. | Opportunity for guided practice with teacher’s assistance | Learners enjoy the opportunity and stand up in front of the class | C10, C14 |
| 11:26 | Teacher and learners reread all the words on the board and clap the syllables in the word as they read. | Clapping word syllables allows children to hear and store the sounds in them more accurately which assists with reading and spelling. | Learners are able to accurately read the words and clap their syllables. | C4, C6, C10, C11, C12 |
| 11:30 | Conclude lesson with a song and actions | Emotional engagement<br><br>The use of actions in the song allows learners to connect an action with the word and solidify the English word and meaning. | Learners enjoyed the song and the interactive actions | C3 |

**General comments:**

Teacher used repetition throughout the lesson to ensure understanding and used incomplete sentences and probing questions to check for understanding.

Appendix 3: Lesson Plan Checklist

**School:**_____

**Lesson Date:** _____

| **Criteria:** | **Yes** | **No** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Is the lesson aligned with the CAPS curriculum? | | |
| 2. Is this lesson based on the knowledge of previous lessons? Does the teacher ensure scaffolding? | | |
| 3. Is the lesson engaging? | | |
| 4. Is the lesson relatable? | | |
| 5. Does the teacher provide the outcome of the lesson and how the outcomes will be achieved? | | |
| 6. Does the lesson provide clarity of examples and offer opportunities for guided practice? | | |
| 7. Does the lesson provide an opportunity for independent practice? | | |
| 8. Is there an assessment tool to assess learner's conceptual understanding? | | |
| 9. Does the lesson offer scope for differentiation in terms of teaching strategies and activities? | | |

***Lesson Plan Checklist sample:***

Site: School 2

Participant: Teacher D

Date: August 2022

Lesson 1

| **Criteria:** | **Yes** | **No** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Is the lesson aligned with the CAPS curriculum? | X | | Term 3 EFAL |
| 2. Does the teacher have a gripping introduction to ensure the emotional engagement of all learners? | X | | Greeting and song |
| 3. Is this lesson based on the knowledge of previous lessons?<br>Does the teacher ensure scaffolding? | | X | The teacher plans to introduce a new letter and therefore new knowledge. |
| 4. Is the lesson engaging? | X | | Teacher provides examples of how the learners will repeat after her and engage throughout the lesson. |
| 5. Is the lesson relatable? | X | | Teacher provides relatable sentence examples |
| 6. Does the teacher provide the objective of the lesson and how the objectives will be achieved? | | X | Objectives not stated in lesson plan |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7. Does the lesson provide clarity of examples and offer opportunities for guided practice? | X | | Examples of guided practice sentences. |
| 8. Does the lesson provide an opportunity for independent practice? | | X | Independent practice not included in this introduction lesson. |
| 9. Is there an assessment tool to assess learner's conceptual understanding? | | X | Teacher plans to check for understanding through probing questions |
| 10. Does the lesson offer scope for differentiation in terms of teaching strategies and activities? | X | | Teacher will use word cue cards and segmented word cue cards to ensure all learners can read the new vocabulary words. |

## Appendix 4: Interview Schedule

Background:

| **Time:** | **Background questions:** | **Answer:** |
|---|---|---|
| 6 minutes | 1. What is your current teaching position? | |
| | 2. What is your highest teaching qualification? | |
| | 3. How long have you been teaching? (Total time) | |
| | 4. How long have you been teaching at this current school? | |
| | 5. What is your home language? | |
| | 6. Does your home language and language of instruction align? | |

| **Time:** | **Question 7** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5 minutes | Please can you explain the level of English proficiency that your learners currently are at? | Are they proficient in English?<br><br>Can they speak it fluently?<br><br>Can they comprehend questions and instructions? |
| Answer: | | |

| **Time:** | **Question 8** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|
| 5 minutes | Do you think your learners are struggling in EFAL? | If yes, why are they struggling?<br><br>In what areas are they struggling? |
| Answer: | | |

| **Time:** | **Question 9** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|
| 5 minutes | How do you differentiate your lesson to assist the different levels of learners in the class? | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Answer: | |

| **Time:** | **Question 10** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|
| 5 minutes | What do you do to assist learners that are struggling in EFAL? | Additional activities, additional time |
| Answer: | | |

| **Time:** | **Question 11** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|
| 5 minutes | Do you provide additional EFAL assistance after the lesson/throughout the day? | e.g., reading programmes, using English on the playground, etc.<br><br>Do you think you can provide additional assistance? |
| Answer: | | |

| **Time:** | **Question 12** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|
| 5 minutes | What challenges do you face when teaching EFAL? | What do you think are the causes of these challenges? |
| Answer: | | |

| **Time:** | **Question 13** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|
| 5 minutes | Do you think your learners are ready and capable to learn in English as the LoLT in grade 4? | If not, why not?<br><br>What can we do to bridge the gap or ease the transition? |
| Answer: | | |

| **Time:** | **Question 14** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|
| 5 minutes | What do you think you would need to be able to improve your teaching practice in EFAL? | Additional teacher training<br><br>School support programmes |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | Revision of the curriculum |
| Answer: | | |

| **Time:** | **Question 15** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|
| 5 minutes | Does the CAPS EFAL document provide a detailed outline of what is expected from learners? | Are you familiar with what CAPS expects you to teach learners per term?<br><br>Do you use CAPS to guide your lessons?<br><br>- Reading and phonics, listening and speaking, writing |
| Answer: | | |

| **Time:** | **Question 16** | **Comments:** |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5 minutes | Does the CAPS EFAL document provide a detailed outline of how teachers can achieve those outcomes? | Are you familiar with what CAPS expects from learners per term in terms of assessment?<br><br>Do you use CAPS to guide your assessments? |
| Answer: | | |

***Interview transcript sample:***

Site: School 2

Participant: Teacher D

Date: August 2022

**ERN 1 Interviewer**:

OK, so firstly you are a grade 3 teacher?

**ERN 2 Interviewee**:

Yes

**ERN 3 Interviewer**:

What is your highest teaching qualification?

**ERN 4 Interviewee**: Higher diploma in education

**ERN 5 Interviewer**:

How long have you been teaching for? All together?

**ERN 6 Interviewee**:

From 1998. 24 years.

**ERN 7 Interviewer**:

And how long have you been teaching at this school?

**ERN 8 Interviewee**: 4 years

**ERN 9 Interviewer**:

What is your home language?

**ERN 10 Interviewee**: isiXhosa

**ERN 11 Interviewer**:

At the beginning of yesterday's lesson and at the end, you had them do that poem, sing that song. Why did you choose the poem to start your lesson?

**ERN 12 Interviewee**:

That poem, it's about family neh. Because we were having a lesson about family and about siblings and then that poem comes from that siblings.

**ERN 13 Interviewer**:

Why did you do a poem?

What reason do you choose to do any poem at the start or end of the lesson?

**ERN 14 Interviewee**:

That poem was about the family members, how many are they in the family, who the breadwinner is at home and then who is taking care of them and then when they are at home do they fight. Are they happy with their family? Who is happy, who is not happy in their family? That poem also helps to gets to know who the child comes from, who is the child and get to know the children in the class.

So that you get to know who you can support, who you can assist. You know the background of the child, let me put it like that.

**ERN 15 Interviewer**:

So, was the family a previous lesson that you did?

**ERN 16 Interviewee**:

Yes, it was the previous lesson that I did. So, every time if I ask them if they are happy or not, I like to do that poem with them.

**ERN 17 Interviewer**:

Do you do that to get them engaged?

**ERN 18 Interviewee**:

Yes, I use that to get them engaged in the lesson.

**ERN 19 Interviewer**:

And then during your lesson when you were busy doing the “ow” words, you repeated the words many times, you made them repeat the words many times. Why did you do that?

**ERN 20 Interviewee**:

I did that because when we are doing reading, the only thing I want is the fluency. They can read, they can decode, they can segment the words, they can read fluently.

And no, English is not their home language neh, but at least they can read fluently for the next grade. In grade 4 to grade 7 they are doing  everything in English. Maths in English. Its only Xhosa that they doing in isiXhosa.

**ERN 21 Interviewer**:

So, what do you do to them to encourage them to become fluent?

**ERN 22 Interviewee**:

To read, each and every day in the morning we have 10 minutes of reading in the morning.

**ERN 23 Interviewer**:

In Xhosa or in English?

**ERN 24 Interviewee**:

No, sometimes, we read in Xhosa and then we read in English because on their file they have got English stories. They got Xhosa stories. We do English, we do Xhosa. Every day we change. So that they can be a fluent reader.

**ERN 25 Interviewer**:

So, in the morning when you do their reading, do you do Xhosa and English reading, or do you do one day English and one day Xhosa?

**ERN 26 Interviewee**:

We do Xhosa story, we do English story.

**ERN 27 Interviewer**:

Everyday?

**ERN 28 Interviewee**:

Every morning that 10 minutes. It's a reading period that 10 minutes. It doesn't matter if it's a Xhosa or English reading.

**ERN 29 Interviewer**:

Is it the same story that you read every day?

**ERN 30 Interviewee**:

It's not the same story. There are a lot of stories. For instance neh, we are doing this “ow” sound now the next thing, I’m going to get a story of “ow” sounds. So, they are going to read “ow” sound and then mixed with other sounds. Every time, we’ve got a new sound and a new lesson, we have a new story. Every new lesson, we’ve got a new story.

**ERN 31 Interviewer**:

OK, so do you use the story to reinforce the “ow” sound?

**ERN 32 Interviewee**:

Yes

**ERN 33 Interviewer**:

During your lesson when you were asking different children to answer, not everybody picks up their hand. How do you get all your children to engage in your lesson or what do you do?

**ERN 34 Interviewee:**

Sometimes I use gestures

But you know, if they doesn’t pick up their hands, I can't do otherwise.

**ERN 35 Interviewer**:

So those children that don't pick up their hands do you ask them anyways?

**ERN 36 Interviewee**:

I asked them but they can't because some of them are here in Grade 3 but if you can know they are actually grade R. There's grade R, there's grade 1, there's grade 2, there's grade 3. There are children that can't read. They can't write. They can't even count. (referring to one specific learner in the class)

**ERN 37 Interviewer**:

So, how do you help him?

**ERN 38 Interviewee**:

That was supposed to be referred long time

**ERN 39 Interviewer:**

To an inclusive or special needs school?

**ERN 40 Interviewee**:

Yes, long time. So, it's the case. This one can count but he can't write (referring to another learner). The only thing that I used to do to help them is I cut letters and they have to make words even single words or double words with consonants and then when I'm doing maybe spelling, I allow them to (says word in isiXhosa).

**ERN 41 Interviewer**:

OK, so have they gotten better since you've tried to help them more, these two boys?

**ERN 42 Interviewee**:

Yes. But that one (referring to one learner), it's very difficult. Even if I show him two fingers and say can you count, he can count 1, 2 (shows two fingers) but if I make like this (shows two fingers and two fingers) for four fingers, he can't. maybe he can say 1, 2, 3, 4 but he doesn't have the knowledge.

**ERN 43 Interviewer**:

But now when you gave them all a worksheet, what does he do?

**ERN 44 Interviewee**:

He will just write quickly and finish.

**ERN 45 Interviewer**:

But does he do it correctly?

**ERN 46 Interviewee**:

No

**ERN 47 Interviewer**:

And then do you help him with the worksheet, or do you just leave him?

**ERN 48 Interviewee**:

I can work him, but I have to take lots of time, only to him. Sometimes, I just ask the assistant. She can help him.

**ERN 49 Interviewer**:

Then does the assistant sits with them and help them?

**ERN 50 Interviewee**:

She sits with them but it takes long to understand. Even then, he can't even understand.

**ERN 51 Interviewer**:

The words that you introduced yesterday, do you think they've added those words into their vocabulary? Do you think they know those words now?

**ERN 52 Interviewee**:

They know that it. Because remember, I have got pictures with it. Because if you just put only words, they will know the words but they won't know the meaning of the words. But for you or for them to know the words, there must be a picture of the word. Picture with word so that they can understand the meaning. But if you use only the word, they can know the words but they don't know the meanings of the word.

**ERN 53 Interviewer**:

Will you revise these words again?

**ERN 54 Interviewee**: I will put the words there (pointing to the back of the classroom on their word wall). On the word wall so that they can see every day.

**ERN 55 Interviewer**:

OK. And then do you go back to those words to practice those words again?

**ERN 56 Interviewee**:

When we're doing that same sound reading, we sometimes, if we don't do the file, we do the word wall. We're doing the word wall. Sometimes we use the file, sometimes we use the word wall, for them to be used to those words.

OK.

**ERN 57 Interviewer**:

Can you explain the activity that you gave them today?

Why did you make the activity like you did?

**ERN 58 Interviewee**:

Because we're doing that "ow" sound neh. And then I want to see if they really understand the "ow" sound because if you see there the picture and you match. You draw the word to the picture. I want to see if they really understand the lesson that I was doing.

**ERN 59 Interviewer**:

Can you explain the level of English proficiency of your learners?

Can your learners understand, speak and read English? (Question 7)

**ERN 60 Interviewee**:

Not to that level. Because it's not their home language. Remember, it's the first additional. It's not like they are doing English in home language. They know the basic, not that deep English. And then even then, some of them, for instance, when they are reading the story, they can just read the story. Some of them, they can understand. I just read maybe, I don't read the whole story for them. I read a portion and then I stop and then ask the questions to know if they understand. And then you see "oh, they understand the story". And then I will read a portion and then I will stop and ask the questions and see if they will listen or if they understand the story. And then I will see that some of them, they don't understand. I will read a portion by portion and ask a question (Answer 7)

**ERN 61 Interviewer**:

So, what do you do for those that don't understand?

**ERN 62 Interviewee**:

Because it's not their home language. I will read the story and then when I finish the story then I will try to make pictures and words so that they can at least know the story and see what that story is about.

**ERN 63 Interviewer**:

So, do you think the picture and the word helps by using it together?

**ERN 64 Interviewee**:

Yes, too much

**ERN 65 Interviewer**:

Do you think your learners struggle with English first additional language? (Question 8)

**ERN 66 Interviewee**:

Ya, some of them. (Answer 8)

**ERN 67 Interviewer**:

And you think some of them are fine?

**ERN 68 Interviewee**:

Some of them are fine.

**ERN 69 Interviewer**:

OK, in what areas are some of them struggling?

What do they struggle with?

**ERN 70 Interviewee**:

Reading. Reading and decoding. Comprehension. And then they can't write English.

**ERN 71 Interviewer**:

Why do you think they are struggling with the reading?

**ERN 72 Interviewee**:

Because some of them, can't even know word building. They can't build, how can I put (teacher struggled to find the correct English word).

**ERN 73 Interviewer**:

Can they read in their home language, or do they struggle in both languages?

**ERN 74 Interviewee**:

Some they struggle in both. They can't read isiXhosa so it's worse when you come to English.

**ERN 75 Interviewer**:

So, it's not necessarily that they can't read in English, it's just because they can't read?

**ERN 76 Interviewee***:*

They are confused. They get confused when we are in English. Because they can't master the isiXhosa.

**ERN 77 Interviewer**:

OK, why do some of the learners get confused when reading isiXhosa and reading English for example?

**ERN 78 Interviewee**:

Like the sound. They get confused. Like you see the “c”. They will say the “c” sound in isiXhosa. They will pronounce it in isiXhosa.  It

**ERN 79 Interviewer**:

What is the “c” sound in isiXhosa?

**ERN 80 Interviewee**:

“chi” (sound) in isiXhosa

**ERN 81 Interviewer**:

OK, so do you think that that affects their English reading?

**ERN 82 Interviewee**:

Yes, yes.

**ERN 83 Interviewer**:

OK, what do you do to assist the learners that are struggling? (Question 10)

**ERN 84 Interviewee**:

I introduce the letter sounds. The letter sound and the picture. So that is why I was saying that if we just give them the word, they don't know the meaning, they can't read. But if there's a picture, they will know the word and then they will try to read because they can see the picture. They will try and then they will get the word. (Answer 10)

**ERN 85 Interviewer**:

Do you give some of the learners that are struggling, do you give them extra activities to do, or do you give them extra time to do the work?

**ERN 86 Interviewee**:

Yes, but even if, it's difficult because even if you give them homework. The parents, they are illiterate. They can't do the homework for them. when they come to school, the only learners that are good, it's the only parents that they help. Because you see that maybe some of the parents, they are illiterate. They don't even know, they can't even read, so it's just sometimes a waste of time to give them homework.

**ERN 87 Interviewer**:

Do you think that the parents sometimes help them with English at home?

Do the parents try and speak English to them?

**ERN 88 Interviewee**:

In fact, they don't speak English. If you give them homework, the parents just write it for them. When they come, you see uh uh, it's not them.

**ERN 89 Interviewer**:

Why do you think the parents do that?

**ERN 90 Interviewee**:

Maybe they can't. You see, you see mos, some of them even, though I can see I'm struggling there, the parents doesn't have the time to sit because maybe they see this child can't read, can't write, then they just read and write for them.

**ERN 91 Interviewer**:

What techniques do you use in your class to check for learner understanding? How do you check that the learners understand what you're teaching them or what they're learning in the class?

**ERN 92 Interviewee**:

Assessment

**93 Interviewer**:

How often do you do assessments?

**ERN 94 Interviewee**:

Every term

**ERN 95 Interviewer**:

Once a term?

**ERN 96 Interviewee**:

Every term we do assessments. We do our EGRA (Early Grade Reading Assessment) to assess them.

**ERN 97 Interviewer**:

And then once you've done the assessment and you get your results to see the areas where your children are struggling. Do you then next term do that again or what do you do?

**ERN 98 Interviewee**:

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, we do that again. We see where the learners struggle. I do that again, extra, extra work. Intervention, as well.

**ERN 99 Interviewer**:

OK, with your intervention, do you do your intervention in class or after school?

**ERN 100 Interviewee:**

No, I do in class because after school some of them, their transport is already there, waiting for them. So, I try to do it immediately. After I see that, OK, he's struggling.

I just create time to sit with him and then.

**ERN 101 Interviewer**:

So, for your intervention, do you sit with one-on-one child

**ERN 102 Interviewee**:

Yes, it's one-on-one because not everybody struggles with the same thing. I can't just do for the whole learners that are struggling. It's one-on-one wherever I see the need to help. Maybe, for instance, in maths, maybe he mastered in addition, but in subtraction, its where he needs help.

**ERN 103 Interviewer**:

So, do you base the intervention on what the child is struggling with?

**ERN 104 Interviewee**:

Yes

**ERN 105 Interviewer**:

I see you also use code-switching regularly, when you change between languages.

Do you think that code-switching helps?

**ERN 106 Interviewee**:

Yes, it helps because sometimes he doesn't know what I'm saying now. Doesn't know the meaning of this now. So, when I code-switch you can raise up the hand. I know it, even if I'm not going to be quite right, I can try and say it

**ERN 107 Interviewer**:

Do you think good discipline in your class helps you in your lesson?

**ERN 108 Interviewee**:

It does. A lot, a lot. Because if they can focus, they can focus. If there's no discipline in class, you know mos, they will,if you allow them to go up and down.

**ERN 109 Interviewer:**

OK, so how do you differentiate your lesson to assist the children with your different levels? How do you change your lesson or do your lesson differently to help all the different children in your class? Do you change your lesson? (Question 9)

**ERN 110 Interviewee**:

Yes, when it comes to writing, then I change it, according to their ability groups. (Answer 9)

**ERN 111 Interviewer:**

Then do you have different sentences for different abilities groups?

**ERN 112 Interviewee**:

Yes

**ERN 113 Interviewer**:

How do you do that?

**ERN 114 Interviewee**:

You know sometimes, there are learners that can read the whole sentence. There are learners that can read letters. There are learners who can read single consonants.

So, maybe first group, they can read the whole sentence.

The second group, they can read one word. The last group, they can read single consonants.

**ERN 115 Interviewer**:

Then I saw you had the small group activity by your table. Do you do that small group with every group or only that one group?

**ERN 116 Interviewee**:

No, if can see, there are five groups- pineapples, peach, strawberries, grapes. According to their ability groups. I can't mix the stronger child with the weaker one.

I mixed the weaker groups together so that they can gain confidence because if I mix them with the stronger and the weaker, they will be overpowered by the strong.

**ERN 117 Interviewer**:

So, this group that you had today, were they a weak or a strong group?

**ERN 118 Interviewee**:

It's the same ability group. It’s the middle group.

**ERN 119 Interviewer**:

And then you do this worksheet with every group, even the strong group?

**ERN 120 Interviewee**:

Yes, but sometimes it depends on what the topic is about or what I was introducing and then I know if they are struggling, I will change my activities.

**ERN 121 Interviewer**:

So why do you do the small group activity?

**ERN 122 Interviewee**:

I wanted to see who struggles because if I take the whole group every time, I won’t see who is struggling. So, if I can take the small group, I can even see who can read and who can’t read.

**ERN 123 Interviewer**:

Do you provide English assistance? (Question 11)

You said after school, you don't.

Does the school have any extra classes?

**ERN 124 Interviewee**:

We don't have extra classes at the moment. Its only an ELSEN teacher that comes on certain days (Answer 11)

**ERN 125 Interviewer**:

And does she take the learners out of your class?

**ERN 126 Interviewee**:

Yes, the ones who are struggling

**ERN 127 Interviewer**:

And what does the ELSEN teacher do with the learners?

**ERN 128 Interviewee**:

In fact, I was asking the other day, what is she doing with the children because I must know so that I can also help her.

**ERN 129 Interviewee**:

Do you think you give your children enough English support?

**ERN 130 Interviewee**:

Teacher nods

**ERN 131 Interviewer**:

What challenges do you face teaching English first additional language? You as a teacher? (Question 12)

**ERN 132 Interviewee**:

Because they can't read, themselves. Some, learners, they are from Zimbabwe, from foreign-speaking countries. They can't speak isiXhosa, they know English. Like the other one there (referring to a learner) he is fluent in English because at home they don't speak isiXhosa, they speak English and their language. So, them. its, English is not a burden. It's not that easy, like the one comes from Xhosa speaking. (Answer 12)

**ERN 133 Interviewer**:

So why does that challenge you, then, to teach English?

**ERN 134 Interviewee**:

Because he's speaking, at home they can't speak English, they only speak isiXhosa.

Even if I give them homework, their parents doesn't know English. It's difficult for them to help with them in English because they can't even write isiXhosa.

**ERN 135 Interviewer**:

But is there anything that you struggle with, do you struggle to teach English?

**ERN 136 Interviewee**:

Yes, but I'm trying my almost best to teach them with pictures

It is where I get at least, how can I put this? It's difficult. It's difficult to teach them English.

Because when they are in grade 1, they can't read and write. It only instructions. When they are in grade 2, its where they learn.

I don't know how to put it.

**ERN 137 Interviewer**:

OK, what do you think you would need to be able to improve your English teaching? (Question 14)

**ERN 138 Interviewee**:

More reading books with pictures. More books with pictures so they cannot just look at a picture. You know mos, some books have a picture and no reading sentences. You must have a picture and word. Word and picture, so that they can see the picture, see the word. (Answer 14)

**ERN 139 Interviewer**:

Do you think there's anything else you need? Or only more books?

**ERN 140 Interviewee**:

(Shrugs shoulders)

**ERN 141 Interviewer**:

If that's fine, that's OK.

Do you think the CAPS English first additional language document provides you with an outline of what is expected from the learners each term? (Question 15)

**ERN 142 Interviewee**:

Ya. You know the problem is, when we're trying to get engaged, they change.

Maybe you're trying to be engaged on CAPS neh, they change. (Answer 15)

**ERN 143 Interviewer**:

The curriculum?

**ERN 144 Interviewee**:

Yes

**ERN 145 Interviewer**:

So, do you feel like you don't really know the CAPS documents enough?

**ERN 146 Interviewee**:

Yes

**ERN 147 Interviewer**:

Do you base your planning on CAPS?

**ERN 148 Interviewee**:

Yes

**ERN 149 Interviewer**:

Do you think the CAPS documents, gives you as a teacher, do you think it tells you how you can achieve the outcomes that the CAPS document wants? (Question 16)

**ERN 150 Interviewee:**

Yes, even though when we implement in class is not easy, for the learners but ya. (Answer 16)

**ERN 151 Interviewer**:

Does it give you detailed Lesson plans? Does it give you guidance on how to plan your English lessons?

**ERN 152 Interviewee**:

Yes, it gives us.

**ERN 153 Interviewer**:

Do you use your CAPS to guide your assessments?

**ERN 154 Interviewee**:

Yes, and trackers as well

**ERN 155 Interviewer**:

What is that?

**ERN 156 Interviewee**:

The trackers. It shows where, what we must do weekly, and daily

**ERN 157 Interviewer**:

Do you think your learners are ready to learn in English as the language of teaching and learning in grade four. Do you think your class is ready to learn in English? (Question 13)

**ERN 158 Interviewee**:

Not everyone. Let's say the group ones, the group twos, but there are the slow learners, they are not ready. (Answer 13)

**ERN 159 Interviewer**:

Will those learners go to Grade four next year?

**ERN 160 Interviewee**:

They have to go to grade four. If they pass, isiXhosa, home language, they must go.

**ERN 161 Interviewer**:

And do you think they will struggle next year in Grade four?

**ERN 162 Interviewee**:

They will. They will

**ERN 163 Interviewer**:

And what do you think that you can do to try and bridge that gap for the slow learners to be able to do English, everything, in grade four next year?

**ERN 164 Interviewee**:

It will be difficult for them because they can't even master this home language. It's not going to be easy. I don't want to lie, it's not going to be easy for them.

Even in first and second term, maybe they'll be better there in third and fourth term there in grade four, but in first term, going to be very difficult, because you remember in grade four, everything is in English, so it's even difficult, even to adapt in English because it's even, even in isiXhosa they can't read those difficult. So, it's going to be more difficult when it comes to English but on first and second term but third to fourth term, they got better.

**ERN 165 Interviewer**:

So, do you think they would master English more if they mastered their home language first?

**ERN 166 Interviewee**:

Yes. But not really, for instance, neh, those learners that are from Zimbabwe and Congo, they are struggling in our grades in isXhosa, they are much, much better in English. So, they are just flowing in grade four.

**ERN 167 Interviewer**:

OK, so do those learners do well in grade four?

**ERN 168 Interviewee**:

Yes

**ERN 169 Interviewer**:

OK, perfect. We are finished.

Thank you very much.

**ERN 170 Interviewee**:

Thank you

Appendix 5: Permission to Conduct Research in Schools




University of the Witwatersrand,

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Principal M.N Njenxa

083 954 2581

Mbekweni Primary School

698 Pinzi Str, Mbekweni, Paarl.

August 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct research at Mbekweni Primary School

My name is Anastasia Dooms

I am studying for a Master's Degree in Inclusive Education in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am seeking permission to do research at Mbekweni Primary School.

My research topic is "Teacher pedagogies for literacy acquisition amongst FAL learners in Grade 3 in two schools in the Western Cape".

I am a current educator and have witnessed first-hand the challenges faced by learners in terms of literacy acquisition.

The purpose of this research report is to identify the current pedagogical approaches used by teachers within the classroom to assist learners that are required to learn in their first additional language (FAL), paying particular attention to literacy acquisition. Through observing English first additional language (EFAL) lessons in Grade 3, the research can identify the pedagogical approaches and literacy interventions currently used by teachers to assist learners in learning in their FAL.

This report will look to identify and analyze all pedagogies used by educators and thereafter look to highlight those that seem most promising. In addition, it will look to highlight the pedagogical approaches and literacy interventions that will assist particularly FAL learners. Potentially, this report may also set the platform for further research into improving literacy acquisition, realigning pedagogical approaches to teaching, and learning in the FAL, as well as potential adjustments to the English FAL CAPS document to assist all learners adequately.

The schools selected were carefully selected as the Grade 3 learners are not English HL learners and are therefore required to learn in their FAL.

The research will entail collecting data through EFAL lesson observation and teacher interviews.

I will invite the Grade 3 educators from your school to participate in this study. If they agree, they will be asked to participate in two EFAL lesson observations and a semi-structured interview. The selected teachers will need to set aside time for one interview which will occur on the school's premises after classroom time. The participants' responses during the interview will be audio recorded.

Participants will be provided with an outline of the study and will be asked to give their written consent before the research can commence. Their responses will be treated confidentially, and their identities (their names and the name of your school) will be kept anonymous. Individual privacy will be ensured in all written data that may result from the study.

The results will be communicated in a research dissertation through the University of Witwatersrand.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. I will reassure them that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without repercussions. The participants will not incur any risks and will not be paid for their participation in this study.

All research data will be kept on a secured hard drive and will be destroyed after two years after the submission.

I, therefore, request permission to conduct my research at your school. The permission letter should be on your organization's headed paper, signed and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Researcher: Anastasia Dooms

072 150 1732

920258@students.wits.ac.za

Research Supervisor: Dr Cameron Martin

Wits contact number

cameron.r.martin@gmail.com

Appendix 6: Participant Information Sheet




August 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to participate in research

My name is Anastasia Dooms.

I am studying for a Master's Degree in Inclusive Education in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. My supervisor is Dr Cameron Martin. I am researching teachers' pedagogies and literacy interventions with FAL learners.

My research topic is "Teacher pedagogies for literacy acquisition amongst FAL learners in Grade 3 in two schools in the Western Cape".

I am a current educator and have witnessed first-hand the challenges faced by learners in terms of literacy acquisition.

The purpose of this research report is to identify the current pedagogical approaches used by teachers within the classroom to assist learners that are required to learn in their first/second additional language (FAL), paying particular attention to literacy acquisition. Through observing English first additional language (EFAL) lessons in Grade 3, the research can identify the pedagogical approaches and literacy interventions currently used by teachers to assist learners in learning in their FAL.

This report will look to identify and analyze all pedagogies used by educators and thereafter look to highlight those that seem most promising. In addition, it will look to

highlight the pedagogical approaches and literacy interventions that will assist particularly FAL learners. Potentially, this report may also set the platform for further research into improving literacy acquisition, realigning pedagogical approaches to teaching, and learning in the FAL, as well as potential adjustments to the EFAL CAPS document to assist all learners adequately.

The schools selected were carefully selected as the Grade 3 learners are not English HL learners and are therefore required to learn in their FAL.

I am requesting to observe two EFAL lessons and thereafter conduct a semi-structured interview. If you decide to take part, your participation in this research study will last about two days. The observations will take place during classroom time, during two EFAL lessons and the interview will take place after classroom time on the school's premises.

With your permission, I would like to audio record the interview. This data will be stored on a secured hard drive for 2 years after the submission. Only the researcher will have access to the data.

The interview will remain confidential and anonymous. When I share the results of the research study, I will not include your name or any personal information about you. With your permission, other researchers may use the data collected from this research study, but your name and any personal information will not be used or passed on.

If you decide to take part in the research study, it should be on a voluntary basis. You do not have to take part. You can withdraw from the study at any time. You do not have to answer any questions if you do not want to. You will not get any direct benefits if you choose to join the research study, nor will you lose any services, benefits, or rights you would normally have if you decided not to join. Taking part in the research will not incur you any costs, nor will you be paid for your participation.

The risks for this research study are little to no risks.

This research study will be written up as a research report and will be submitted to the University of Witwatersrand and will be available on their library's website. If you are later interested, I can send you a copy of a summary of the report.

If you have any questions regarding this research, during or afterwards, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor on the details listed below. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical procedures of this research study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408, email hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za.

Yours sincerely,

Anastasia Dooms (researcher)

920258@students.wits.ac.za,

072 150 1732,

Supervisor: Dr Cameron Martin, cameron.r.martin@gmail.com

## Appendix 7: Teacher Consent Form

**Teacher Consent Form**

Dear Teacher volunteer,

You are being asked to participate in an educational research study. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything that you do not understand before deciding if you would like to participate.

| **Research Team** | |
|---|---|
| Research Name:<br><br>Anastasia Dooms | Education Department<br><br>University of Witwatersrand |
| Contact details: 072 150 1733<br><br>920258@students.wits.ac.za | Research Supervisor: Dr Cameron Martin<br><br>Cameron.r.martin@gmail.com |
| **Research Title:** | |
| Teacher pedagogies for literacy acquisition amongst FAL learners in Grade 3 in two Western Cape Schools | |
| **Purpose of the study** | |
| The purpose of this research report is to identify the current pedagogical approaches used by teachers within the classroom to assist learners that are required to learn in their first additional language (FAL), paying particular attention to literacy acquisition. Through observing English first additional language (EFAL) lessons in Grade 3, the research can identify the pedagogical approaches and literacy interventions currently used by teachers to assist learners in learning in their FAL.<br><br>This report will look to identify and analyze all pedagogies used by educators and thereafter look to highlight those that seem most promising. In addition, it will look to highlight the pedagogical approaches and literacy interventions that will assist particularly FAL learners. Potentially, this report may also set the platform for further research into improving literacy acquisition, realigning pedagogical approaches to | |

| |
|---|
| teaching, and learning in the FAL, as well as potential adjustments to the English FAL CAPS document to assist all learners adequately. |
| **Procedure** |
| This research will be conducted over a two-day period. Firstly, I will request a copy of your EFAL lesson plan so that I can identify what you will be teaching in your lesson. Thereafter, I will be entering your classroom to observe two EFAL lessons. After the observations, I hope to engage in meaningful dialogue about your lessons, literacy practices and literacy interventions. These interviews will be audio recorded and later transcribed for data analysis. The interview will be a discussion about your EFAL lessons that I observed and the current teaching practices that you use in your classroom to assist FAL learners. |
| **Risks and benefits** |
| Risks: This study involves little to no risk. There are no known harms or discomfits associated with this study.<br><br>Benefits: This research will benefit the researchers by providing a learning opportunity for the participants, as well as the research. This research will provide you with an opportunity to critically reflect on your practice and develop new and innovate ways to address literacy challenges, especially amongst FAL learners. |
| **Withdrawal from the study** |
| You are free to withdrawal from this study at any time. If you decide to withdraw from this study, please notify me immediately. |
| Comments |
| If you have any comments, concerns, or questions regarding the conduct of this research, please contact me.<br><br>If you have any concerns about the research study or questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Witwatersrand<br><br>Shaun Schoeman, Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ac.za - 011717 1408 or<br><br>Charmaine.khumalo@wits.ac.za - 011 717 1788 for queries. |

The data will be kept on a secure hard drive and will be permanently deleted after two years after the research report has been submitted. All names and identifiable

information will be removed from this experiment, and you will remain completely anonymous.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may discontinue your involvement at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with your school, the Department of Education, or the University of Witwatersrand. By continuing in this study, you acknowledge that you have read the information form and have had the chance to ask any questions that you may have about the study.

Name and Surname: _____

Signature: _____

**Title of project:**

"Teacher pedagogies for literacy acquisition amongst FAL learners in Grade 3 in two schools in the Western Cape"

**Name of researcher:**

Anastasia Dooms

I, ……., agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to the following:

(Please circle the relevant options below)

| | |
|---|---|
| The research study was explained to me. I understand what this study is about. | YES NO |
| I understand that I can volunteer to take part in the study | YES NO |
| I agree that the interview may be audio recorded | YES NO |
| I agree that direct quotations from my interview or lesson may be used by the researcher in their research report | YES NO |
| I agree that my participation will remain anonymous (my name will not be used by the researcher in their research report | YES NO |
| I agree that other researchers may use the information I provide in my observations/interview, but my name and any personal information will not be used or passed on | YES NO |

…… (signature)

…… (name of participant)

…… (date)

…… (signature)

…… (name of researcher/person seeking consent)

…… (date)

***Teacher Consent Form sample:***

Site: School 2

Participant: Teacher D

| |
|---|
| Risks: This study involves no more than minimal risk. There are no known harms or discomfits associated with this study.<br><br>Benefits: This experiment will benefit the participants and the researchers by providing a learning opportunity for the participants, as well as the research. This research will provide you with an opportunity to critically reflect on your practice and develop new and innovate ways to address literacy challenges, especially amongst FAL learners. |
| **Withdrawal from the study** |
| You are free to withdrawal from this study at any time. If you decide to withdraw from this study, please notify me immediately. |
| Comments |
| If you have any comments, concerns, or questions regarding the conduct of this research, please contact me.<br><br>If you have any concerns about the research study or questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Witwatersrand<br><br>Shaun Schoeman, Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ac.za - 011717 1408 or<br><br>Charmaine.khumalo@wits.ac.za - 011 717 1788 for queries. |

The data will be kept on a secure hard drive and will be permanently deleted after two years after the research report has been submitted. All names and identifiable information will be removed from this experiment, and you will remain completely anonymous.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may discontinue your involvement at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with your school, the Department of Education, or the University of Witwatersrand. By continuing in this study, you acknowledge that you have read the information form and have had the chance to ask any questions that you may have about the study.

Name and Surname: T.C THEMBISA JELWANA

Signature: T.C Jelwana

**Title of project:**
"Teacher pedagogies for literacy acquisition amongst FAL learners in Grade 3 in two schools in the Western Cape"

**Name of researcher:**
Anastasia Dooms

I, ...THEMBISA JELWANA..., agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to the following:
(Please circle the relevant options below)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| The research study was explained to me. I understand what this study is about. | (YES) | NO |
| I understand that I can volunteer to take part in the study | (YES) | NO |
| I agree that the interview may be audio recorded | (YES) | NO |
| I agree that direct quotations from my interview or lesson may be used by the researcher in their research report | (YES) | NO |
| I agree that my participation will remain anonymous (my name will not be used by the researcher in their research report | (YES) | NO |
| I agree that other researchers may use the information I provide in my observations/interview, but my name and any personal information will not be used or passed on | (YES) | NO |

T C Jelwana ..... (signature)

THEMBISA ..... (name of participant)

31/08/22 ..... (date)

..... (signature)

A. Dooms ..... (name of researcher/person seeking consent)

31 August 2022 ..... (date)

Appendix 8: Learner Assent




**Learner Assent for participating in a research study**

Research project title:

**To be read to children under the age of 18 years**

My name is Anastasia Dooms and I am also a teacher. I teach Grade R children.

**Why am I here?**

I am here to see how your teacher helps you learn in class. I will be in your class when you are busy learning how to speak, read and write in English. I will be in your classroom for two days.

Is it ok if I sit in your class during your English lesson?

# Appendix 9: Ethics Clearance Certificate



**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ETHICS COMMITTEE**

**CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)**

| | |
|---|---|
| **CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE** | **PROTOCOL NUMBER:** 2022ECE026M |
| **PROJECT TITLE** | Teacher pedagogies for literacy acquisition amongst FAL learners in Grade 3 in two Western Cape Schools. |
| **INVESTIGATOR** | Dooms Chloe Anastasia |
| **SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR** | **WSOE** |
| **DATE CONSIDERED** | 22 July 2022 |
| **DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE** | Approved unconditionally |
| **RISK LEVEL** | No Risk |
| **EXPIRY DATE** | Date of submission of the Research Report |
| **ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE** | **CHAIRPERSON** Dr. Batseba Mofolo-Mbokane |

cc: Dr. Cameron Martin

---

**DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR**

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

_____ **Signature**

_____/_____/_____ **Date**