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LANGUAGE FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES: PERFORMANCE OF GRADE-ONE ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) LEARNERS ON THE DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATION OF LANGUAGE VARIATION (DELV)

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A research report submitted to the discipline of Speech Pathology and Audiology,
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In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Speech Pathology (by coursework and research report)

May, 2007

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research report is my own work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters of Arts in Speech Pathology (by coursework and research report). It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at any other University.

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(Name of candidate)

_____

(Date)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAE = African American English

ANOVA = Analysis of Variance

BICS = Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

CALP = Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

CEO = Chief Executive Officer

DELV = Diagnostic Evaluation of Language Variation

ESL = English as a Second Language

GDE = Gauteng Department of Education

HEI = Higher Education Institution

L1= First Language/ Home Language

L2 = Second Language

LI = Language Impairment

LiEP = Language in Education Policy

LLD = Language Learning Disability

LoLT = Language of Learning and Teaching

MAE = Mainstream American English

MOE = Months of Exposure

PPVT = Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test

SES = Socio-Economic-Status

SLI = Specific Language Impairment

SLP = Speech Language Pathologist

SOV = Subject Object Verb

SVO = Subject Verb Object

TD = Typically Developing

ABSTRACT

This study endeavoured to document the oral English language abilities of grade-one, isiZulu-speaking English Second Language (ESL) learners, from three inner city schools using the Diagnostic Evaluation of Language Variation (DELV) (Seymour, Roeper & de Villiers, 2003). A cross-sectional quantitative design was used. This design consisted of both a comparative component, which examined performance and gender comparisons, and a correlational component that evaluated the relationship between the parent-teacher estimations of language proficiency, and the scores obtained on the DELV. In addition, there was a small element of qualitative research, which attempted to elucidate the children's general language environment. On the basis of the results obtained on the DELV, it was concluded that the groups of ESL children from the three schools would be treated as one larger group. The results from this larger single group showed that the ESL children in this study obtained low means and a wide range of scores for all three sub-tests of the DELV. This broad range of scores indicated that there is a large degree of individual variation amongst these ESL children. The placing of the scores obtained in each sub-test into their appropriate categories of weakness, low average, average, and strength, revealed that the ESL children in this study performed better in the pragmatics sub-test. This categorisation of scores was also utilised to detect impairment on the DELV. The results displayed that the majority of the ESL children's performances reflected a language impairment (LI) profile. In contrast, this strong pattern of LI was not clearly evident in the results from the item analysis in each sub-test. The results from the item analyses showed that the most difficult item for the ESL children in this study was the double *wh*-question (pragmatics sub-test), and that these ESL children experienced particular difficulty with the task of producing the correct articles and verb-contrasts. In addition, the results from the item analyses revealed these ESL children's learning potential. It is this learning potential that is the focus of dynamic assessment, which was recommended for the use with ESL children in further studies. The gender performances demonstrated that there were no differences between the male and female learners in this study across all three sub-tests. The generally weak relationships between the

DELV sub-tests and parent and teacher ratings of the ESL children's English proficiency, showed that although the DELV is a useful tool for the South African population, it should be used in conjunction with other language assessment tools (e.g. measures of language processing and language aptitude skills). The parent and teacher language questionnaires, which raised three issues: (1) The emphasis placed on English skills, as parents view it as providing an improved lifestyle for their children; (2) The effect that the ESL children's linguistic exposure in their L1 may have on their L2 development; and (3) The influence of the ESL children's linguistic experience in the classroom. Two main implications emerged from these results. First, is the need for further research on South African ESL children's English language acquisition, as well as for additional evaluations of the DELV's potential for this population. Second, is that the weak areas of English language skills displayed by the ESL children's results on the DELV must be addressed, by utilising the influence of L1 exposure in the home (the parents), classroom exposure (the teachers), and the expertise of the speech language pathologist (SLP).

INTRODUCTION

"To the highways and byways of bilingualism needs to be added the geography of the journey." (Baker, 1993, p. 91)

The investigation presented in this report represents one such journey of bilingualism set in the challenging, multilingual, multicultural context of South Africa. The specific geography of this journey maps out the route of the academic language development of grade-one English second language (ESL) learners attending three inner-city schools, where the language of instruction is English.

Language is key to all spheres of life and is crucial for educational success (Hoff, 2005; Owens, 2004), but it is not only language for communication that is important, but in particular, language for academic purposes. It is the development of language required for educational success in a second language that is the focus of this study. Second language acquisition refers to the acquisition of a second language (L2) after the first language (L1) is well developed (this usually occurs after 3 years of age) and sequential bilinguals generally tend to use the L1 at home and the L2 at school (Genesee, Paradis, & Crago, 2004; Paradis, 2007). Any evaluation of language development in education must differentiate between two fundamental skills namely, Basic Interpersonal Skills (BICS) or conversational proficiency, and Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) or academic proficiency (Cummins, 2000). It is the latter that is central to this research, as it is these deeper linguistic skills that are linked to a child's literacy abilities (Cummins, 2000, 2001b). It is important to research these academic language skills in the South Africa context, as there is serious concern regarding the low levels of literacy among South African children. In an open letter to all primary school principals, Deputy Director of the South African Department of Education, Palesa Tyobeka (2006) states that: "Reading is a foundational skill that all our children need if they are to succeed in life. Sadly all our assessments of how well our children read reveal that a shockingly high number cannot read at the appropriate grade and age level. Many simply cannot read at all"

Grade-one symbolises the beginning of the attainment of this fundamental skill, as children make the initial transition from learning language to utilising language to learn (Westby, 1998). In addition, as Genesee et al. (2004) maintain, it is at this time (early schooling) in the child's development that his/her language abilities are typically assessed, and concern over best practices in detecting children who would benefit from therapy and special education is most common. It must also be noted that academic proficiency is not only equated with literacy skills but includes all other cognitively demanding linguistic tasks of the classroom (Cummins, 2000). The acquisition of academic language proficiency is further complicated if these skills have to be learned in a second language, which appears to be the case for a large proportion of children in South Africa, who are educated in English. The reasons for English being the second language originate from historical factors as well as from the current socio-linguistic forces operating within the country and in the education system. These factors have enabled English to acquire and maintain a high status (Banda, 2000; Braam, 2004; de Klerk, 2002; de Wet, 2002; Ntshingila, 2006). Furthermore, the various educational contexts present in South Africa have been shown to have differential effects on the development of language proficiency needed for academic purposes, in both the first and second language (Morrow, Jordaan, & Fridjohn, 2005). The current study focuses on one specific educational context namely inner-city schools, which was not considered by the above-mentioned researchers.

The skills inherent in academic proficiency do not develop as naturally as those involved in conversational proficiency, and therefore need to be fostered through the education system. This means that educators must teach and facilitate development of these skills so that learners may reach their full potential academically. However, it appears that in the South African education system these underlying language aspects inherent in academic tasks are seldom directly taught, especially with the new outcomes based education in which there seems to be reduced levels of explicit language teaching (Olivier, 1999). "…..Since the introduction of the National Curriculum statement, many teachers believe that they do not have to teach reading

anymore. Nothing could be further from the truth." (Tyobeka, 2006). This study evaluates how ESL children in grade-one cope with the language processes underlying English for academic purposes, and emphasises the need for these linguistic skills to be taught more explicitly. The study will thus hopefully provide some direction for teacher training.

The amount of individual variation in L2 development is well known, and creates difficulty for educators in setting appropriate linguistic expectations for ESL children (Genesee, et al., 2004; Paradis, 2005; Paradis, 2007). However, it is this complex and challenging nature of L2 acquisition that in turn makes it fascinating and intriguing. This study has undertaken to initiate the process of documenting the academic language abilities of ESL children, beginning at the end of grade-one.

In general, the evaluation of language is exceptionally challenging, as language is a multi-dimensional system and is difficult to quantify. In order to conduct valid and reliable assessments of the language acquisition of children, it is vital that suitable measures are utilised. In the educational system, teachers tend to evaluate learners on the grounds of results attained, utilising several different assessment criteria. These criteria are principally based upon language content, and not the processes underlying academic proficiency. Therefore, they do not examine the vital language abilities needed for school success. In addition, language tests and assessment tools utilised by speech language pathologists (SLPs) have also been criticised for evaluating language content, instead of the processes underlying language proficiency. Furthermore, these tests are highly biased towards the populations on which they were normed, and can not be utilised reliably to examine children acquiring a second language. One tool, newly released, which has the potential for examining the deeper linguistic skills needed for academic success, is the Diagnostic Evaluation of Language Variation (DELV) (Seymour, Roeper, & de Villiers, 2003). Cummins (2000) states that as students advance through the grades, they are expected to be able to utilise language in more cognitively demanding and context-reduced circumstances that gradually differ from everyday communicative interactions. Not only is

there a progressively expanding vocabulary and concept load, comprising of words which are seldom used in everyday out-of-the school situations, but syntactic features (such as using the passive instead of an active form), and discourse practices, also become progressively unrelated from the traditional uses of language in non-academic settings (Cummins, 2000). The DELV is felt to sufficiently capture these three areas in the tasks used. Firstly, the DELV looks at the deeper linguistic skills needed to cope successfully, with this gradually increasing lexical and conceptual demand. It achieves this by testing skills such as, the ability to acquire novel words using syntactic cues, the child's lexical organisation and retrieval, as well as how the child copes with a cognitively demanding-aspect of semantics (i.e. the comprehension of quantifiers). Secondly, with regard to the advancing complexity in the use of syntactic features, the DELV assesses the child's ability to comprehend complex questions and passives, and the ability to specify referents using articles (Paradis, 2004). Thirdly, the DELV tests the increasingly decontextualised and cognitively demanding aspects of discourse. It looks at the child's ability to take another persons perspective, to ask for missing information, to tell a cohesive narrative to a person who has no contextual reference to the story (i.e. being able to use the linguistic devices to create, sustain, and differentiate between characters, and the use of causal and temporal links among events), as well as testing the cognitive skill of 'theory of mind' (Paradis, 2004). 'Theory of mind' refers to the ability to perceive oneself and other in terms of mental states (Bower, 1993). The DELV was created as a dialect-neutral assessment tool, and its conceptual basis lies in three areas of research: (1) the investigation into universal grammar and its attainment within theoretical linguistics; (2) the study of African American English (AAE) syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and phonology within theoretical linguistics; and (3) the exploration of Specific Language Impairment (SLI) across various languages (Pearson, 2004).

Universal Grammar can be defined as the fundamental structure that underpins the grammar of every human language (Pinker, 1994). Incorporated within this paradigm is the theory of "principles and parameters", in which principles are the broad patterns of grammar in any given language, and parameters are the specific settings which make one language distinctive from another (Pinker, 1994). For example, a parameter is set which makes one language structured as subject verb object (SVO) as in English, and another as subject object verb (SOV) as in Japanese (Pinker, 1994). Pinker (1994) provides an interesting analogy of Universal Grammar to the typical body design found across a large variety of animals. "For example, among all amphibians reptiles, birds, and mammals, there is a common body architecture, with a segmented backbone, four jointed limbs, a tail, a skull, and so on. The various parts can be grotesquely distorted or stunted across animals: a bat's wing is a hand, a horse trots on its middle toes, whale's forelimbs have become flippers and their hind-limbs have shrunken to invisible numbs, and the tiny hammer, anvil, and stirrup of the mammalian middle ear are jaw parts of reptiles. But from newts to elephants, a common topology of the body plan-the shin bone connected to the thigh bone, the thigh bone connected to the hip bone-can be discerned" (Pinker, 1994, p.238-239). Likewise, when one considers the differences between various languages, there appears to be a shared pattern of syntactic, morphological, and phonological rules and principles, with a few individualised parameters which are altered for each language (Pinker, 1994). Once a parameter is established, it can transform the language's surface structure so that it becomes completely different (Pinker, 1994). This theoretical basis increases the validity of the DELV for assessing the universal properties of language. This makes it suited to assessing second language learners who have acquired these properties through two languages

The second field of research on which the DELV is based, concerns the in-depth linguistic investigations into AAE. These studies show that the perception that AAE is merely the inaccurate use of Mainstream American English (MAE) is untrue. Instead, AAE was found to follow universal principles, and can be considered as having its own grammatical parameters, as deep and complicated as any language (Pearson, 2004). This notion can be applied to the stage of interlanguage in L2 learning. Interlanguage refers to the period in L2 acquisition, when the L2 learner is utilising the L2 productively but has not yet attained native-like proficiency (Genesee et al., 2004). Interlanguage contrasts from the L2 in two main ways: (i) the L1 influences the L2, called transfers errors; (ii) the occurrence of developmental patterns that are a typical component of language learning, called developmental errors (Genesee et al., 2004). It must be noted that interlanguage is a structured and rule governed system (Genesee et al., 2004). Therefore, it is proposed that interlanguage, like AAE, adheres to universal features with its own individualised parameters that differ from the L2.

The third field of research concerns the shift of focus towards examining the characteristics of Specific Language Impairment (SLI) in languages other than English (Pearson, 2004). SLI is a developmental disorder that is determined on exclusionary criteria (Genesee et al., 2004). These children exhibit language difficulties that cannot be attributed to impairments in sensory, cognitive, motor, or social-emotional areas of development (Wetherby, 1998). In other words, these children are typically developing in all domains except one, the ability to acquire and utilise language (Genesee et al., 2004). These studies mentioned-above have resulted in placing emphasis on the deeper principles embodied in this disorder (Pearson, 2004).

It is clearly evident that all three fields emphasise the significance of focusing on deeper linguistic principles. Therefore, the DELV was developed to accurately identify Language Impairment (LI) no matter the variety of English spoken, by utilising language features that are common to all dialects of English and most importantly, this is achieved by examining the deeper linguistic knowledge of typically developing (TD) children (Seymour et al.,

2003). In addition, the DELV has been sourced as the motivation behind a new "European Co-operation in the field of Scientific and Technical research" (COST) endeavour (Sauerland, 2005). The proposal put forward for this research, stipulates that it was particularly inspired by the process taken by the DELV, as it has successfully identified components of language that follow developmental trends equally for both TD MAE and TD AAE, and showed that these same components create difficulty for SLI (Sauerland, 2005). The main objective of this COST study is similar to the DELV, in that it aims to discover language testing methods that can be translated into all European languages, will display developmental patterns, and differentiate TD from SLI across all European languages (Sauerland, 2005). In addition, they utilise three components from the DELV in constructing their assessment tool namely, quantifiers, passives, and questions (Sauerland, 2005).

Thus, due to the resourcefulness of the DELV, its strong theoretical focus on deeper linguistic principles, as well as its measure of skills necessary for successful school performance, it was felt that this tool would be useful in examining the proficiency skills of South African ESL learners.

Hence, this study intends to gather data to answer 3 main questions: 1) How competent are these ESL children, on the DELV measures of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic domains needed for academic proficiency in English?, 2) Are there different competency levels for the different language domains?, and 3) What are the performance patterns of these ESL children on the measures of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics?

A secondary aim of the study is to assess the value of the DELV in identifying ESL children who may be language impaired as SLPs in South Africa are increasingly confronted with this problem in clinical practice. Due to the amount of significant individual variation, SLPs and other professionals find it very difficult to set appropriate linguistic expectations, in order to differentiate between TD L2 learners and L2 learners with LI (Genesee et al., 2004; Paradis, 2005). In addition, there are two common mistakes that professionals working with L2 children make, the misdiagnosis of TD L2 children as

language impaired and in contrast to this, the failure to identify L2 children who have LI (Genesee et al., 2004; Paradis, 2005). The latter error in judgement, results from the professional demanding too little from the child's language abilities, as well as attributing any errors in the L2 to the process of second language learning (Genesee et al., 2004). Furthermore, an overextended "wait and see" (p.173) mode of thinking is employed (Paradis, 2005).

The skills needed to distinguish between TD L2 learners and learners with SLI, becomes even more complicated, as there is an overlap in the oral language performances between these two populations (Genesee et al., 2004). One such overlap lies in the fact that both L2 learners and learners with SLI, experience difficulties in the same language domains (Genesee et al., 2004; Paradis, 2005). Paradis' (2005) study, in which she compared the performance in grammatical morphology of ESL children and children with SLI, found that both populations have difficulty with grammatical morphemes. This was evident in the ESL accuracy rates and error patterns matching those documented for monolingual, English speaking learners with SLI at equivalent ages, in both elicitation exercises and spontaneous speech (Paradis, 2005). In addition, Genesee et al. (2004) indicate that both populations have the same weakness in vocabulary knowledge, in particular, verbs. Furthermore, both L2 children and children with SLI have the same error patterns, in which they both produce high numbers of errors of omission [in which they leave out or omit the correct morpheme] (Genesee et al., 2004). This is supported in the Edmonton ESL study, in which the ESL children produced a larger number of errors of omission, compared to errors of commission [in which they use the wrong morpheme] (Genesee et al., 2004). The Edmonton ESL study is a continuing research project on 23 immigrant children in a large urban centre in Western Canada, Edmonton (Genesee et al., 2004). The children's ages at the onset of the study were between four and half to seven (Genesee et al., 2004). These children came from diverse L1 environments including, Spanish, Arabic, Ukrainian, Farsi (Persian), Mandarin and Cantonese (Genesee et al., 2004). The results from Paradis' (2005) study are in agreement with the Edmonton ESL study, as the ESL learners produced significantly greater

omission errors than commission errors, for tense and non-tense morphemes. In addition, Paradis (2005) showed that this error pattern was displayed in more than 90% of the individual learner's results. Thus, it is apparent that current knowledge regarding the comparisons between children with SLI and TD L2 learners, is insufficient to provide the professional with a specialised set of criteria for differential diagnosis (Genesee et al., 2004). However, despite this paucity of knowledge, Paradis (2005) asserts that it is crucial for professionals to set appropriate expectations, grounded in a good understanding of early ESL development. Therefore, the current study attempts to begin this process of formally mapping out the early academic language proficiency levels, in South African ESL development.

Language Issues, Language Policy, and Historical Influences

A discussion of the issues surrounding language in South Africa takes one on a winding and scenic route, through the hills and valleys of official policies, current socio-linguistic forces, and the political history of language in this country. Officially, South Africa promotes multilingualism. This is evident in section 6 of the South African Constitution (1996) that adopts 11 official languages, and asserts that all official languages must be given equal status. More recently, the South African Languages Bill (2003) provides an enabling approach for encouraging the heterogeneity of languages spoken in South Africa, as well as reinforcing respect for language rights. Its objectives include, advocating the equal use of the official languages, providing a regulatory guideline, to encourage the competent execution of the constitutional responsibilities regarding multilingualism, and empowering South Africans to utilise the official language of their choice in varying contexts, thereby promoting equal opportunity to government facilities and programmes, to education, and to skills and knowledge (South African Languages Bill, 2003).

In reality however, these policies have not been implemented effectively, as English has maintained a very strong position within the South African linguistic landscape. This is clearly demonstrated in the extensive use of English in the fields of government, the media, education, economics as well as in social and state services (Braam, 2004; de Klerk, 2002; de Wet, 2002). In a statement given to the Sunday Times by the National House of Traditional Leaders, CEO Abraham Sithole, emphasises the effects English has in the media (Ntshingila, 2006). He states "Most of the media that we have is in English. There are very few Zulu publications that I know of. The same with television, [where] a large [proportion] of what is said is in English." (Ntshingila, 2006, p.4). Similarly, Adler (2001) indicates that the majority of daily local newspapers and weekly national newspapers are primarily written in English. For example, newspapers such as The Sowetan, whose target readers are those individuals living in Soweto and the surrounding Johannesburg areas, is printed exclusively in English (Adler, 2001). In addition, Adler (2001) states that only one Zulu newspaper exists, which is distributed mainly in KwaZulu-Natal. The influential nature of English is also exhibited in the attitudes and perceptions that South Africans have towards this language. For example, de Wet's (2002) study showed that postgraduate education students felt that English was the most important South African language, in the domains of politics, education, science and technology. Only in the domain of culture were African languages found to be more important than English (de Wet, 2002). In addition, Plus 94 Research on the population's use of the eleven official languages, published in the Sunday Times, indicated that despite the fact that English is the first language of only 10 percent of South Africans, it is preferred by 64 percent of the population as the "main" official language and is the language of choice for business interactions (Ntshingila, 2006). According to de Klerk (2002), even the language distribution in South Africa supports English, as it has the most widespread distribution of all the official languages, despite the fact that English does not outnumber any other official language. Moreover, de Klerk (2001) indicates that the influence of English on South Africans is in fact, on the increase.

Another domain where the influence of English is clearly apparent is that of education, as is evident in the fact that parents generally demand that their children learn English at school (Braam, 2004). According to Braam (2004), this is particularly prevalent in low socio-economic-status (SES) communities, where parents view English as the means to achieving a more successful lifestyle. A prime example of South African's strong feelings towards English in education was displayed in 2005, when the Education Minister, Naledi Pandor, recommended the increased use of other official languages in school. This sparked huge public outcry (Ntshingila, 2006). The possible reason for this intense reaction, was that the public and the media perceived this proposal, as an attempt to marginalise English, which would ultimately disempower people.

In opposition to this widespread preference for English, there are several researchers who caution that the utilisation of English should not lead to the suppression, or the inaccessibility of all the other languages, as this may cause disempowerment in the years to come. For example, Prah (1996) and Djite (1993) emphasise that the downfall of many economic development undertakings in Africa, may be rooted in the fact that the conceptual knowledge regarding science and technology are expressed in European languages, which the populations are not fully competent in. Yet, it must be stressed that this does not signify an anti-English approach. Instead, it proposes that access to English should be made available to all who seek it, but that the advancement of the other official languages should be a national prerogative. This view is resonated in all national policy documents.

One cannot fully understand these language policies and socio-linguistic forces, without considering the historical landscape of the development of the English language in South Africa. English first gained importance in 1814, when the British settlers governed the Cape. In 1825, the implementation of policies that legalised English as South Africa's first official language were put into effect, and in 1907, the Smuts Education Act was passed, requiring all children to learn English in school (Cele, 2001). The influence of English continued to grow with the unification of the former Boer republics with the

Cape colony and Natal, in the Union Act of 1910 (Banda, 2000). This unification resulted in higher numbers of English-Afrikaans bilingualism, as Afrikaners began to enter the urban job market and the government as civil servants (Banda, 2000). During this time, English still retained economic power, and there remained a distinctive divide between the English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking Whites (Banda, 2000). As the usage of English was on the rise in Afrikaans communities, so too were Black South Africans gaining higher proficiency levels in English, which was due to the accessibility of state and mission schools, and the increased contact with English speakers in the ever expanding cites and work environments (Banda, 2000). In 1948, the Afrikaner National Party came into power, and with them the regime of apartheid began. This government used all their power to promote Afrikaans. One key component in this endeavour, was the utilisation of the education system to decrease the predominance of English, and elevate the status of Afrikaans (Banda, 2000). Black education suffered the most under this government, especially with the passing of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 (Banda, 2000). This Act imposed mother-tongue education, and strategically decreased the status of English while advancing that of Afrikaans (Banda, 2000). Despite the fact that there was large amount of resistance to this policy, it was implemented (Banda, 2000). In addition, the Afrikaner Nationalist government intentionally removed White English first-language teachers from Bantu Education, thereby prohibiting Black children from good quality models of English, as well as from well-trained teachers (Banda, 2000). This dismissal of well-trained and experienced teachers, lack of financial support, and a prevailing lack of concern towards Black education, resulted in the downfall of Bantu Education (Banda, 2000). The subsequent objection to the compulsory Afrikaans-medium of instruction in Black schools, gave rise to the well-known Soweto Uprising of 1976, in which apartheid police killed demonstrating school children (Banda, 2000). Thus, Afrikaans was perceived as the 'language of the oppressor', and English became the 'language of liberation' (Alexander, 1996, as cited in Braam, 2004; Braam, 2004). This regime came to an end in 1994, with the advent of a new democracy. However, the apartheid education left a dreadful legacy and imprint on the South African

education system, which according to the Education Minister, Naledi Pandor (2005), is "as hard and unyielding as a crocodile's skin" (p. 1).

Language in Education

These language policies, socio-linguistic and historical influences, have had an inevitable effect on language in education policies and practices. In 1997, a Language in Education Policy (LiEP) was drawn up on the premise that cultural and linguistic diversity are a national resource, and that both societal and individual multilingualism are the international norm (Department of Education, 1997). The LiEP mentions two frameworks to be potentially implemented namely, home language (one-medium) approach in which, additional languages are taught as subjects, and the two-way immersion (dual-medium) approach in which, both English and the home language are utilised to teach literacy and academic subjects (Department of Education, 1997; Genesee et al., 2004). Whichever approach is undertaken, the policy emphasises that its underlying tenet is to preserve home language(s), while providing the opportunity to and the competent acquisition of additional languages (Department of Education, 1997). This policy is in line with the globally recognised "additive" approach to multilingualism (Genesee et al., 2004).

Therefore, it appears that the LiEP is based on international models of bilingual/multilingual education. In general, the international literature on bilingualism and bilingual education, differentiates between children from "majority and minority ethnolinguistic communities" (Genesee et al., 2004, p. 6). A 'majority ethnolinguistic community' is one in which the individuals in that community share their first language with most of the population of that community (Genesee et al., 2004). This majority language is usually held in high regard, enjoys a high social status and is linked with socio-economic power (e.g. German in Germany) (Genesee et al., 2004). In most of the countries in which bilingual educational studies have taken place (the United States and Canada apart from a handful of exceptions), the majority language has been English (Genesee et al., 2004). A 'minority ethnolinguistic community' consists of individuals whose first language is a minority language

(Genesee et al., 2004). These languages are therefore less valued, have a diminished social status, and may be linked with reduced or no socio-economic power (For e.g. languages such as Cantonese, Spanish, Vietnamese, spoken in Canada) (Genesee et al., 2004). This differentiation cannot be easily applied to the South African context, as no clear division between a majority and minority language exists. This is evident in the fact that South Africa has 11 official languages, with its least spoken language (isiNdebele) being the home language of 1.6% of the population, and the majority language (isiZulu) being the home language of 23.8% of the population (Census, 2001). In addition, this distinction between majority and minority languages becomes even more blurred, when one considers the home languages spoken in each province. The Gauteng province for example where this study takes place, has a distinctly widespread distribution of home languages, as shown by the relative use (in %) of the four most commonly spoken home languages: isiZulu 21.5%, Afrikaans 14.4%, Sesotho 13.1%, English 12.5%, Sepedi 10.7% (Census, 2001).

The LiEP mentions the possible implementation of the two-way immersion model, which according to Genesee (1999) is one of three major models of education, utilising both the L1 and L2. The other two are developmental bilingual programmes, and transitional bilingual programmes (Genesee, 1999). All three programmes are directed towards minority language children (Genesee, 1999). Developmental bilingual programmes and two-way immersion strive for complete bilingual capability, and grade appropriate performance in academic subjects (Genesee, 1999). Both the second language (i.e. English) and the home language are utilised to teach literacy and academic subjects through all the primary school grades, and occasionally continues through the secondary grades (Genesee, 1999). The part of the school day taught in each language varies according to the specific programme, but the most well known varieties are 90/10 and 50/50 (Genesee, 1999). In other words, 90% of the day is taught in English and 10% in the home language, or 50% in English and 50% in the home language (Genesee, 1999). The main difference between developmental bilingual programmes and two-way immersion, is that all of the learners in the developmental

programmes are minority language children, while in two-way immersion half the learners are from a minority language group (e.g. Spanish), and the other half are from the majority language group (e.g. English) (Genesee, 1999). The successful functioning of these two programmes requires a homogenous group of minority languages (Genesee, 1999). In the multilingual context of South Africa, it would be a near impossibility to meet this requirement, especially when one considers a province such as Gauteng with its widespread home language distribution. Both developmental and two-way immersion-are regarded as additive models of bilingual education (Genesee, 1999). The third model of education namely, the transitional bilingual programmes, utilises the learners home language to teach literacy and certain academic subjects for the first three years in primary school, following which, the children are transitioned to a mainstream class where they are only taught in the second language (Genesee, 1999). An additional educational system, which incidentally is the most prevalent for minority language learners, utilises English/L2-only programmes (Genesee, 1999). In these programmes, as indicated by their name, all instruction is in English (or the L2) (Genesee, 1999). Although there may be a certain amount of ESL instruction given by a skilled professional, all instruction is given by the regular classroom teacher (Genesee, 1999). Both transitional bilingual programmes and English/L2-only programmes are regarded as subtractive models of education, as the learners' home language is only utilised as a basis for the acquisition of the majority language, and commonly leads to loss of the home language (Genesee, 1999).

In terms of the outcomes of these various programmes, it appears that that the minority language children who attend additive bilingual programmes (i.e. developmental bilingual programmes and two-way immersion), which provide a significant amount of instruction in academic and language subjects through the first language, commonly acquire the equivalent or increased levels of proficiency in the majority language (Genesee et al., 2004). Simultaneously, these learners retain and increase their proficiency in their first language (Genesee et al., 2004). Subtractive forms of education (i.e. transitional bilingual programmes and second language only programmes) do not attain

these positive results, as unlike the additive forms of education they do not encourage high standards of proficiency in the first language, and therefore there are no conducive transfer effects from the first language to the majority language (Genesee et al., 2004).

Despite these positive results for an additive bilingual framework, programmes of this nature have yet to be effectively implemented within the South African educational system (Heugh, 2000). In addition, the LiEP still remains highly contested (Heugh, 2000). The principal reasoning opposing a bilingual model comprise of the assertions that there is insufficient local research, parents go directly for English, English is the only language that has the potential to provide good quality education, African languages are unable to and fail to do so, and bilingual education is too costly (Heugh, 2000). Heugh (2000) contests these beliefs, alluding to them as "myths", and provides various counter statements in support of an additive bilingual approach. For example, the belief that parents favour English-medium schools, as they are anxious that home language instruction will result in failure, as in the dismal Bantu education, is false (Heugh, 2000). Heugh (2000) argues that the accurate explanation, is that parents choose to send their children to the schools providing a better education, and it just so happens that these schools are the ones utilising an English only approach. In addition, the Education Minister, Naledi Pandor (2005), acknowledges that language in education should not be viewed as only concerning English or Afrikaans, and that there is a demand to create a language policy that actively and effectively encourages South African indigenous languages in the schooling system. However, she emphasises that this does not mean that the education system plans to ignore the relevance of attaining proficiency in English, as that would be "a foolhardy objective on any minister's part" (p.8) but to promote these indigenous languages before they are lost (Naledi Pandor, 2005).

Recently, in line with her stance to foster South Africa's indigenous languages in schools, Naledi Pandor (2006), in a speech at the language implementation in HEI's (Higher Education Institutions) conference, stated that the department of education acting on the advice from the language colloquium in July 2006, has devised a plan to support the implementation of the school language policy (1997). One of the components of this plan is to establish a six-year mother tongue education programme, with the objective of utilising the learners' home languages, as media of instruction in the foundation and intermediate phase (Naledi Pandor, 2006). Therefore, in future according to this plan, it can be assumed that English will no longer be used as the general medium of instruction. However, Mrs Pandor (2006) does maintain that a differentiation will be made, depending on whether the school setting has unilingual or multilingual learners.

Educational Setting

The importance of the educational setting in promoting the development of language, lies in the characteristics of the existing language learning conditions namely, the input. The two major factors affecting input are evidently the quantity and quality of that input. Quantity of input refers to the amount of exposure to a language that is needed for the child to achieve adequate competency levels (Dawber & Jordaan, 1999). Quality of input on the other hand, involves the nature of input that the child is being exposed to, which usually relies on the proficiency levels of the language model. (Dawber & Jordaan, 1999). The Edmonton ESL study looked at the effect of quantity of second language input, which was measured in months of exposure (MOE) to English (Genesee et al., 2004). The results showed that there was no statistical correlation between the amount of exposure, and the scores obtained in both the elicitation probes and the vocabulary test at 10 MOE to English (Genesee et al., 2004). In accordance with the Edmonton ESL study, Paradis' (2005) study also revealed that the individual differences in accuracy scores for grammatical morphology and spontaneous speech measures, did not correlate significantly with months of exposure (2-18 months). Therefore, it appears that both studies indicate that the large degree of variation in individual acquisition rates, is not associated with the amount of time spent in

English pre-schools or schools (Genesee et al., 2004; Paradis, 2005). Nevertheless, Paradis (2005) does provide possible explanations for this finding. She proposes that perhaps the range of months of exposure was not extensive enough, or that the quantity of exposure to L2 only starts to correlate with accuracy of production, after a specific threshold has been reached, possibly greater than 18 months (Paradis, 2005).

An additional explanation for this lack of correlation, could be that exposure estimated as months in a classroom, may be too basic to evaluate the quality of input and the real use of the language (Paradis, 2005). Likewise, Genesee et al. (2004) state that there is a much greater probability that quality of input not the quantity, has a more significant effect on acquisition rates. Quality of input was also utilised as an explanatory factor, for the results concerning the use of L2 (i.e. English) in the homes of the ESL children in the Edmonton ESL study. The results revealed that the use of English (i.e. the L2) at home, was significantly and negatively correlated to the children's raw scores on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), as well as with years of parental education (Paradis, 2007). According to Paradis (in press), one needs to look at the actual quality of the English input that these children are receiving from their L1 speaking parents. In order to increase competency in their English lexicon, children need to be exposed to a creative and versatile vocabulary, which L1 speaking parents may not be able to supply when using the L2 (Paradis, 2007). Instead, it is proposed that parents should rather utilise the high level vocabulary knowledge that they have in their L1, as this will have an indirect positive effect on the development of the L2 lexicon, through the positive effect it has on the lexical development of the L1 (Paradis, 2007).

Educational Contexts in South Africa

The new democratic South Africa created in 1994, saw the establishment of several different educational contexts, in which African languages and English, are utilised variably for instructional and/or additional language purposes. Although the educational settings in South Africa somewhat resemble the international models of education mentioned earlier, they also differ considerably, making the South African setting distinctive from any other, and in dire need of research. Three major educational contexts in the current complex, socio-political economy of South Africa, have been distinguished by Adler (2001). In the following paragraphs these contexts are outlined, and their different affects on language development are commented on.

First, the non-urban/rural schools refer to those schools that are situated in a poor SES community (Adler, 2001). The teachers are usually second language speakers of English, but are professionally trained and can converse in English (Adler, 2001). Learners and teachers typically have the same first language (Adler, 2001). However, teachers are still required to teach in English, as it has become the *de facto* language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in all the grades except the first three (Adler, 2001). English is seldom spoken outside formal settings, and therefore learners are restricted to speaking, reading, and writing in English inside the classroom (Adler, 2001). Due to the low SES, resources are scarce and reading material is usually confined to textbooks (Adler, 2001). In certain schools, learners have limited opportunities to make use of these books, as one class set has to be divided between various classes, or because teachers want to conserve an invaluable resource (Adler, 2001).

Second, urban-township schools relates to those schools located in the residential areas near the major cities, which under the apartheid government were originally developed for 'non-white' South Africans (Adler, 2001). Consequently, a variety of African languages are spoken in these areas (Adler, 2001). English on the other hand, is not typically spoken in these areas although there is some exposure to English such as, in the surrounding

environmental print (e.g. advertising billboards), in the accessibility of English newspapers, magazines, television programmes, and to English first language speakers (Adler, 2001). Although the LoLT of schools in these areas is English, it is not the first language of the learners or the teachers (Adler, 2001). In general, learners come to the school displaying various competency levels in several African languages besides their own first language, as well as some knowledge of English (Adler, 2001).

Third, urban-suburban schools refer to those schools, including both independent and government schools, which were historically for white only learners (Adler, 2001). Presently, learners of all races and cultures attend these schools, resulting in multilingual and multicultural classrooms (Adler, 2001). These classrooms are subsequently absorbed into an English atmosphere (Adler, 2001). The majority of the teachers at these schools are generally still white, first language English or Afrikaans speakers (Adler, 2001). These schools are also usually well resourced, with the parents generally able to afford the costs of sustaining and improving the material aspects of the schools (Adler, 2001). Like the township schools, the learners are multilingual and come to class with an assortment of languages, either a diversity of African languages, or a mix of African languages and English and/or Afrikaans (Adler, 2001).

The differing effects that each educational context has on language proficiency, was assessed in a study conducted by Morrow et al. (2005). These researchers examined the influence of English schooling on first language (isiZulu) proficiency, in Grade 7 learners from the three educational contexts described by Adler (2001), where the experiences and the education in English and isiZulu varied greatly (Morrow et al., 2005). The assessment material used, developed in English and translated into isiZulu, was adapted from the number of times core concepts appeared in a printed curriculum document (Morrow et al., 2005). The results showed the following performance patterns in relation to the three different educational contexts. The learners from the urban-suburban schools located in Johannesburg, performed significantly better in English compared to isiZulu. In comparison to

the two other education contexts, they showed the greatest level of proficiency in English but the lowest in isiZulu (Morrow et al., 2005). The learners from the urban-township schools located in Soweto, displayed similar competency levels in both English and isiZulu (Morrow et al., 2005). When contrasted with the performances from the non-urban/rural schools, they showed the equivalent level of proficiency in isiZulu but significantly greater English proficiency levels (Morrow et al., 2005). The learners from the non-urban/rural schools located in KwaZulu Natal, had the reverse performance pattern to the Johannesburg learners', that is they performed significantly better in isiZulu than in English (Morrow et al., 2005).

The current investigation takes place in a school setting not identified by Adler (2001) or Morrow et al. (2005) that is, inner-city schools. Inner-city schools appear to share most of their characteristics with urban-suburban and urban-township schools. These schools parallel suburban schools, as the LoLT is English from the start. Like township schools, the LoLT (i.e. English) is generally not the first language of the teachers or learners, and the learners' experience with English, excluding the classroom, comes from the media, environmental print, and occasionally from the parents. Similar to both township and suburban schools, inner-city schools have multilingual learners with a variety of L1s. In addition, the teachers at these schools do not share their L1 with all the learners in their classrooms. Furthermore, in terms of the resources available, the schools differ from being adequately resourced like suburban schools, to being poorly resourced. Thus, this setting was chosen as it appears to have not been previously explored, especially with regard to its learners' academic language skills.

Basic Interpersonal Skills (BICS) or Conversational Proficiency, and Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) or Academic Proficiency

According to Cummins (2000), it is crucial within any educational context, that one differentiates between the two important proficiency levels of conversational proficiency, and academic proficiency. Conversational proficiency involves the surface language abilities in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar that are evident in everyday, interpersonal relations (Cummins, 2000, 2001b). In other words, it is the child's capacity to comprehend almost everything that is spoken to him/her in his/her everyday interpersonal interactions, as well as the competent use of language in these situations (Cummins, 2000). Academic proficiency comprises of the deeper linguistic skills that are linked to the child's ability to read and write (i.e. literacy skills), as well as to skills such as, the child's range and understanding of his/her lexical knowledge (Cummins, 2000, 2001b). An alternative way of contrasting these two proficiency levels, is to consider that when any first language speaker begins school, they are in essence competent speakers of their language (Cummins, 2000). They have acquired the main syntax of their language, and many of the socio-linguistic rules for applying it adequately in common situations (Cummins, 2000). However, schools devote an additional 12 years to expanding these basic linguistic abilities or BICS, into more highly skilled areas and functions of language (Cummins, 2000). In other words, schools are attempting to develop and enhance those skills involved in CALP or academic language proficiency (Cummins, 2000).

This essential differentiation between conversational and academic language proficiency, is strengthened with the inclusion of an additional framework by Cummins (2000). This framework looks at the intersection of two underlying processes inherent in any language task namely, the degree of contextual support and the cognitive demands involved (Cummins, 2000). The contextual support ranges from being context-embedded, in which there are interpersonal and situational cues (e.g. facial expressions, gestures), to being context-reduced, in which there are only the linguistic cues to aid in determining the meaning of the communication (Cummins, 2000). Cognitive

demand/involvement ranges from routine tasks, which need minimal direct cognitive involvement, to unfamiliar tasks, which demand high levels of cognitive involvement (Cummins, 2000). In general, context-reduced and cognitively undemanding communications, are distinctive of the everyday situations away from the classroom (e.g. conversations in the playground), and are therefore characteristic of conversational proficiency or BICS (Cummins, 2000). Context-embedded or context-reduced and cognitively demanding communicative tasks (e.g. an oral debate or a written essay), are more representative of the demands of the classroom, and are consequently typical of academic proficiency or CALP (Cummins, 2000).

A central question to the current research is: how are children able to learn the academic language of school in a second (or even third) language. One notably effective theory as to the reasons behind the success or failure of children schooled in a second language, is the "Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis" postulated by Cummins (1979, 1980). This hypothesis proposes that the level of proficiency a child achieves in a second language acquired in the school context, is dependent on particular underlying language skills attained in the child's first language (Cummins, 1979, 1980). To be specific, Cummins (1979) maintains that there are three broad components of a child's knowledge of language that are firmly linked, and that affect the acquisition of academic language proficiency: (1) First is "vocabulary knowledge", which refers to the child's comprehension of the ideas or meanings embodied in words (Becker, 1977, in Cummins, 1979); (2) Second is metalinguistic skills in particular, the comprehension that print is purposeful, and the understanding that written language is unlike spoken language (Smith , 1977, in Cummins, 1979), so that interpretations regarding the meaning of written text are likely to be correct, i.e. reading comprehension; and lastly (3) the capacity to decontextualise language.

One of the issues at the core of this study, is whether academic language abilities can be developed in the second language in linguistically diverse schools, where there is no choice but to utilise the second language, in this instance English, as the medium of instruction. As briefly described above, there are many elements that may affect how successful such a system would be, one of which must certainly be the degree to which, the educational input promotes the language processes underlying the acquisition of academic proficiency.

Individuality and Second Language Learning

When investigating L2 acquisition, one also needs to take into account the individual aspects of the learners. Firstly, the type of personality qualities that a child possesses may affect how he/she copes with the L2 learning process. For example, personality characteristics such as confidence and outgoingness are likely to contribute to more successful L2 acquisition (Paradis, 2007). It is presumed that a child who has these traits, will experience more regular and a greater quality of communicative contacts with L1 speakers (Paradis, 2007). However, Genesee et al. (2004) pose an interesting question, which comes first: do confident children have better developed L2 skills since they pursue English-speaking companions, and therefore have more experiences using the L2, or are they able to be confident and pursue these companions since they have adequate skills in English, and have acquired this proficiency as a result of a different source?

Secondly, attitudes and beliefs towards the L2 play possible role in L2 acquisition. In other words, when motivation to acquire the L2 (or to preserve the L1) is weak, CALP skills will not be applied to the task of successfully attaining proficiency in the L2 (or preserving the L1) (Cummins, 2001b). In this study, the motivation towards learning the L2 (i.e. English) is likely to be high, as English continues to hold a high-status in South Africa, and is linked with economic success. Thirdly, the typological similarities and differences between L1 and L2, have the potential to influence L2 learning (Paradis, 2007). This possibility was investigated in Paradis' (2005) study. The study speculated that the children whose L1 was not richly inflected, would learn

grammatical morphology at a reduced rate, as this feature of English would be less apparent to them (Paradis, 2005). The results showed that this theory was true for non-tense morphemes but was untrue for tense morphemes (Paradis, 2005). In addition, no differences were found in the scores of those children with a richly inflected L1 or a relatively uninflected L1 (Paradis, 2005). Therefore, as Paradis (in press) asserts, the notion that typological contrasts among L1 and L2, results in differences in the learning of morphosyntactic structures is debatable.

Furthermore, there is the aspect of the child's language aptitude, which comprises of various analytic and working memory skills that are significant to being able to learn linguistic forms and individual words (Paradis, 2007). It is distinguishable from general intelligence, and is regarded as an innate not an acquired attribute (Genesee et al., 2004). Genesee et al. (2004) maintain that language aptitude has the potential to be a pertinent component, in accounting for the reasons that certain children achieve English proficiency quicker than others do. Similarly, Dawber and Jordaan (1999) indicate that children who are intrinsically skilled language learners, will exhibit proficient linguistic skills in their first language, and will acquire a second language easily. Unfortunately, due to the fact that language aptitude measures have not been clearly defined for children, these measures are not easily available. Nevertheless, these measures may in fact overlap with the language processes underlying the acquisition of academic language proficiency.

Finally, the last two factors that one must take into consideration are age effects, and SES (Paradis, 2007). The influential nature of age in the acquisition of a L2 is clearly evident, as it is highly unusual for an individual who has acquired a second language later in his/her life, to have the same proficiency levels as a L1 speaker of that language (Paradis, 2007). However, the issue being raised is that in opposition to the common belief that the critical period ends at puberty, individual differences in the acquisition of the L2 in fact rely on what age in the pre-puberty years L2 learning begins (Paradis, 2007). In terms of the influence of SES, this aspect of a child's family has been investigated in a few studies on child L2 learning, and it

appears that SES does indeed, affect a child's acquisition of the L2 (Paradis, 2007). This factor of SES may play a role in the current study as the inner-city schools are situated in low SES areas, which is likely to affect the adequate development of the children's L1 for academic purposes as well as their exposure to literacy.

It is apparent that regardless of the specific input factors and individual learner characteristics, there always appears to be a large degree of individual variation between learners in their acquisition of the L2. Individual variation is more evident in the process of L2 acquisition compared to that of L1 acquisition (Paradis, 2007). This is plausibly due to fact that there are more possible sources of individual variation in L2 language learning namely, child L2 learners have more variety in the input of their target language compared to L1 learners, as the quantity of input is distributed between two languages (and frequently between two contexts), they are exposed to the target language at different ages rather than consistently from birth, and they already have a maturing language when the L2 acquisition starts (Paradis, 2007). This individual variation was evident in the broad range of scores obtained by the ESL children in the Edmonton ESL study (Genesee et al., 2004). For example, the scores at 10 MOE to English on the probes of grammatical morphemes, showed a mean score of 27%, with a range from 0% to 94%, and on the receptive vocabulary test the mean score was 45, with a range of 9-82 (Genesee et al., 2004). Similarly, in Paradis' (2005) study, the individual accuracy scores for grammatical morphology in the spontaneous speech samples, ranged from 28,25% to 82,08% for tense morphemes, and 47,07% to 93,56% for non-tense morphemes (Paradis, 2005). According to Paradis (2005), it is these large standard deviations and ranges that are indicative of that fact that the ESL children appear to be acquiring English at varying individual rates.

This aspect of variety in L2 acquisition rates not only occurs amongst the individual children, but also in the acquisition of the different components of language (Genesee et al., 2004). This is shown in the Edmonton ESL study, which revealed that following 21 MOE (standard deviation = 4) to English, 40% of the children achieved scores that fell within the normal limits of monolingual speakers for grammatical morpheme production, 65% for receptive vocabulary, and 90% for story grammar in a narrative (Paradis, 2007). A possible explanation for the swift success rate in attaining monolingual norms for story grammar, could be that the conceptual basis of story telling skills is easily transferred from the L1 to the L2 (Paradis, 2007). A challenge facing this variation in L2 acquisition, is that although ESL children do inevitably attain native-like proficiency, it is uncertain how long it takes (Paradis, 2005). In addition, this large degree of variation may continue beyond the early stages of L2 development (Paradis, 2005). Despite the fact that Paradis (2005) is referring to grammatical morphology in this statement, she does propose that this pattern of acquisition is more than likely not restricted to this language domain alone.

Conclusion

To date, there has been limited research within the South African context, to examine the academic language learning of ESL children in the first grade. This study reflects one such an undertaking. The findings attained from research of this nature, will be beneficial in improving the sign posting for this first stop in the ESL children's bilingual journey through the South African education system.

METHODOLOGY

AIMS

Main Aim

The main aim of this study was to document the oral English language abilities of grade-one, isiZulu-speaking English second language (ESL) learners, using the Diagnostic Evaluation of Language Variation (DELV) assessment tool.

Sub-Aims

- To search for possible patterns of language performance. This is in agreement with Genesee et al. (2004), who assert that it is crucial to have a good knowledge of the typical patterns of dual language (i.e. ESL learners) development. This knowledge will assist in increasing the accuracy of detection of ESL children with language impairment (Genesee et al., 2004).
- To determine if there are differences in performance between male and female participants. Bornstein, Hahn and Maurice Haynes (2004) found in their longitudinal research on language performance that only between the ages of 2-5 years, did girls consistently perform better than boys. Therefore, this study intended to ascertain if this pattern occurred beyond this age limit, in performances of ESL learners on the DELV.
- To assess the validity of the DELV for use in the South African context, by correlating the results from the DELV with the parent-teacher ratings of language proficiency.
- To investigate the children's performance in relation to language exposure and experience. This objective was undertaken in order to attain a holistic outlook of the participants. Genesee et al. (2004) maintain that having a holistic viewpoint is significant when dealing with any language impaired child and is essential in the circumstances of dual language children, as sociocultural, cognitive, and educational intricacies in their lives, play an

important role in their language development and status. In addition, Gutierrez-Clellen and Kreiter's (2003) study on bilingual children, found that language exposure variables in the L1 are a significant indicator of variance in L1 performance.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A cross-sectional quantitative design, consisting of a comparative and a correlational component, was utilised. The comparative component consisted of contrasting the children's scores on the DELV, in terms of performance patterns and gender comparisons. The corrrelational component involved evaluating the relationship between the parent-teacher estimation of language proficiency, and the scores obtained on the DELV. In addition, there was a small element of qualitative research, which consisted of elucidating the children's general language environment.

PARTICIPANTS

Participant Selection Criteria

The selection criteria included the following:

- isiZulu must be the dominant first language. isiZulu was chosen for two main reasons. Firstly, it is the most prevalent language in South Africa as nearly a quarter of the entire population (23.8%) are reported to be first language isiZulu speakers (Census, 2001). In addition, isiZulu is also the most common language spoken in Gauteng (i.e. 21.5% reported it to be their home language) (Census, 2001). Furthermore, isiZulu was chosen to maintain the homogeneity of the sample, as to control for the possible influence of the L1 on L2. The information regarding the first language of the children was obtained from the principals and head-teacher.
- The children must be currently completing grade-one. The grounds for the selection of this grade are twofold. Firstly, this grade would give the researcher a larger sample base to work with. This is due to the fact that not all South African children attend Grade R (Department of Education, 2002). Secondly, (as mentioned in the

introduction) Genesee et al. (2004) maintain that this is a significant period to focus on, as it is at this time (early schooling) in the child's development that his/her abilities are typically assessed, and concern over best practices in detecting children who would benefit from therapy, and special education is most common. Therefore, grade-one is an important grade for the documentation of second language abilities, and the identification of possible language difficulties.

- The children must all be attending inner-city schools. This criterion was implemented in order to minimise the effects of contextual variables.

Selection Procedures

A non-probability, purposive sampling strategy was used. The characteristic feature of non-probability sampling is that subjective decision-making is an integral part of the sample selection (Henry, 1998). A purposive sampling technique is one of the variations of non-probability sampling, and refers to a sample that is selected for a particular attribute (McBurney, 2001). This sampling technique is applicable to this study, as the researcher attempted to analyse the language abilities of a specific group of children, i.e. ESL learners. The major difficulty with purposive sampling is that there may be some bias in the findings, due to the researcher choosing the sample (McBurney, 2001). This characteristic, subjective nature of all non-probability samples, poses another problem of the generalisation of the findings to other populations (Henry, 1998). Therefore, the researcher will be unable to generalise the findings of this study, to the population of second language learners as a whole.

Description of Participants

The learners were selected from three inner-city schools in the Johannesburg area. These schools were situated in low socio-economic areas, and comprised of learners and teachers who were mainly ESL speakers with differing groups of first languages. The resources and the school grounds available at these schools, varied between limited to adequately resourced with ample grounds.

The sample consisted of 56 learners with a range of ages from 6.4 years to 8.2 years and a mean age of 7.2 years. Assent to participant in the study was obtained from each child tested.

Description of Schools

The data regarding the description of the schools is divided into three sections namely, school background information, first languages of the grade-one learners and teachers' language background. The first table displayed below, provides the background information on the three schools.

TABLE 1: BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOLS

	School 1	School 2	School 3
Areas serve	Hillbrow, Berea	Hillbrow, Berea, Some Yeoville	Learners come from various areas within Johannesburg
Medium of instruction	English	English	English
No. of Grade 1 classes	3	3	3
Socio-economic status (SES)	Varies	Poverty, single parent, refugees	Varies

The three schools were situated in Berea, located in the Johannesburg East District, D9. Two of the schools serve the surrounding areas, and one school serves a diversity of suburbs within Johannesburg. All three schools' medium of instruction is English, and each have three grade-one classes. According to two of the schools, the socio-economic status (SES) of the learners who attend their school varied. One school stated that most of the learners come from poor, single parent homes, and that many of children come from families of refugees.

The researcher applied and obtained approval from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), as well as from the District Director of the Johannesburg East District (D9), to conduct the study. Letters of approval are in appendix 1 and 2. In addition, written permission to perform the study at the three schools was granted by the principal of each school.

Secondly, the first languages of the learners in the grade-one classes, across the three schools were as follows:

TABLE 2: NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF THE HOME LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN GRADE-ONE, ACROSS ALL 3 SCHOOLS

	School 1	School 2	School 3	Total	Percentage
Sepedi	4	11	11	26	8.1%
Sesotho	9	2	14	25	7.79%
Setswana	7	2	15	24	7.48%
siSwati	1	0	0	1	0.31%
Tshivenda	2	2	4	8	2.49%
Xitsonga	2	2	4	8	2.49%
Afrikaans	0	0	7	7	2.18%
English	9	1	0	10	3.12%
isiNdebele	1	1	0	2	0.62%
isiXhosa	9	9	4	22	6.85%
isiZulu	36	42	57	135	42.06%
Chinyarwanda	3	0	0	3	0.93%
Nyanja	5	0	0	5	1.56%
Swahili	1	1	0	2	0.62%
Tshona	0	0	5	5	1.56%
French	10	14	5	29	9.03%
Portuguese	0	1	0	1	0.31%
Chicewa	0	1	0	1	0.31%
One of the principal languages of Cameroon	0	1	0	1	0.31%
Don't know	6	0	0	6	1.87%
TOTAL	**105**	**90**	**126**	**321**	**100%**

These findings illustrated the amount of linguistic diversity that is present in the grade-one classrooms at these three schools. They also showed that the most prevalent home language is isiZulu (i.e. 42.06% are first language isiZulu speakers). This is in line with the National Census (2001), which showed that isiZulu is the most commonly spoken home language in Gauteng. In addition, one must also consider that English has been given as the first language for nine children in School 1, and for one child in School 2. One of the teachers provided a possible reason for this occurrence. She explained that sometimes parents have the misconception that if they do not put English as the first language on the school forms, their child will not be accepted into the school. Furthermore, it is interesting to note the presence of languages from other African countries such as, Chinyarwanda, Nyanja, Swahili, Tshona, French, Portuguese, Chicewa, and one of the principal languages of Cameroon, of which French is the most common.

Thirdly, tables 3-5 revealed the language background of each of the teachers across the three schools.

TABLE 3: SCHOOL 1-DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADE-ONE TEACHERS			
	Teacher A1	**Teacher B1**	**Teacher C1**
First Language	L1=Afrikaans	L1= Setswana	L1 = isiZulu
Other Languages	L2= English	English, isiZulu, Xitsonga, Sesotho, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, siSwati	English, isiZulu, Xitsonga, Tshivenda
Use of Languages	Afrikaans and English are used to communicate with the family but English is spoken the most at home	Setswana and Sesotho are used to communicate with the family but Setswana is spoken the most at home	Zulu is spoken the most at home
Frequency of language use	English: daily at home with family as well as at work to teach and talk to colleagues Afrikaans: daily at home with family	Setswana, Sesotho, English: daily isiZulu: daily to talk to colleagues, other family members and friends Others: when necessary (e.g. when with isiXhosa speaking friends or using Xitsonga with a Xitsonga speaker who does not understand any other languages)	Zulu: daily at home with family English: daily at work to teach and talk to colleagues Xitsonga: three times a year when visiting the in-laws
Language educated in	Afrikaans at both school and university/college	English at both school and university/college	At school in isiZulu and English At university/college in English
Competency rating	Afrikaans = Like a first language speaker English = Not excellent but competent and fluent	Setswana = Like a first language speaker isiZulu = Not excellent but competent and fluent	isiZulu and English = Like a first language speaker

TABLE 4: SCHOOL 2-DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADE-ONE TEACHERS			
	Teacher A2	**Teacher B2**	**Teacher C2**
First Language	L1= Tshivenda	L1 = isiZulu	L1= isiZulu
Other Languages	Sesotho, Xitsonga, isiZulu, Sepedi, English	Xitsonga, isiXhosa, Sesotho, English, Setswana	isiXhosa, Sesotho, Afrikaans, English
Use of Languages	English and Tshivenda are used to communicate with the family but Tshivenda is spoken the most at home	isiZulu and Tshivenda are used to communicate with the family but isiZulu is used the most at home	isiZulu, Sesotho, isiXhosa and English are used to communicate with the family but isiZulu is used the most at home
Frequency of language use	Tshivenda: daily English: daily to teach and communicate at school isiZulu: to communicate with parents who do not understand English and with friends Sesotho: to communicate with parents who do not understand English and at dance practice Xitsonga: only when visiting Others: use during dance practice	Tshivenda and isiZulu: daily to teach and talk to colleagues, explain concepts (sometimes) in class, and at home to talk to the family English: daily to teach and talk to colleagues Xitsonga, Sesotho: sometimes, to explain concepts in class isiXhosa: sometimes	isiZulu: daily at school with the learners, to talk to the family and community English, Sesotho and isiXhosa: daily to teach, and to talk to colleagues
Language educated in	At school in English At university/college in English and Afrikaans	At school in isiZulu and English At university/college in English	At school and at university/college in English, isiZulu and Afrikaans.
Competency rating	Tshivenda = Like a first language speaker English, isiZulu, Sesotho = Not excellent but competent and fluent Xitsonga = Strenuous but I can get my meaning across isiXhosa = Only a handful of words	isiZulu = Like a first language speaker Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiXhosa, Sesotho, English and Setswana = Not excellent but competent and fluent	isiZulu = Like a first language speaker isiXhosa, Sesotho and English = Not excellent but competent and fluent Afrikaans = With an extreme amount of effort

TABLE 5: SCHOOL 3-DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADE-ONE TEACHERS			
	Teacher A3	**Teacher B3**	**Teacher C3**
First Language	L1 = Setswana	Only speaks English	L1 =Afrikaans
Other Languages	English, isiZulu, Sesotho, Sepedi		L2= English
Use of Languages	Setswana and English are used to communicate with the family but Setswana is spoken the most at home		Afrikaans and English are used to communicate with the family but English is spoken the most at home
Frequency of language use	Setswana: daily English: daily to teach, and to talk to colleagues		Afrikaans: daily English: daily to teach and to talk to colleagues
Language educated in	At school in English, Afrikaans and Setswana At university/college in English		In Afrikaans both at school and university/college
Competency rating	Setswana = Like a first language speaker isiZulu, Sesotho, Sepedi, English = Not excellent but competent and fluent		Afrikaans and English = Like a first language speaker

The tables above indicate that all the grade-one teachers across the three schools, except for one teacher, are second language speakers of English. Three are first language isiZulu speakers, two are first language Setswana speakers, two are first language Afrikaans speakers and one is a first language Tshivenda speaker. Therefore, one needs to consider the quality of English input that the children are receiving from these second language models, as only two of the teachers rated their English proficiency as like a first language speaker (The rest of the teachers rated their proficiency in English as not excellent, but competent and fluent). However, despite a possible reduced quality of English input, the teachers are able provide a better understanding of concepts by using the child's L1 in the classroom. Two teachers revealed that they used other languages to explain concepts in the classroom, and an additional teacher expressed the use of this strategy to the researcher in a personal communication. The majority of grade-one teachers have bilingual homes, and on average these teachers tend to speak

four additional languages. Interestingly, the two first language Afrikaans speaking teachers reported that English had become the dominant language at home. This dominant nature of English is revealed in the fact that English is the medium of instruction at all three the schools. Consequently, the teachers use English on a daily basis to teach, and to talk to most of their colleagues. In terms of the language experienced in their own education, all but the two first language Afrikaans speaking teachers, had a portion of their education in English. Consent to participate in the study was received from all nine teachers.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTATION

Informed Consent

The information sheet (see appendices 3, 4, & 5) included details regarding the general purpose of the study, and placed stress on the voluntary nature of participation. This emphasis on voluntary participation is important, as Porter and Lacey (2005) state that participants should never feel forced to be involved in the research. As a researcher, one needs to acknowledge the disproportionate power networks that exist among the researcher and the participants (Porter & Lacey, 2005). Therefore, one must ensure that participants do not provide consent under pressure, or from the belief that they have no alternative (Porter & Lacey, 2005). In addition, confidentiality of responses was assured, and a contact person provided, should respondents have queries or require feedback from the researcher. According to Porter and Lacey (2005), good practice demands that participants should not be readily identifiable in the study, due to the feasible, unexpected, consequences of the study, and its publication. Furthermore, the information sheet stated that if there were any questions about the research, the researcher would readily respond to them. This is line with Strydom (2002), who maintains that participants must have sufficient opportunity to make any queries prior to the start of the study, as well as while the study is being conducted.

In terms of the consent form, Cone and Foster (2001) state that acquiring informed consent, is a crucial component in carrying out ethical research. Since this study was concerned with school children, who are not regarded as legally able to provide consent, consent was supplied by a parent or guardian (Cone & Foster, 2001). However, Cone and Foster (2001) maintain that it is still valuable to allow the child to assent, or to decline to participate (Cone & Foster, 2001). The child's assent can be attained by providing the child with an assent form to sign, in which the study is explained using simplistic terminology (Cone & Foster, 2001).

Consent from the principals of the schools, the teachers, and the parents was obtained by the researcher. In addition, assent from the children who participated in the study was also acquired. A copy of the information letters and consent forms provided to the principals, teachers, and parents, as well as the child assent form can be found in appendices 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics is integral to each and every research (O'Leary, 2004). Whenever research involves contact with human participants, it is expected that one will be required to attain ethics approval (O'Leary, 2004). This requirement must be fulfilled in order to ensure the credibility of the data gathered, and to safeguard the mental, emotional, and physical interests of the participants (O'Leary, 2004). Therefore, in accordance with the Code of Ethics for research on Human Subjects, formulated by the University of the Witwatersrand, the necessary documentation was submitted to the relevant ethics committee at the University. Permission to conduct the research was granted by the committee. The Ethics Clearance Certificate is presented in appendix 7.

The Diagnostic Evaluation of Language Variation (DELV) Assessment Tool

As a result of the DELV's strong theoretical focus on deeper linguistic principles and its measure of skills required for school success, it was felt that this tool would be useful in examining the academic proficiency (i.e. CALP) skills of South African ESL learners. Cummins (2000) states that as students advance through the grades, they are expected to be able to utilise language in more cognitively demanding and context-reduced circumstances that gradually differ from everyday communicative interactions. Not only is there a progressively expanding vocabulary and concept load, comprising of words which are seldom used in everyday out-of-the school situations, but syntactic features (such as using the passive instead of an active form), and discourse practices, also become progressively unrelated from the traditional uses of language in non-academic settings (Cummins, 2000). The DELV is felt to sufficiently capture these three areas in the sub-tests used. Firstly, with regard to the advancing complexity in the use of syntactic features, the DELV assesses the child's ability to comprehend complex questions and passives, and the ability to specify referents using articles (Paradis, 2004). Secondly, the DELV tests the increasingly decontextualised and cognitively demanding aspects of discourse. It looks at the child's ability to take another persons perspective, to ask for missing information, to tell a cohesive narrative to a person who has no contextual reference to the story (i.e. being able to use the linguistic devices to create, sustain, and differentiate between characters, and the use of causal and temporal links among events), as well as testing the cognitive skill of 'theory of mind' (Paradis, 2004). Thirdly, the DELV looks at the deeper linguistic skills needed to cope successfully, with this gradually increasing lexical and conceptual demand. It achieves this by testing skills such as, the ability to acquire novel words using syntactic cues, the child's lexical organisation and retrieval, as well as how the child copes with a cognitively demanding-aspect of semantics (i.e. the comprehension of quantifiers).

These sub-tests are discussed in detail in the following section.

1) Syntax Sub-test

The syntax sub-test consists of three components namely: *wh*-questions, passives and articles. There are three critical principles that underlie the syntax sub-test. They are as follows:

- *Implicit grammatical connections*: refers to the hidden features in a sentence that are not directly stated, but which can be inferred by its grammar
- *Key characteristics of questions*: involves the rules and regulations for the syntactic movement between and across clauses, and the demand of exhaustivity (i.e. when answering a question one must provide everything in the set)
- *Discourse Linking*: forming associations across sentences. (Roeper, 2004)

1.1 *Wh*-Questions

The *wh*-question comprehension items have three variants (Roeper, 2004). For every item, the child is presented with 1-2 pictures, read a brief story of 1-5 sentences, and asked a *wh*-question (Seymour et al., 2003).

1.1.1 *Double Wh-Questions*

In general, *wh*-questions involve exhaustivity (Roeper, 2004). Exhaustivity requires that all the relevant components are included in the answer (e.g. "Who was in the car?" "Mom, dad, my two sisters and myself") (Roeper, 2004). Double *wh*-questions demand a more complex form of exhaustivity namely, a paired exhaustive (Roeper, 2004; Seymour et al., 2003). A paired exhaustive requires that all the characters in the incident are stated and linked in the correct ordered relationship (Seymour et al., 2003). In other words, the who element

is accurately coupled with the what element, for example in the question "Who drank what?", the correct answer would be "Tommy drank a milkshake and David drank a fruit juice" (Seymour et al., 2003).

1.1.2 *Embedded Clause Questions*

In *wh*-questions, the *wh*-word refers to an omitted portion of information that one communicative partner needs to know from another (Seymour et al., 2003). Therefore, when a listener is asked a question such as "What did the man eat?", he/she must determine what component the *wh*-word replaces, or where in the sentence the *wh*-word comes from (e.g. object, subject) (Seymour et al., 2003). Simple movement in *wh*-questions is when the *wh*-question word is transferred from the end of the clause to the beginning (e.g. "He ate a hamburger?" "He ate what?" "What did he eat?') (Seymour et al., 2003). In a more complex sentence, more specifically one that has two clauses, finding the position that the *wh*-word originated from is a much more complex endeavour (Seymour et al., 2003). For example, in the question "What did Tommy say he drank?", the *wh*-word signifying the object of "drank" has changed places by crossing over two clauses (e.g. "did the Tommy say" and "he drank") to be at the beginning of the sentence (Seymour et al., 2003). The appropriate response to the question necessitates the consideration of both verbs "say" and "drank" (Seymour et al., 2003). To only answer with what "he drank" is inadequate, as in this question the *wh*-word pertains not to what "he drank" but in fact, to what Tommy *said* he drank (Seymour et al., 2003). To interpret the question correctly, the listener must realise that one clause is embedded in the other (Seymour et al., 2003). Thus, embedded clause questions require the understanding of

"*wh*-movement" and implicit relationships (Roeper, 2004; Seymour et al., 2003).

1.1.3 *Barrier Questions*

These are questions that contain barriers to the movement of certain components, and restrict the question word to a single correct answer (Roeper, 2004). They are tested in two forms namely, a second question word in the middle of the sentence, and adjunct clauses. When a second question word is placed in the middle of the *wh*-question, the only correct response is the short distance answer (i.e. this is when the question word is linked to the nearest verb) (Seymour et al., 2003). Any long distance answer (i.e. when the *wh*-question word is linked to the verb that is farthest from it in a sentence) would be inappropriate, as is it is obstructed by the second question word (Seymour et al., 2003). For example, in the question "When did Mary say how the vase broke?", an appropriate short distance answer could be "a week ago" whereas, a possible long distance answer could be "it dropped and shattered" (Seymour et al., 2003). However, the long distance answer would be incorrect, as the second question word forms a barrier to this response (Seymour et al., 2003).

Two types of adjunct clauses are utilised in the DELV they are, relative clauses and purposive clauses. A relative clause is a dependent clause that alters a noun, for example, in the sentence "That is the thief *who was chased by the dog*" (p.53). Purposive clauses are adverbial clauses that provide the planned outcomes of an action or situation, for example, in the sentence "Thandi went to the bakery *so that her mom could have cake with her tea*". Both these kinds of clauses have an

"adjunct" connection to the other clauses in the sentence. Adjuncts are not directly associated with the verb like a subject or object, but they are 'add-ons', and generally provide adverbial or adjectival information. It is not feasible to ask a *wh*-question in which, the *wh*-word has been transferred from within the relative or any other adjunct clause. Such as, the sentence "The dog that chased the thief ran away" (p.53), comprises of two clauses (two verbs). The first verb (chased) as well as the object of that verb (the thief) are contained within the relative clause, which is connected to the subject noun (the dog). One cannot pose the question "Who did the dog that chased ran away?" (p.53) as it is impossible to interpret.

(Seymour et al., 2003)

1.2 Passives

The passive comprehension items test children's knowledge of movement and implicit relations (Roeper, 2004). For each item, the child is shown three pictures, and requested to indicate the picture that the administrator is talking about (Seymour et al., 2003).

The passive items are classified into three groups.

1.2.1 *Movement of Elements*

The most pertinent characteristic of a passive sentence is movement (Roeper, 2004; Seymour et al., 2003). The object is placed in the subject position and is treated like the subject (Seymour et al., 2003). This component tests a child's knowledge of movement, in creating simple passive sentences. (Seymour et al., 2003).

1.2.2 *Hidden Properties*

Children do not adequately comprehend the meanings exhibited by passive sentences, until they have become familiar with the hidden characteristics in these grammatical constructions. These hidden characteristics refer to the information that is not explicitly stated in a sentence lexically or grammatically, but that needs to be implied from the syntax of the sentence. These hidden features consist of hidden agents, the difference between an action and the result, and disjoint reference. Hidden agents involve the knowledge that in a sentence, such as, "The umbrella was opened", the doer or agent of the activity is insinuated rather than clearly expressed. The difference between an action and the result, refers to the ability to distinguish between "The house is being built" [action is continuous] and "The house is built" [action is completed]. Disjoint reference comprises of the knowledge that the agent of the activity is different from the recipient of the activity. For example, in the sentence, "The bear was being washed" (p.55), the child needs to be able to distinguish that another person is performing the washing, not the bear himself.

(Seymour et al., 2003)

1.2.3 *Alternate by-phrase Meanings*

This component examines the child's ability to recognise that it is in fact, the structure of the verb that signifies a passive sentence, not the more distinctive by-phrase, which is an optional feature of the passive sentence. For example, the sentence "The ball is rolling by the boy" (p.55) closely approximates the passive construction of "The ball

> was rolled by the boy" (p.55). If the child overlooks the verb ending (-ing and -ed) and concentrates on the by-phrase, as if it depicts the agent of action, rather than the location of action, he or she will point to the picture of the boy rolling the ball. This ability to disregard the by-phrase and concentrate on the verb structure, is more indicative of the deeper understanding of the demands of the passive construction, than the other passive items tested on the DELV.
>
> (Seymour et al., 2003)

1.3 Articles

This section examines the ability to use the appropriate article, which is centred on the skill of discourse linking (i.e. cohesion) (de Villiers, J., 2004; Roeper, 2004). In order to produce the correct article, the child needs to focus on the manner in which the object has been explained in the previous utterances, and what is presumed about the object by the listener (Seymour et al., 2003). The appropriate interpretations in English for the correct use of 'the' and 'a' is a prominent difficulty for English second language learners (Seymour et al., 2003). For each article item, the child listens to a 1-3 sentence story and responds to a question, which demands a singular noun answer, for example, "the wheel" or "a hat" (Seymour et al., 2003). These items are presented without any pictures so that the administrator of the test, can assess the child's awareness of new versus old information (Seymour et al., 2003). When a picture is displayed to both the child and the administrator, the very existence of the picture, even prior to it being mentioned, may cause the pictured items to be "old" information to the child and therefore affects which article is used (Seymour et al., 2003).

Two types of definite article 'the' are tested: familiar 'the' and part 'the'. Familiar 'the' is when the definite article 'the' is used to refer to a previously named object, for example "A tiger and a monkey were sitting in the jungle. They were friends. One of them climbed up a tree. Guess which?" (*the* monkey) (de Villiers, J., 2004). Part 'the' occurs when 'the' is utilised refer to part of an object that has previously been stated (de Villiers, J., 2004) Such as "Thabo wanted to eat an orange but first he had to take something off it. What did he take off it?" (*the* peel) (Roeper, 2004,). In addition, three kinds of indefinite 'a' were tested: specific 'a', non-referential 'a' and predicational 'a'. Specific 'a' is when 'a' is used to refer to a specific object, familiar to the speaker but not to the listener, for example "I am sure you have something hanging on the wall of your classroom" (*a* picture/poster) (de Villiers, J., 2004). Non-referential 'a' occurs when 'a' is utilised to refer to a non-referential/non-specific object, but one that is inferred from the context such as, "Sipho wants to go to sleep but he is cold and wants something to cover himself. What does he need? (*a* blanket) (de Villiers, J., 2004). Lastly, predicational 'a' occurs when 'a' is used to refer to a noun following the verb 'have', for example "Think about a fireman. What does he have?" (*a* fire engine) (de Villiers, J., 2004).

2) Pragmatics Sub-test

The pragmatic sub-test centres on several functional language abilities that are critical for all children's success in the beginning stages of their formal education, as well as for the attainment of proficient reading skills. These skills include: question-answer planning, communicative role taking, differentiating between referents, connecting events into a cohesive narrative, and comprehending the mental states of characters in a narrative. (i) Question-answering planning involves, asking the correct *wh*-questions to obtain the desired information. (ii)Communicative role taking refers to, taking another person's communicative viewpoint, and recognising what speech acts they are using. (iii) Differentiating between referents comprises of, expressing to the listener who (or what) is being spoken about, particularly when producing a narrative with a number of diverse characters. (iv) Connecting events into a cohesive narrative, consists of producing temporal links among events. (v) Lastly, comprehending the mental states of characters in a narrative, involves a 'theory of mind'
(de Villiers, P., 2004).

In addition, all the components and procedures in this sub-test have several key properties. Firstly, they supply a certain referential base, and pragmatic encouragement for the language structures and information to be expressed, which increases the probability that these structures are tested. Secondly, by limiting the range of correct responses, the scoring of the child's expressions is easier than that required for an open-ended spontaneous sample. This is achieved while still maintaining a large degree of communicative naturalness. Thirdly, all of the tasks assess the relationship between syntax, semantics, and pragmatics, as it is impossible to totally separate the one language domain from the other.
(de Villiers, P., 2004)

This sub-test is divided into three tasks:

2.1 Communicative Role Taking Items

This component evaluates the child's ability to take another person's point of view, by requiring the child to speak about a communication act or incident that has occurred in two picture events (Seymour et al., 2003). To complete this task successfully, the child must have insight into what the person (or the speaker) in the pictures wants to achieve with his/her utterance (Seymour et al., 2003). In other words, the child must recognise what speech act the speaker is producing (e.g. does the speaker want to report some information, obtain something, or prohibit an activity from occurring) (Seymour et al., 2003). For example, the first picture is of a young girl discovering a lovely cake in the refrigerator (Seymour et al., 2003). When the second picture is presented, the little girl is pulling at her mother's shirt and saying something to her mother (Seymour et al., 2003). The administrator then asks the child "what the girl is *asking* her mom?" (Seymour et al., 2003). As a result of the use of the word "asking" by the administrator, the appropriate speech act to be used by the child is restricted to either a direct or indirect question (Seymour et al., 2003). A suitable response would be, "May I have a piece of cake" or "She is asking if she can have a piece of cake" (Seymour et al., 2003). A statement such as, "I found cake in the fridge" or "She found a cake in the fridge" would be incorrect (Seymour et al., 2003). This component consists of four items, one assessing reporting an observed incident ('telling'), two asking for an object or an activity ('asking'), and one stopping an activity or reprimanding the character who performed the activity (de Villiers, P., 2004).

2.2 Short Narrative Items

According to P. de Villiers (2004), psycholinguists maintain that all skilfully constructed stories have two shared elements. The first is narrative coherence on the macro-level of the overall organisation of events (de Villiers, P., 2004). The second is narrative cohesion at the micro-level of sentences (de Villiers, P., 2004). Narrative cohesion involves the effective use of the cohesive ties, which are the linguistic markers that link clauses together to create a fluent discourse unit, instead of producing a string of disjointed sentences (Paul, 1995). Narrative cohesion is also considered more dialect-neutral than narrative coherence (de Villiers, P., 2004). Therefore, two skills of linguistic cohesion are tested: the ability to clearly differentiate between referents (expressing to the listener who is being referred to), and connecting events in time (de Villiers, P., 2004). In addition, this component assessed the child's knowledge and skill in using language to reveal the mental states of the characters, which is dependent on having a 'theory of mind' (de Villiers, P., 2004). 'Theory of mind' comprises of the ability to perceive oneself and others in terms of mental states such as, the desires, emotions, beliefs, intentions that motivate human behaviour (Bower, 1993)

The visual stimuli utilised for this component has three key elements, which increases the pragmatic motivation for the production of linguistic cohesion, and the language relating to the mental states of the characters. First, there are two characters of the same gender, who need to be clearly differentiated from each other, and merely utilising pronouns would not be enough. Second, there are important time relations among the pictured events that occur both within and across the pictures, which must be told in a coherent manner. In addition, for these first two sections the stimulus

book is facing the child, and the administrator is unable to see the pictures. This increases the need for the child to use these cohesive devices effectively. Third, the pictures are adapted from the typical tests of theory of mind in which, the desired object is transferred from one place to another without the knowledge of the major character. A 'thought balloon' is also included in this test to illustrate the mental state of the main character. The child is required to express the mental state of this character, as well as provide an explanation for this character's false belief (i.e. why the character searches for the object in the incorrect location) (de Villiers, P., 2004).

2.3 Question Asking Items

Questions can satisfy various intentions such as, asking for clarification, asking politely for an activity to be performed, and so on. However, the most crucial objective of questions is in acquiring important information. For a child starting school, being able to identify what information he/she is required to know, so that he/she may ask the correct question from the teacher, is a profoundly important skill to develop. This expressive *wh*-question task corresponds with the comprehension *wh*-question task in the syntax sub-test, and as in the comprehension task it also includes a double *wh*-question.
(Seymour et al., 2003)

This task demands that the child ask various questions to obtain missing information (Seymour et al., 2003). Questions that need to be asked include, who (for people), what (for objects), where (for places), why (for the motive and consequences) and how (for the means and methods of an activity) (de Villiers, P., 2004; Seymour et al., 2003). In each item, the child is presented with a picture containing a

missing component (Seymour et al., 2003). Once the child has produced the correct question form, the complete picture is revealed (Seymour et al., 2003). For each item the child has two opportunities to ask the correct question (Seymour et al., 2003). The amount of prompting differs across the items, with regard to the pragmatic skills required (de Villiers, P., 2004). The prompts for the initial 4 items, contain a clue to the semantic domain of the answer (that is, if it is a person, place, manner, or cause) (Seymour et al., 2003). If the child gives an incorrect answer after the first prompt, he/she is then provided with the required question word (Seymour et al., 2003). For example, the child is given the prompt "the nurse is feeding *somebody*" (Seymour et al., 2003). The use of the word "somebody" in the prompt is a clue that a "who" question is required (Seymour et al., 2003). If the child is unable to give an appropriate "who" question, then the administrator responds by saying "Ask me a who question. Who…..?" (Seymour et al., 2003). The stimulus prompts for the following 4 items, do not provide the semantic domain, and the child is told: "Ask me the right question, and I'll show you the answer" (Seymour et al., 2003). Therefore, the child can only utilise the pictured event to establish what question is required (de Villiers, P., 2004). If the child is unable to produce an appropriate question, then he/she is provided with a semantic domain prompt (as mentioned above for the first 4 items) (Seymour et al., 2003). In terms of the scoring, the level of prompting required for a certain item is not differentially weighted however, the amount of scaffolding required before the child provides the appropriate question is available (de Villiers, P., 2004).

3) Semantic Sub-test

The are four main principles that are adhered to in this sub-test. They are as follows:

- The avoidance of the prejudicial nature of acquired vocabulary tests, which tend to be too culturally dependent (one such solution was to use verbs instead of nouns).
- The emphasis on process (i.e. can the child acquire a novel word comfortably from context?).
- The focus on lexical organisation/retrieval, which is likely to be more important than the actual number of words a child can produce (This is the type of semantic knowledge usually tested in standardised tests).
- A more detailed analysis of one element of complex semantics namely, the logical features and scope of the quantifier *every*.

(de Villiers, J., 2004).

There are three components in the semantic sub-test:

3.1 Verb and Preposition Contrast Items

The verb and preposition contrast items examine a child's vocabulary organisation and retrieval. This is a crucial skill, as irrespective of how diverse the child's exposure and resultant vocabulary knowledge are, his/her lexicon needs to be organised in a hierarchical manner, for the efficient retrieval of words. This hierarchical structure usually moves from general to specific. For example, in nouns 'animal-cat-Persian' or in verbs "move-walk-stagger" (p. 69). Words can also be organised as opposites (e.g. big/small) or as synonyms (e.g. small, tiny, little, minuscule). For all of the items in this component, a picture is displayed to the child and he/she is required to complete two sentences for each picture.

(Seymour et al., 2003)

3.1.1 *Verb Contrast Items*

Verb hierarchies were targeted instead of the usual noun hierarchies, as they are more culturally neutral, and most of the common verbs do not need any particular cultural exposure. The verb contrast items analyse the child's competency in using a suitable contrast at the appropriate level in the hierarchy, in identifying actions in a flexible manner. The overall classifications of verbs examined in the DELV include: motion, grooming, breaking, corresponding, and dressing.

(Seymour et al., 2003)

3.1.2 *Preposition Contrast Items*

The preposition contrast items utilise the equivalent structure to the verb items. These items analyse the child's skills in producing spatial [e.g. "*under* the chair" (p.69)], abstract [e.g. "*at* night" (p.69)], and grammatical [e.g. "listens *to* the radio"(p.69)] prepositions that are contrastive to the ones used in the prompts.

(Seymour et al., 2003)

3.2 Quantifier Items

Semantics is not only about the lexicon, it also comprises of the means in which quantification operates within a sentence (de Villiers, J., 2004). Quantification is present in all languages, and is most evident in the language of mathematics (Seymour et al., 2003). Words like 'every', 'all', 'each', 'some', and 'only' are present in mathematical word problems, in addition to being used in everyday conversations (Seymour et al., 2003). From a linguistic standpoint, quantification demands the understanding of both semantics and syntactic form, such as in the sentence, "Every boy drank his cold-drink" requires that the boys and

the cold-drinks be linked to one another (Seymour et al., 2003). This pairing is equivalent to the type found in *wh*-questions, for example in the question "Who ate what?" (Seymour et al., 2003). The manner in which a child performs with quantifiers, provides insight into how well his/her developing grammar can cope with complex constructions in everyday discourse (Seymour et al., 2003). This sub-test utilises the quantifier 'every' as it is one of the most frequently occurring quantifiers (Seymour et al., 2003). This component consists of eight items: (i) Three analyse the child's acquisition of the meaning of the quantifier 'every' and the syntactic constraints that govern its production; (ii) Three items examine the child's understanding that 'every' only affects the noun that follows it; and (iii) Two analyse the child's understanding of the syntactic constraints that regulate the production of 'every' across sentences (i.e. that fact that 'every' cannot cross sentence boundaries)(Seymour et al., 2003).

3.3 Fast Mapping Items

The fast mapping items analyse the child's skill in acquiring the meaning of novel verbs utilising the sentence context. This skill is called fast-mapping or is sometimes referred to as syntactic bootstrapping, as the child utilises the knowledge that he/she has regarding word order, and word endings in particular, to acquire the meaning of new words. Fast mapping is a language ability that is present in all typically developing children, no matter the cultural or linguistic background of the child. For example, a child, who has not yet learned the meaning of the words 'flee' and 'chase', is provided with a picture of a man chasing a burglar. When the child is told that "the burglar is fleeing" (p.59), he/she will tend to concentrate on the actions of the burglar. However, if the child is instructed that the "man is chasing

the burglar" (p.59) he/she will concentrate not only on the man's actions, but also on how the man's running is linked to the burglar, who is also included in the sentence. A child who is developing typically, should acquire the differences in the meaning between these two words after several exposures.
(Seymour et al., 2003)

The first group of items teaches the child the task, by paralleling the novel verb task utilising real verbs (e.g. 'pouring', 'handing'). The second group of items contains novel verbs, which include words such as 'lelling', 'zanning' etc. For each item, the child is provided with a series of three pictured episodes (organised on one page), while the administrator expresses an action such as, "the boy is pouring the juice" (p.70). The child is then expected to respond to a number of questions about the characters and objects in the series of three pictured episodes [e.g. "Which one was pourable?"(p.70)], by indicating to one of four smaller pictures. These smaller pictures are placed to the right of the initial three pictures, and each one relates to one of the characters or objects depicted in the initial set of pictures. The original sequence of pictures assists the child in observing the succession of events, but does not provide the child with the material needed to respond to the question correctly. The child has to utilise what he/she understands about word order, and word endings, to produce the right answer. The verbs used in this component consist of three variations: transitive (e.g. 'punch'), transfer (e.g. 'give'), and complement verbs (e.g. 'beg').
(Seymour et al., 2003)

4) Phonology Sub-test

This sub-test was not used in this study, as it was believed to be too specific to the African American population.

Scoring on the DELV

For the items, a score of 1 or 2 is given for a correct response and 0 for an incorrect or 'no response'. Responses for items that required more than the production of a noun or basic noun phrase (i.e. determiner+noun) namely, those items on the pragmatics sub-test, were evaluated solely based on their pragmatic and semantic appropriateness, and not on the exact vocabulary or morpho-syntactic structures used. When all the items have been scored, the sub-total is calculated for each section of items within every sub-test (e.g. *wh*-question items sub-total in the syntax domain). Subsequently, after each sub-total has been determined, the total score for the particular domain is calculated (e.g. sub-total for wh-question items + sub-total passives items + sub-total for article items = syntax domain total score). On the basis of the total score, the child is placed in the categories of either weakness, low average, average or strength for each domain.
(Seymour et al., 2003)

The scores in this study were not evaluated according to chronological age, but on the age of school admission. This is due to the fact that children in the United States of America begin school a year earlier than in South Africa, and therefore can be expected to have more developed language skills. Thus, if the children in this study were to be compared to their chronically age-matched African American peers, on which the DELV is standardised, they would display much lower language skills. Hence, the children in the current investigation were assessed according to a lower age group (1 year younger).

The Rating Scales

Although the DELV highlights the deeper properties of language acquisition (Pearson, 2004), the fact that it has been standardised on an American sample, raises questions about its validity for the South African context. Therefore, additional measures of second language competency were administered, in the form of parent and teacher language proficiency rating scales. These language proficiency-rating scales were based on the teacher proficiency scale devised by Gutíerrez-Clellen and Krieter (2003), which was proved in their study on bilingualism to be an effective measure of bilingual proficiency. The scale asked the parents and teachers to rate the child's proficiency in English on a 5 point scale, ranging from 0 = not able to speak the language to 4 = first language competency. The results from these scales were subsequently correlated with the scores the children obtained on the DELV. This is in line with Greig and Taylor (1999) who maintain that by acquiring similar data from different methods and tools, which aim to evaluate the same construct, and by estimating whether the different results are connected in a purposeful relationship, one can improve the validity of one's research. A copy of the parent and teacher rating scales is contained in appendices 8 and 9.

The Language Questionnaires

As mentioned in the introduction, there is a large amount of individual variation in L2 acquisition (Genesee et al., 2004; Paradis 2005). Therefore, it was proposed that data concerning the children's exposure to, and experience with the various languages in their environments, would aid in elucidating this diversity in language learning. The two language environments that are most likely to be significant to children beginning school, are the home and school setting. Consequently, brief language questionnaires were given to the parents and teachers to complete. The parent and teacher questionnaires differed from one other. The parent questionnaire investigated three aspects namely, the children's exposure to the L1 (isiZulu) and English; the quality of language models in the children's

environment; and the parent's attitudes towards the L1 (isiZulu) and English. The teacher questionnaire only concentrated on the language exposure provided by the teacher and her language background, thereby providing more information on the language exposure at inner-city schools.

The quality of exposure in both questionnaires, was measured by requiring the parents and teachers to rate their own language proficiency. In addition, the parents were also requested to rate the proficiency of the other isiZulu and English language models in the child's environment. The proficiency scale utilised was a 5 point scale (1 = like a first language speaker to 0 = Only a handful of words), adapted from de Wets (2002) study on BEd Hons students, in which he utilised the Languages in Contact and Conflict in Africa (LiCCA) standardised questionnaire (Putz, 1995, as cited in de Wet, 2002). A copy of the parent and teacher language questionnaires can be found in appendices 10 and 11.

RESEARCH PROTOCOL

Piloting the DELV Sub-tests, Rating scales, and Questionnaires

A pilot study is performed so that the design and procedures can be tested out before the complete study is undertaken (Barrett, 2002; McBurney, 2001). Any problems that arise are dealt with, and subsequent modifications are made, thereby improving the accuracy of the study (Barrett, 2002; McBurney, 2001). The pilot study revealed that certain minor vocabulary alterations needed to be made to the DELV, such as changing "baseball player" to "soccer player ". These modifications did not affect the item's validity (i.e. the item still maintained its aim of testing the language skill it was designed to assess). The parent language questionnaire, the parent rating, the teacher language questionnaire and teacher rating, were scrutinised by the principal and head-teacher at one of the participating schools. These individuals were believed to be the most qualified, as the

principal has a PhD in Humanities and the head-teacher is in the process of obtaining an MA in Education. In addition to their academic knowledge, they also have the practical insights of the teachers and parents involved in the school. The only recommendation made, was to add a question involving the role of English in education.

Testing Protocol

The DELV was administered by the researcher who is a qualified Speech Language Pathologist. The learners were randomly selected from lists of the isiZulu-speaking children in the grade-one classes, and were assessed individually. Testing was conducted at the end of the academic year (i.e. the last two weeks of the 4th school-term), and took place during school hours in the library.

Data Collection

The data collection adhered to the following process:

- Applied and obtained ethics clearance from the University (Humanities) Committee for research on human subjects.
- Requested and acquired approval from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE).
- Applied and obtained approval from the District Director of the Johannesburg East District, D9.
- Approached the three schools and attained permission from the principals.
- Piloted the parent and teacher rating scales and questionnaires.
- Obtained consent from the teachers and provided the teachers with the questionnaires and rating scales.
- Acquired consent from the parents and provided the parents with the questionnaires and rating scales.
- Obtained assent from the children.
- Piloted the DELV sub-tests.
- Administered the DELV sub-tests.

DATA ANALYSIS

There were three types of statistics utilised in the data analysis namely descriptive, correlational, and inferential. The purpose of descriptive statistics is to describe the properties of a sample, or to exhibit the various properties that the sample as a whole shares (e.g. mean, standard deviation) (Baxter & Babbie, 2004; Mertens, 2005). It also provides an overview of the data collected (Baxter & Babbie, 2004). Descriptive statistics consist of two kinds of measures specifically, measures of central tendency, and measure of variability (Mertens, 2005). This study used the measure of central tendency of mean, and the measure of variability of range. The mean is a brief description of a group of numbers with regard to centrality, and is what is generally conceived of as the arithmetic average (Mertens, 2005). The range shows the overall expansion of the data or in other words, it provides the highest and lowest values in a data group (Baxter & Babbie, 2004; Mertens, 2005). In this study the means and ranges were calculated for each sub-test of the DELV.

Secondly, correlational statistics aim to illustrate the strength and direction of the relationship between two or more variables (Mertens, 2005). The relationships between the parent and teacher rating scales and each of the sub-tests were examined in this study. Thirdly, inferential statistics allows the researcher to make inferences, from the results of the data from the sample to a bigger population (Baxter & Babbie, 2004). These statistics are utilised to estimate whether data from various samples, differs significantly from each other or from population findings (Mertens, 2005). In other words, inferential statistics measure the differences amongst groups (Mertens, 2005). This study used two kinds of inferential statistics namely, independent t-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The independent t-test was utilised to compare the differences between the scores of the male and female participants on the DELV sub-tests. The one-way ANOVA was used to examine the differences between the performances of the children from the three schools, on each sub-test of the DELV. If differences were found to be significant, a t-test was performed to determine exactly where these differences occurred.

Lastly in terms of the qualitative component, the data was analysed using content analysis. Content analysis is the method by which, a set of categories or themes are identified, and the researcher then counts the number of instances that fall into each category (Silverman, 2000). Similarly, Rosenthal and Rosnow (1991) refer to content analysis as comprising of the objective, systematic strategy of decomposing messages, and then evaluating their contents in order to reveal specific characteristics. Therefore, the data from the questionnaires were examined for common themes and categories regarding language attitudes and practices in the children's environments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study endeavoured to document the oral English language abilities of grade-one, isiZulu speaking, ESL learners using the DELV. An analysis of the data obtained from the 56 learners assessed on the DELV, the 9 teacher language questionnaires and teacher ratings of child proficiency, as well as 54 parent language questionnaires and 43 parent ratings of child proficiency, provided the following results. These findings are presented and discussed in accordance with the sub-aims of the study.

Patterns of Language Performance

This section examined how the ESL children across the three schools performed on the DELV.

On the basis of the results obtained, it was proposed that the groups of ESL children from the three inner-city schools could be treated as one larger group. This assertion was tested utilising a one-way ANOVA, which examined if the three groups of ESL children differed significantly with regard to their scores on the DELV. The results indicated that only on the syntax sub-test was there a significant difference between the three groups (syntax: F = 3.82, p-value = 0.03; pragmatics: F = 0.63, p-value = 0.54; semantics: F = 1.2, p-value = 0.31). Subsequently, a t-test was performed to ascertain where this difference occurred. This procedure showed that it was groups B (i.e. school 2) and C (i.e. school 3) that differed [t stat (-3.05) > t Critical two tailed (2.03); p (T<=t) two tailed (0.00)< alpha level (0.05)]. This indicated that the ESL children at school B, have more difficulty in acquiring the decontextualised aspects of the subtle grammatical knowledge required in the classroom. The major difference between these two schools (besides gender, which is dealt with later) is that school B serves poor, single parent, refugee families. This lower SES may in part, have influenced this poorer performance in syntax, as Paradis (in press) maintains that a child/family's SES has been shown to affect acquisition of the L2. Another possible explanation for this finding, could be that these ESL children's already established linguistic skills in their L1, are at a lower level and thereby according to the Linguistic Interdependence

Hypothesis proposed by Cummins (2001a), these poorer first language skills will affect the level of adequacy in the L2, especially in the area of decontexualised language. However, although this difference between school B and school C was found to significant, the actual amount that they differed by (only by 1 point, i.e. 1.02) was considered to be small, and consequently the three smaller groups were treated as a one single group. The results from the ANOVA and t-tests can be found in appendices 12 and 13.

A prominent feature from the data on the DELV was the large degree of individual variation among the ESL children's scores, which is displayed in the broad range of scores obtained for each sub-test (syntax: 6 to 25; pragmatics 4 to 21; semantics 14 to 32). This result is in agreement with findings from Paradis' (2005) study and the Edmonton ESL study. In Paradis' (2005) study, the individual accuracy scores for grammatical morphology in the spontaneous speech samples, ranged from 28.25% to 82.08% for tense morphemes and 47.07% to 93.56% for non-tense morphemes. According to Paradis (2005), it is these large standard deviations and ranges that are indicative of that fact that the ESL children appear to be acquiring English at varying individual rates, despite similar language experiences. Similarly, the Edmonton ESL study showed that at 10 months of exposure (MOE) to English, the children's scores on the grammatical probes ranged from 0% to 94%, and on the receptive vocabulary test the scores ranged from 9 to 82 (Genesee et al., 2004).

A possible explanatory factor for this individual variation in the acquisition of the L2 is language aptitude. Language aptitude is viewed not as a fixed combination of abilities but rather as consisting of a number of different sub-skills (e.g. working memory, phonological memory, etc.) (de Bot, Lowie, Verspoor, 2005). These sub-skills are vital in the acquisition of the L1 and subsequent school success. Phonological memory is related to vocabulary growth, and children with good verbal memories are at a clear advantage compared to their peers (Hoff, 2004; Nelson, 1993). Therefore, intuitively the important role that language aptitude plays in L1 acquisition will be reflected in L2 learning. In agreement, Genesee et al. (2004) maintain that language

aptitude has the potential to be a pertinent component in accounting for the reasons that certain children achieve English proficiency quicker than others do. Similarly, Dawber and Jordaan (1999) indicate that children who are intrinsically skilled language learners, will exhibit proficient linguistic skills in their first language, and will acquire a second language easily. However, regardless of the children's specific language aptitude, it appears that there remains a larger degree of individual variation in L2 learning compared to L1 acquisition, which can be seen in the wide range of scores obtained on the DELV. This is plausibly due to fact that there are more possible sources of individual variation in L2 language learning namely, child L2 learners have more variety in the input of their target language compared to L1 learners, as the quantity of input is distributed between two languages (and frequently between two contexts), they are exposed to the target language at different ages rather than consistently from birth, and they already have a maturing language when the L2 acquisition starts (Paradis, 2007).

In addition, and importantly, the ESL children in this study have obtained low means across all three language domains tested on the DELV (i.e. *syntax*-mean: 14.36 category: weakness; *pragmatics*-mean: 13.77, category: weakness. *semantics* -mean: 19.75, category: weakness), which suggest that the children fall into the lower range of performance.

The following tables deal with the results obtained on the DELV. Tables 6, 7, and 8 show the overall breakdown of the number and percentage of children scoring in the four categories of the DELV (i.e. weakness, low average, average, strength) on the sub-tests of syntax, pragmatics, and semantics, respectively.

TABLE 6: SYNTAX-OVERALL RESULTS		
Category	***Number* of children scoring in each category**	***Percentage* of children scoring in each category**
Weakness	47	83.93%
Low Average	6	10.71%
Average	3	5.36%
Strength	0	0%

TABLE 7: PRAGMATICS-OVERALL RESULTS		
Category	**Number of children scoring in each category**	**Percentage of children scoring in each category**
Weakness	30	53.57%
Low Average	8	14.29%
Average	16	28.57%
Strength	2	3.57%

TABLE 8: SEMANTICS-OVERALL RESULTS		
Category	**Number of children scoring in each category**	**Percentage of children scoring in each category**
Weakness	47	83.93%
Low Average	5	8.93%
Average	4	7.14%
Strength	0	0%

These tables reveal that the syntax and semantics sub-tests show an almost identical pattern, with a large discrepancy between the vast majority of ESL children in this study who scored in the weakness category, and none who scored in the strength category. These tables also indicate that the ESL children in this study obtained higher scores on the pragmatics sub-test, which is revealed by the fact that the scores in this sub-test are more widespread across the four categories. This higher performance in pragmatics is in agreement with the results from the Edmonton ESL study, which found that the children achieved the highest score of 90% for the pragmatic measure of story telling (Paradis, 2007). Paradis (in press) provides a possible explanation for the higher performance levels in pragmatics. She asserts that the conceptual basis underlying the pragmatic measure used in the Edmonton ESL study (i.e. storytelling skills) may be easily transferred from the L1 to the L2 (Paradis, 2007). This reasoning may also be true for the results obtained in the current study. Nevertheless, it must be noted that despite this improved performance pattern in the pragmatics sub-test, just over half of the ESL children in this study still scored in the weakness category. Thus, overall it appears that the majority of the ESL children in this study scored in the weakness category across all three sub-tests.

Moreover, concerning the performance patterns, one should consider that the criteria used on the DELV to detect impairment, takes into account the fact that only a small minority of children (~4% in the developmental milestone research) will fall into the failing or weakness category in every domain (Seymour & Pearson, 2004). In addition, it is not unusual for a child to exhibit a score in the failing/weakness category in one domain, as 20% of the DELV research sample showed this pattern (Seymour & Pearson, 2004). If a child has failed a domain, it would be important to consider how they faired on the other domains (Seymour & Pearson, 2004). In fact, a large number of children who fail one domain will exhibit normal or above-average scores in the other domains, and therefore will not warrant attention (Seymour & Pearson, 2004). However, if a child fails two domains or is low average or below in two domains inclusive of the already failed one, then there is reason to suggest intervention (Seymour & Pearson, 2004). The results presented in the table

below, show that the majority (82.14%) of the ESL children's performances in this study reflect a language impairment (LI) profile, with only 16.1% of the children displaying no need for intervention. Two significant issues emerge from these performance patterns. The first is that this high percentage of weak performance and suspected LI does raise concern regarding the ESL children's academic proficiency in English, which is vital for success in an English-medium school setting. This issue will be further explored when the DELV results are analysed in more detail below. The second is the danger of over-diagnosis of language impairment, as it is impossible to have such a large percentage of performances indicating LI. Therefore, it would be beneficial to continue to document these ESL children's development of English language skills, as the current study has only focused on their English skills at the end of grade-one. Follow up testing during or at the end of their grade 2 year may show significant gains in acquisition and such longitudinal data may begin to differentiate TD ESL children from ESL with LI, in terms of rate of development. In addition, further research can be conducted in ascertaining the similarities and differences between these ESL children and children with SLI. This is in agreement with Genesee et al. (2004), who assert that it is crucial to have a good knowledge of the typical patterns of dual language (i.e. ESL learners) development. Furthermore, this knowledge will assist in increasing the accuracy of detection of ESL children with language impairment (Genesee et al., 2004).

TABLE 9: ESL CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE ACCORDING TO THE CRITERIA FOR DETECTING LI ON THE DELV

	Number of children	**Percentage of children**
Scored weakness or failing in 3 domains	27	48.21%
Scored weakness or failing in 2 domains	46	82.14%
Scored failing or weakness in 1 domain plus scored low average or below in 2 domains	1	1.79%
No concern	9	16.07%

Two alternative measures that may have the potential to distinguish between language difference and language disorder, and would therefore complement the results obtained from the DELV, are dynamic assessment and language processing capacity (Roseberry-McKibbin & O'Hanlon, 2005). Firstly, dynamic assessment involves examining the child's ability to learn when given instruction. (Roseberry-McKibbin & O'Hanlon, 2005). In other words, the focus is on how the child learns not on what the child knows, which is usually assessed in standardised tests (Roseberry-McKibbin & O'Hanlon, 2005). This latter knowledge generally reflects a child's prior experience, and failure on standardised test items may reveal the child's lack of opportunities or different learning experiences, rather than a true representation of the child's linguistic ability (Roseberry-McKibbin & O'Hanlon, 2005). Dynamic assessment utilises the test-teach-retest framework, which enables the clinician to assess the child's learning potential and capacity to use newly learned skills in novel situations (Roseberry-McKibbin & O'Hanlon, 2005). The more effort that is required, the greater the likelihood that the child has a language-learning disability (LLD) (Roseberry-McKibbin & O'Hanlon, 2005). As Roseberry-McKibbin and O'Hanlon (2005) maintain that a child who is slow to learn, and displays a reduced competency to transfer knowledge to novel settings, is likely to have an underlying LLD. Secondly, language-processing capacity can be tested which includes skills such as, repeating digits in sequence, recalling lists of real and nonsense words etc. (Roseberry-McKibbin & O'Hanlon, 2005). These skills are very similar to those that underlie language aptitude. Roseberry-McKibbin states that when she assesses an ESL child she frequently utilises processing dependent measure such as, digit and word repetition (in English or the child's L1), and has found these measures to be very effective in detecting those children who have a possible LLD (Roseberry-McKibbin & O'Hanlon, 2005). In general, a child who is a typical language learner will not find language processing tasks problematic (Roseberry-McKibbin & O'Hanlon, 2005).

Tables 10, 11, and 12 examine the results from the DELV in greater detail, as they display the number and percentage of correct responses on the sub-tests of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. The numerator refers to number of correct responses and the denominator refers to the total number of possible responses (i.e. the number of items multiplied by the number of children).

Syntax

TABLE 10: ITEM ANALYSIS FOR SYNTAX DOMAIN			
Category	**Number of Items**	**Number of Correct Responses**	**Percentage of Correct Responses**
***Wh*-Questions**			
Double *Wh*-question	1	38/56	67.86%
Long Distance No Barrier	1	15/56	26.79%
Long Distance Barrier With Complement Clause	1	26/56	46.43%
Long Distance Barrier From Adjunct			
From Relative Clause	2	70/112	62.5%
From Purposive Clause	2	77/112	68.75%
Overall Total		**226/392**	**57.65%**
Passives			
Simple Passive	4	147/224	65.625%
Passive Disjoint Ongoing	3	56/168	33.33%
Locative (not passive)	2	48/112	42.86%
Passive Ongoing	1	3/56	5.36%
Overall Total		**254/560**	**48.36**
Articles			
Part *the*	2	18/112	16.07%
Familiar *the*	2	28/112	25%
Specific *a*	1	10/56	17.86%
Non-referential *a*	1	12/56	21.43%
Predicational *a*	2	57/112	50.89%
Overall Total		**125/448**	**27.9%**
SYNTAX SUB-TEST OVERALL		**605/1400**	**43.21%**
Total: 56 **Females:** 33 **Males:** 23			

The items on this sub-test centre on those syntactic aspects of language that are essential for success in early schooling and the development of literacy (Roeper, 2004). School is full of complex questions, discourses with missing information, and links between sentences that articles help to communicate (Roeper, 2004).

Wh-Questions

In the classroom, the majority of teacher-child interactions comprise of didactic exchanges as the teacher asks questions that demand responses (Owens, 2004). The degree of abstraction of the question form used by the teacher can causes difficulty for some children (Owens, 2004). This is due to the fact that certain question forms require statement of the fact, whilst others demand that the child analyse and justify actions, which may necessitate inductive or deductive reasoning (Owens, 2004). Therefore, it is essential that children understand the requirements of different question forms.

Double Wh-Questions

Double *wh*-questions display an aspect important to all questions namely, the feature of exhaustivity (i.e. that everything in the set must be included in the answer) (Roeper, 2004). According to Roeper (2004), the children who fail to provide correct responses to double *wh*-questions, will be those children who inappropriately provide single answers to simple questions in everyday life, for example, the child who names one ingredient when asked, "What do you need to bake cookies? ". In addition, double *wh*-questions also require that the sets are paired in the correct order (Roeper, 2004; Seymour et al., 2003). The results revealed that a fair proportion of the ESL children (67.86%) in this study understood the requirements of double *wh*-questions.

Embedded Clause Questions

These questions require the child to understand implicit relations between clauses as well as *wh*-movement (i.e. the movement of the *wh*-question word from the place of the component it replaces) (Roeper, 2004). The ESL children in this study performed very poorly on this task as only 26.79% correctly answered the questions. This indicates that the vast majority of the ESL children in this study have not considered both verbs in the two clauses. In other words, they have not understood that one clause is embedded in the other (Roeper, 2004; Seymour et al., 2003).

Barrier Questions

There are two types of barriers to *wh*-movement that are utilised in this task. The first barrier tested is the one caused by a second *wh*-question word, in other words, the question contains two *wh*-question words but only one question (the second *wh*-word acts as a barrier) (Roeper, 2004). The results showed that a fairly low percentage (46.43%) were able to answer this type of *wh*-question correctly, and of those who failed this item, 73.81% made the error of answering the medial question. The medial response occurs for example in the question: "When did the boy learn how to skate?", the children would answer the question: "How did the boy skate?" (Seymour et al., 2003). This is not a random misinterpretation but is a systematic error, which continues for a long time (Roeper, 2004). This persistence of the medial response was also evident in the DELV research sample, where the TD children produced this error well into the 7-8 year age range (Roeper, 2004). In addition, the medial response parallels grammatical forms in other languages (Roeper, 2004). In various languages across the globe, it is acceptable to answer the middle question, and the first *wh*-question word just serves as an indicator that another *wh*-question word is coming in the sentence (Roeper, 2004). For example, it is as if one said "What did you say how you were going to swim" (p.46), in which one comprehends that one is expected to respond to "how you swim" (Roeper, 2004). However, in most circumstances it is inappropriate to answer the middle question in English (Roeper, 2004). Therefore, this difficulty with the barrier to *wh*-movement

caused by a second question word, may be due to a developmental pattern, or may be due to the transfer effect of the L1 on the L2.

The second type of barriers to *wh*-movement used in this task, are those formed by adjunct clauses (i.e. relative and purposive clauses). These barrier type questions require the knowledge that question words are unable to move from inside these adjunct clauses (Seymour et al., 2003). For example, if one derived a question from the sentence "The dog that chased the thief ran away" (p.53), in which the *wh*-question word moved from inside the relative clause, it would be impossible to interpret, such as the question: "Who did the dog that chased ran away?"(p.53) (Seymour et al., 2003). Seymour et al. (2003) assert that this feature is not only pertinent to English, but is a universal feature shared by all languages. The results of this study support this claim to an extent, as a good proportion of the ESL children provided a correct response to these barrier wh-questions. The ESL children in this study achieved 62.55% correct on the relative clause barriers, and 68.75% correct for purposive clause barriers.

Therefore, a good proportion of the ESL children in this study appeared to understand the demands of a paired exhaustive. Yet, they struggled in particular to grasp *wh*-movement, and the implicit relations involved when one clause is embedded in another. That is, that the whole sentence with both verbs must be considered in providing a correct response. The ESL children in this study also experienced difficulty with the barrier to *wh*-movement consisting of a second question word. However, they performed considerably better on the barrier to *wh*-movement formed by adjunct clauses, which may be the result of tapping a type of linguistic universal.

Passives

Cummins (2000) maintains that as children advance through the grades the complexity of the syntax increases, such as the more frequent use of passives rather than active sentences. Passives rely more on the grammar of the sentence to convey the information, whereas in an active sentence the information is explicitly stated (Roeper, 2004). Therefore, in order to succeed in understanding passive constructions, children are expected to use non-linguistic cues. Paul (1995) maintains that if a child still utilises non-linguistic cues to comprehend complex sentences, then the child will misinterpret these types of sentences in either oral or written formats.

Movement of Elements

Passives share their most prominent characteristic with *wh*-questions namely, the feature of movement (i.e. in passives the object moves to the position of the subject) (Roeper, 2004). The results showed that a sizeable proportion of the ESL children in this study were able to cope successfully with the movement aspect, as 65.63% were able to distinguish simple passives from active sentences.

Hidden Properties

Passive sentences also involve the knowledge of hidden properties, which includes the ability to differentiate between disjoint reference, as well as between ongoing activity and the completed activity. These two properties are tested together on the DELV, except for one item which only tests the feature of passive ongoing. For the items that test both properties (i.e. the passive disjoint ongoing items), the results displayed that approximately half of the percentage of correct responses attained for simple passives was obtained for these items. In other words, the results showed that the percentage of correct responses obtained for simple passives was 65.63% and for passive disjoint ongoing items was 33.33%. This is in line with the results obtained by the DELV research sample for disjoint reference, showing that the acquisition of this complex passive is attained later in development than the simple passives (Roeper, 2004). On the item testing only passive ongoing, the ESL children in this study performed particularly poorly as they only attained an extremely low

percentage of 5.36% correct. This indicates that the ESL children in this study have a distinctive problem with the hidden property of passive ongoing.

Alternate by-phrase

A third aspect of passives was tested, which involves the deeper syntactic understanding that it is not the by-phrase, but the actual verb structure, which makes a sentence passive (Seymour et al., 2003). For these items, the children cannot merely select the most feasible interpretation based on their world knowledge (Roeper, 2004). They are required to concentrate on the verb endings (-ing or -ed) in order to make the correct interpretation (Roeper, 2004). The results showed that only 42.86% of the ESL children in this study have attained this deeper knowledge of passive constructions.

Thus, a sizeable proportion of the ESL children in this study appeared to understand the feature of movement in passives. However, they tended to struggle with the hidden properties of disjoint reference and especially with passive ongoing movement. In addition, they also had difficulty with the deeper linguistic skill of utilising verb-endings to correctly identify a passive sentence.

Articles

The importance of articles lies in the fact that they link information across sentences (Roeper, 2004). A good comprehension of articles is important for children to connect the ideas the teacher communicates orally in class, as well as for the linking of information conveyed in written language.

The correct usage of articles is centred on discourse linking (i.e. cohesion), and involves the children's understanding of context and presupposition (Roeper, 2004; de Villiers, J. 2005). The results showed that for the definite article 'the', a quarter of the ESL children (25%) in this study used it correctly to refer to a previously named object (familiar *the*), and a small percentage (16.07%) utilised 'the' correctly to refer to part of an object that had previously been stated (part *the*). For indefinite article 'a', the results revealed that only a small percentage (17.86%) utilised it correctly to refer to a specific object familiar to the speaker but not to the listener, a slightly higher percentage (21.43%) utilised it correctly to refer to a non-referential/non-specific object but one that is inferred from the context, and finally half of the ESL children (50.89%) in this study used it correctly for predicational purposes with regards to a noun following the verb 'have'. These generally poor results can be expected as the article system in English is particularly complicated, and ESL learners find this aspect of syntax especially problematic (Roeper, 2004; Seymour et al., 2003).

In addition, the ESL children in this study substituted the indefinite 'a' for the definite 'the' more often than they used definite 'the' for indefinite 'a' (i.e. 'a' for 'the' = 27 responses, 'the' for 'a' = 19 responses). This error pattern is in agreement with the results found in the DELV research sample, which showed that the children used 'a' for 'the' 8 times more often than they used 'the' for 'a' (Roeper, 2004). Roeper (2004) asserts that this type of error can be explained according to grammatical marking: the unmarked noun has the highest abstract meaning: "Peter enjoys cake". An indefinite article has minimal marking ("a cake"), and the definite article provides the most information ("He enjoys the/that cake").

Therefore, a quarter of the ESL children in this study have acquired the knowledge that when an object is mentioned in a previous utterance, it is then subsequently referred to with a definite article. However, they really struggled with the part-whole relationship between clauses. That is, when an object is named, any parts of the object mentioned in the following utterances also receive the definite article (Seymour et al., 2003). In addition, for the indefinite articles, the results showed that the ESL children in this study experienced difficulty with utilising a specific 'a' to refer to a particular object known to the speaker but not the listener, as well as with using the indefinite article 'a' to refer to a non-referential object that can be inferred from sentence context. Furthermore, the results for indefinite articles showed that half of the ESL children in this study were able to use a predicational 'a' for a noun following 'have'. Moreover, the ESL children in this study appeared to be following a grammatical error pattern in substituting the indefinite 'a' for the definite 'the' more often, than substituting the definite 'the' for indefinite 'a'.

Pragmatics

TABLE 11: ITEM ANALYSIS FOR PRAGMATICS DOMAIN						
Category	**Number of Items**		**Number of Correct Responses**		**Percentage of Correct Responses**	
Communicative Role-Taking						
Telling	1		47/56		83.93%	
Asking	2		61/112		54.46%	
Prohibiting	1		33/56		58.93%	
Overall Total			**141/224**		**62.95%**	
Short Narratives						
Reference Contrast	1		41/56		73.21%	
Temporal Links	1		8/56		14.29%	
Mental State Representation	1		19/56		33.93%	
Recognising False Beliefs	1		20/56		35.71%	
Overall Total			**88/224**		**39.29%**	
Question Asking	1st prompt	2nd prompt	1st prompt	2nd prompt	1st prompt	2nd prompt
Who Question	2	2	44/112	55/112	39.29%	49.11%
What Question	1	1	30/56	40/56	53.57%	71.43%
Where Question	2	2	47/112	58/112	41.96%	51.79%
Why Question	2	2	68/112	79/112	60.71%	70.54%
How Question	1	1	14/56	40/56	25%	71.43%
Double *Wh*-Question	1	1	0/56	0/56	0%	0%
Overall Total			**203/504**	**272/504**	**40.28%**	**53.97%**
Total: 56 **Females:** 33 **Males:** 23						

The aspects of pragmatics tested in this sub-test are essential for young children's academic success and early literacy acquisition: asking the correct question to attain specific information, adopting the perspective of another speaker and comprehending what speech act they are expressing, and providing a cohesive narrative which explicitly distinguishes the main characters for the listener, communicates the time links between events, and expresses important attributes of the mental states of the characters (de Villiers, P., 2004).

Communicative Role Taking Items

The competency in utilising language for other than need-meeting functions is essential for the academic tasks expected by school (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). Many of these higher level functions of language move beyond what is readily apparent, such as the use of language to anticipate the thoughts and feelings of others, which cannot be seen and therefore must be deduced (Haynes & Shulman, 1998).

These items tested the children's ability to take another person's point of view, and to comprehend what speech act the person was expressing (i.e. what the speaker wants to achieve with his/her utterance) (de Villiers, P., 2004; Seymour et al., 2003). The results showed that for the item assessing reporting an observed incident ('telling'), the ESL children in this study attained a high percentage of 83.93%. They also revealed that for the items that required requesting an object or an activity ('asking'), and stopping an activity or reprimanding the character who performed the activity ('prohibiting'), the ESL children in this study received 54.46% and 58.93% respectively. These last two results are slightly lower than can be expected, as by ages 8 and 9 the LI children in the DELV research sample had already caught up to their TD peers (de Villiers, P., 2004). In addition, according to Seymour et al. (2003) by approximately 4 years of age, a considerable number but not the entire group of adult speech acts should be apparent in a child's conversational skills, and the child should also be able to comprehend what speech acts a person may utilise in certain circumstances.

Thus, the ESL children in this study performed well on the communication act of reporting an observed incident. However, in terms of asking for an action and prohibiting an action, the percentages obtained were slightly lower than expected, especially considering the performance of the LI children in the DELV research sample.

Short Narratives

Narrative language is especially significant in the success of early schooling (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). Most of the texts utilised in nursery school through to the third grade are structured in a narrative (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). In addition, children learn to read by reading narratives, and maths and science tasks are frequently given in narrative formats (Haynes & Shulman, 1998).

Narratives involve linguistic cohesion which are tested in two forms firstly, the ability to clearly differentiate between referents (i.e. reference contrast), and secondly, the ability to connect events in time (i.e. temporal links)(de Villiers, P., 2004). These two forms of linguistic cohesion are important for school success, as school text requires an increase in the specificity of pronominal references, and utilises a larger diversity of conjunctions, adverbs, adverbial clauses, and relative clauses (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). Firstly, the results showed that for reference contrasts, the ESL children in his study achieved a good result of 73.21% correct. This relatively high percentage is in contrast with results obtained for another skill of discourse linking that is, the use of articles. In the article task, the overall result showed a low percentage of 27.9% correct. This contrast in results would appear to support the claim that articles are particularly problematic for ESL speakers (Seymour et al., 2003). The developmental pattern for the ability to discriminate between two referents, shows that children progress from not explicitly differentiating the characters for the listener (characteristic response of younger children), referring to the two male characters in the identical manner through the entire narrative as either 'the boy' or with the indiscriminate production of the pronoun 'he', to the later production of adjectives or specific nouns (de Villiers,

P., 2004; de Villiers, J., 2005). The ESL children in this study attained 14 responses or 25% reflective of the first developmental phase, and 20 responses or 71.43% reflecting the later developmental phase, indicating that the majority of the children are moving towards the specificity of referents. On the second aspect of linguistic cohesion namely temporal links, the ESL children in this study obtained a small percentage of only 14.29% correct. This result may be related to the very low percentage attained for the passive item involving a continuing action (i.e. passive ongoing), which would suggest that perhaps the children experience difficulty in expressing time elements in English. Furthermore, the developmental progression for temporal linking between events, moves from producing no temporal links between events or connecting events with 'and', to only producing sequencers (e.g. 'then'), to using adverbial clauses of time (e.g. 'when', 'after') (de Villiers, J., 2005). The ESL children in this study attained 14 responses or 25% reflective of the first stage of producing no temporal links between events or using 'and', 35 responses or 62.5% reflective of the second stage of only using sequencers, and 7 responses or 12.5% reflective of the later stage of using adverbial clauses of time. Thus, most of the ESL children in this study are in the second stage of using sequencers to connect events in time.

Following the evaluation of the children's ability to tell a cohesive narrative, the children are assessed for their theory of mind understanding. The two theory of mind items tested the children's ability to express the mental states of a character (i.e. his desires or thoughts), and the ability to justify the character's mistaken response (i.e. expressing the character's false belief) (de Villiers, J., 2005; Seymour et al., 2003). The first theory of mind task requires the acquisition of metacognitive verbs (e.g. know, forget, remember), which are vital for children's understanding and participation in school tasks (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). To complete a teacher's instruction, children need to know if they comprehend the requirements of the task, and if they do not know, they must request assistance (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). They must know if they have the required information or if they are guessing (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). In addition, they must remember what they have been instructed to do, and be aware if they have forgotten the instruction (Haynes &

Shulman, 1998). Without this dynamic awareness of knowing, remembering, forgetting, and guessing, children will not be able to work on their own, and as children advance through the grades it is expected that they function more and more independently (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). The results show that the ESL children in this study only obtained 33.93% correct for this item. The second theory of mind item relies on the children's cognitive perspective taking abilities, in explaining the character's false belief. Cognitive perspective taking demands that the students or learners are able to integrate different pieces of information (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). As the students or learners mature, the demand on cognitive perspective taking increases, as a larger number of pieces of information must be integrated simultaneously (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). The results revealed that the ESL children in this study only attained 35.71% correct for this second theory of mind item. Furthermore, these two theory of mind items may also be connected to the communicative role taking items, as the theory of mind and communicative role taking tasks involve different types of perspective taking (Geller, 1989, as cited in Haynes & Shulman, 1998). The overall results for the communicative role taking items showed that half (50.36%) of the ESL children in this study coped successfully with these items, which in turn indicates that half are still struggling with this task. Therefore, if the ESL children in this study are experiencing difficulty in expressing another person's perspective utilising English on these simpler items, then intuitively it makes sense that they would perform worse on the theory of mind tasks.

In terms of the developmental progression for the first theory of mind item, in describing the characters mental states, the children in the DELV research sample progressed from just describing the character's actions (the most common response at 4 years), to expressing his intentions or desires, and lastly to identifying his cognitive state ('think', 'remember') (de Villiers, J., 2005; de Villiers, P., 2004). The ESL children in this study attained 11 responses or 19.46% reflecting the first developmental phase by merely describing the character's actions, 24 responses or 42.86% reflecting the second developmental phase by expressing the character's intention or desire, and 20 responses or 35.71% reflecting the later developmental phase

by expressing the character's cognitions. Moreover, in terms of the second theory of mind item, in explaining the characters false belief, the children in the DELV research sample progressed from providing no explanation, to expressing the character's intention or desires by describing the reason why the character is looking for his train, to giving a suitable explanation for the character's false belief or for why he is searching for his train in the incorrect location (de Villiers, J., 2005; de Villiers, P., 2004). The ESL children in this study obtained 11 responses or 23.21% of the first developmental stage of providing no explanation, 23 responses or 41.07% reflective of the second stage of providing the character's intention or desire, and 20 responses or 35.71% representative of the later developmental stage of providing a false belief explanation. Therefore, for both theory of mind items most of the ESL children in this study appeared to be progressing from the second developmental phases into the last developmental phases, as the number and percentages for these developmental stages are similar.

Therefore, in terms of discourse cohesion the majority of the ESL children in this study were able to clearly differentiate between referents, but experienced difficulty in linking events in time. In addition, the developmental progression pattern for discourse cohesion, showed that the ESL children in this study are advancing towards specificity of referents yet, are still utilising sequences to connect events in time. For the theory of mind items the ESL children in this study struggled to express the character's desires or thoughts, as well as experienced difficulty in explaining the character's false belief. The developmental pattern for the ability to describe the characters mental states, showed that the ESL children in this study are moving from expressing the character's intentions or desires, to identifying his cognitive state. Lastly, the developmental pattern for explaining the character's false belief, indicated that the ESL children in this study are progressing from expressing the character's intention or desires, to giving a suitable explanation for the character's false belief.

Question Asking

One of the language expectations of the classroom is competency in being able to ask and provide information (Owens, 2004). Requests differ with the kind of information required. As children develop, they learn to recognise the kind of information needed to formulate a request (Owens, 2004). In essence, their awareness of the significance of information specificity increases. According to Peterson and Swing (1985, as cited in Owens, 2004), those school-age children who are able to identify specific information, have a greater likelihood of being high-achievers.

This task examined the children's identification of missing information, and their ability to ask a suitable question to attain that information (Seymour et al., 2003). In the syntax sub-test, the children are required to *answer wh*-questions but in this sub-test the children are required to *ask* the *wh*-questions (Seymour et al., 2003). Interestingly, the results revealed that a good proportion of the ESL children (67.86%) in this study understood double *wh*-questions however, not one child even with prompting, was able to correctly produce this question type. Therefore, it appears that the ESL children in this study have good understanding of the requirements of double *wh*-questions but are unable able to correctly express them.

The results also showed that when the ESL children in this study were given extra scaffolding (in the second prompt) on the single *wh*-questions, their results increased by 10%, with the 'how' question increasing by a substantial 46%. This indicates that ESL the children in this study needed assistance in asking the appropriate question in English. This prompting/scaffolding also elevated the percentage correct on three of the single *wh*-questions namely, 'what' (for objects), 'why' (for motive and consequence), and 'how' (for the means and methods of an activity), into the 70% range. The other two single *wh*-questions, 'who' (for people) and 'where' (for places), scored 49.11% and 51.79% respectively. In accordance with the tenets of dynamic assessment discussed earlier, the fact that the ESL children in this study improved when provided with extra scaffolding indicates their potential to learn to ask the

correct *wh*-question. The present challenge would be to discover the most effective teaching strategy to promote the correct use of question forms.

In addition, the developmental error pattern for *wh*-question progressed from the common error made by the DELV research sample at 4 years old, which is a failure to ask a question and trying to guess the answer (16.29%); to the common error at 5-6 years, which is asking the incorrect *wh*-question for the information required (22.77%), or asking an all purpose question that was too generalised (e.g. "what is he doing?" or "what is it?"); to a similar level as the older children in the DELV research sample who produce all or almost all of the single *wh*-questions correctly, but still frequently get the double *wh*-question incorrect (de Villiers, P., 2004). In terms of the last developmental phase, the ESL children in this study attained 60.71% on the single *wh*-questions correct on the second prompt, and not a single double *wh*-question correct. Therefore, it appears that the ESL children in this study are moving towards the last developmental phase, as there is a sizeable proportion of correct responses on the single *wh*-question. However, it is evident that since there was not a single correct double *wh*-question that this language task needs to be explicitly taught in the classroom.

Thus, the ESL children in this study experienced difficulty in asking the correct *wh*-question to obtain the missing information, which improved greatly when provided with extra scaffolding in the form of a second prompt. This distinct display of increased levels of performance when given extra cues reveals the children's learning potential. In addition, the results showed that the ESL children in this study have good understanding of the requirements of double *wh*-questions, but fail to produce them correctly. Furthermore, the developmental pattern indicated that the ESL children in this study are moving towards the skills of older TD monolingual children, in producing all or almost all of the single *wh*-questions correctly. However, the fact that all the ESL children in this study got the double *wh*-question incorrect, clearly suggests that this task should be included as part of the instruction in the classroom.

Semantics

TABLE 12: ITEM ANALYSIS FOR SEMANTICS DOMAIN						
Category	**Number of items**		**Number of Correct Responses**		**Percentage of Correct Responses**	
Verb Contrasts	Contrast 1	Contrast 2	Contrast 1	Contrast 2	Contrast 1	Contrast 2
Motion	1	1	23/56	7/56	41.07%	12.5%
Grooming	1	1	25/56	3/56	44.64%	5.36%
Breaking	1	1	9/56	19/56	16.07%	33.93%
Corresponding	1	1	6/56	6/56	10.71%	10.71%
Dressing	1	1	26/56	11/56	46.43%	19.64%
Overall Total			**89/280**	**46/280**	**31.79%**	**16.43**
			135/560		**24.11%**	
Prepositional Contrasts						
Abstract or Grammatical	3		106/168		63.1%	
Spatial	3		98/168		58.33%	
Overall Total			**204/336**		**60.71%**	
Quantifiers						
Meaning of "Every"	2		84/112		75%	
Scope of "Every"	1		28/56		50%	
Across Sentence Boundary	3		92/168		54.76%	
Within Sentence Boundary	3		114/168		67.857%	
Overall Total			**318/504**		**63.01%**	
Fast Mapping: Real Verbs						
Transitive	4		71/224		31.7%	
Transfer	3		86/168		51.19%	
Complement	3		78/168		46.43%	
Overall Total			**235/560**		**41.97%**	
Fast Mapping: Novel Verbs						
Transitive	5		103/280		36.79%	
Transfer	5		155/280		55.36%	
Complement	5		103/280		36.79%	
Overall Total			**361/840**		**42.98%**	
SEMANTICS SUB-TEST OVERALL			**1253/2800**		**44.75%**	
Total: 56 **Females:** 33 **Males:** 23						

A reduced vocabulary will put children at a disadvantage in all language-related tasks from everyday conversations to school readiness and literacy (de Villiers, J., 2004). This sub-test examines the process of vocabulary learning and the efficient organisation of this vocabulary (de Villiers, J., 2004). In addition, this sub-test looks beyond word learning viewed only with regards to content words, into fields such as quantifier scope (de Villiers, J., 2004).

Verb and Preposition Contrasts

The awareness of children's schema content development during the school years, gives one a better understanding of the children's reading comprehension skills (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). An important element of semantic development during the school years is the building of semantic networks or interrelationships between words in the lexicon (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). This organisation of vocabulary knowledge is tested in this section of the semantics sub-test.

Verb Contrasts

This task examined the children's ability to provide a verb that is appropriate for the action in the picture, is different from the one used in the prompt, and is at the appropriate level in the hierarchy [i.e. a specific (licking) or general verb (eating)](de Villiers, J., 2004; Seymour et al., 2003). Errors made by the DELV research sample showed that the most typical response for the TD younger children, was providing an answer that was too specific or too general to be at the correct level for the prompt (de Villiers, J., 2004). The mistakes made by the LI children in the DELV sample were the production of more vague utterances, for example all-purpose verbs (e.g. 'do', 'try', and 'put'), or leaving out the verb altogether (de Villiers, J., 2004). The results from the current investigation showed that the ESL children displayed an error pattern similar to that of TD younger children, as there were 26.07% too specific or too general answers and only 6.96% vague expressions or omissions of the verb. However, the ESL children in this study did parallel the LI children in the DELV research sample, as both groups experienced difficulty in providing two different verbs for the same pictured scene (de Villiers, J., 2004). In this study

the percentage of responses correct obtained by the ESL children for contrast 2 (i.e. 16.43%) is much lower than that for contrast 1(i.e. 31.79%).

de Villiers, J. (2004) maintains that children's responses which contain verbs that are too general are indicative of reduced vocabulary, whereas those that have verbs that are too specific are suggestive of a disorganised lexicon. This too general or too specific response pattern was investigated, by examining if the ESL children in this study performed worse on the specific verbs (i.e. providing answers that were too general or incorrect), or on the general verbs (i.e. providing answers that were too specific or incorrect). However, the results did not show a consistent pattern of difficulty with either specific or general verbs, as the children performed poorly across all the verb items. Thus, it appears that the ESL children in this study have both a reduced verb vocabulary and a disorganised lexicon.

Preposition Contrasts

According to de Villiers, J. (2004) in order to succeed on this task, children need to understand how the language utilises prepositions in both concrete and abstract ways. The results appeared to indicate that the ESL children in this study are fairly competent in distinguishing the subtle differences between prepositions, as they attained 63.1% correct for abstract/grammatical prepositions, and 58.33% correct for spatial prepositions. In addition, errors made by the DELV research sample on this section of the semantic sub-test, comprised of confusing prepositions and occasionally omitting them (de Villiers, J., 2004). These errors particularly omissions, were found to be much more common in the language disordered children in the DELV research sample (de Villiers, J., 2004). The results showed that the ESL children in this study attained 66 responses or 19.64% that confused prepositions or gave the incorrect prepositional phrase and 64 or 19.05% that omitted the preposition. These results indicated that the ESL children in this study are following the TD children in the DELV research sample, as the two error patterns (mentioned above) do not appear to be very prevalent in this study, and the omission errors were lower than the confused preposition errors.

Therefore, the results indicated that the ESL children in this study have a reduced and disorganised verb vocabulary, but appear to be fairly competent in producing the correct prepositional contrasts. The ESL children's error pattern for verbs showed that they tended to produce answers that were too specific or too general to be at the correct level for the prompt, which is characteristic of the younger TD children in the DELV research sample. In addition, the ESL children's errors also consisted of not being able to produce two different verbs for the same picture scene. These responses paralleled those given by the LI children in the DELV research sample. For the prepositions, the error pattern showed that the ESL children in this study are following the TD children in the DELV research sample, with a low presence of both error types (i.e. confusing prepositions and omissions of prepositions).

Quantifiers

It is virtually impossible to function in today's world without competent skills in reading and writing (McLaughlin, 1998). "Written language is not simply oral language written down" (Haynes & Shulman, 1998, p. 323). Written language utilises more specific vocabulary and complicated syntax (Haynes & Shulman, 1998; McLaughlin, 1998). Therefore, this section of the semantics sub-test tests the way in which semantics operates within a sentence (de Villiers, J., 2004). Quantification is present in all languages, and is most evident in the language of mathematics (Seymour et al., 2003). Words like 'every', 'all', 'each', 'some', and 'only' are not only present in mathematical word problems, but are also utilised in everyday conversations (Seymour et al., 2003). This complex aspect of semantics was tested in three ways: (1) the acquisition of the meaning of the quantifier 'every' and it's syntactic constraints, (2) the understanding that 'every' only affects the noun that follows it, and (3) the understanding of the conditions that regulate the production of 'every' across sentences (i.e. that fact that 'every' cannot cross sentence boundaries) (Seymour et al., 2003).

Firstly, the results showed that three quarters (75%) of the ESL children in this study understood the basic meaning of the quantifier 'every'. However, half (50%) of the ESL children in this study are still not limiting the quantifier 'every', and are applying it to all the characters/sub-events involved in the situation. Secondly, a good proportion of the ESL children in this study understand that 'every' only modifies the noun it precedes, which is shown by the 67.85% correct attained on the within-sentence-boundary items. These items also test the syntactic and semantic knowledge of pairing. For example, the sentence "Every boy drank his cold-drink" requires that the boys and the cold-drinks be linked to one another (Seymour et al., 2003). This pairing of variables/sets is also inherent in double *wh*-questions, as in the question "Who ate what?" (That is, variable 'who' is paired correctly with variable 'what')(Seymour et al., 2003). This underlying linguistic knowledge of pairing required for success on both the syntactic task of question asking and semantic task of quantifiers, is evident in this study as the score obtained on the double *wh*-question is exactly the same as the one attained for these quantifier items (i.e. within-sentence-boundary items). In addition, since the item testing the scope of 'every' and the within-sentence-boundary items appear to be testing very similar linguistic knowledge regarding quantifiers, it is counter intuitive that they would differ in the percentage correct by approximately 17% (i.e. scope of 'every' items, 50%; within-sentence-boundary items, 67.86%). This could be due to the syntactic constraints of the prompts used for these two items, as the item testing the scope of 'every' is in a question form (e.g. "Is every dog eating a bone?") and the within-sentence-boundary items are in declarative form (e.g. "The man watched every boy throw a ball."). Thirdly, over half of the ESL children (54.76%) in this study understood that 'every' cannot cross sentence boundary. The quantifier parallels *wh*-movement, as it blocks or forms a barrier to the linking of one sentence to another. For example, in the sentence "Every mother knows her son", each mother can be connected to each son, in that each mother knows her own son (Seymour et al., 2003). In the sentence "Every girl saw the Queen. Her mother was happy", 'her mother' is linked to the noun with a basic determiner ('the Queen') but not to the more natural antecedent 'every girl', which the quantifier blocks (Seymour et al., 2003). Seymour et al. (2003)

state that similar to *wh*-movement the regulations governing the use of quantifiers, creates links between quantifiers and pronouns *within* sentences but not *across* sentences.

Thus, a fairly high proportion of the ESL children in this study understood the meaning of the quantifier 'every', and half comprehended its scope. Secondly, a good proportion of the ESL children in this study understood that 'every' only modifies the noun it precedes and thirdly, over half comprehended that this quantifier cannot cross sentence boundary. Furthermore, these quantifier items also support the linguistic relationship between *wh*-questions and quantification.

Fast Mapping: Real and Novel verbs

During the school years learners depend less and less on explicit concrete contexts for the learning of new words, as they begin to develop skills in utilising textual and linguistic clues for comprehending and ascertaining the meaning of unfamiliar words (Haynes & Shulman, 1998). This important skill is necessary for success in the decontextualised written language of school.

These items examine the children's ability to acquire a new word from context (de Villiers, J., 2004). The real verbs are tested before the novel verbs to not only teach the child the task, but also for the administrator to evaluate if the actual question causes difficulty in terms of the grammar and morphology, and not the novel word meaning (de Villiers, J., 2004). The results showed that for the first two verb types, transitive and transfer verbs, the ESL children in this study obtained similar percentages across real and novel verbs (i.e. real transitive = 31.7% correct and novel transitive = 36.79% correct; real transfer = 51.19% correct and novel transfer = 55.36% correct). The results for the third verb type, namely complement verbs, revealed that the ESL children in this study performed better on the real verbs than the novel verbs. The percentage correct was 10% higher for the real verb items compared to the novel verbs (i.e. real complement = 46.43%; novel complement = 36.79%). This generally poor performance on the fast mapping items tends to suggest that the ESL children in this study are experiencing difficulty in abstracting the

meaning of the word from the syntactic context (i.e. by utilising word-order and word endings). According to de Villiers, J. (2004), children who struggle to identify the cues for the meaning of a word supplied by the sentence context, will have grammatical difficulty with word order or inflections. This is in agreement with the results from this study, as the overall percentage correct for the syntax items was low at 43.21%. In addition, the ESL children in this study attained a poor percentage correct (i.e. 42.86%) on the passive item of the locative-by-phrase, in which the focus falls on the verb ending to correctly identify a passive sentence. Furthermore, this difficulty may in part be due to the fact that word-order in the children's first language (isiZulu) is likely to differ from English.

Moreover, de Villiers, J. (2004) suggests that these results from the fast mapping items should be contrasted with the results on the verb contrast items, in order to ascertain the children's ability to learn from linguistic context. This comparison showed that the poor fast mapping results corresponded with the very low overall results obtained for the verb contrast items (24.11% correct), which may indicate that the ESL children in this study are struggling to acquire English vocabulary merely from the linguistic context. In other words, the ESL children in this study are likely to require more explicit or direct teaching of English vocabulary and lexical organisational skills. This pattern of difficulty is similar to children with LI, as they have also been found to experience difficulty in acquiring new words in an informal manner (de Villiers, J., 2004). Therefore, in terms of vocabulary acquisition it appears that the ESL children's apparent difficulty is not the sole result of an inadequacy in fast mapping, but that there is an additional difficulty in the competency of their lexical organisation, once the words have been acquired (de Villiers, J., 2004).

Thus, the results showed that the ESL children in this study are experiencing difficulty in learning new English words from the sentence context, which may be related to their weakness with word-endings in English and the difference in word-order between their L1 (isiZulu) and English. In addition, the results indicated that the ESL children in this study are finding it difficult to acquire

English in an informal manner, and have an added difficulty with the efficient organisation of the words once they have been fast-mapped or learned.

Implications

The results on all the DELV sub-tests revealed the weak areas of English language acquisition for the ESL children in this study. Therefore, it is suggested that these poor English language abilities need to be addressed more directly in the classroom. The teachers should attempt to remove the ambiguities for the ESL children by establishing linguistic contexts that support, and make these English language skills contextually clear (Roeper, 2004), thereby assisting the ESL children in attaining vital language skills required for success in an English-medium school setting. This is in line with Davison (1995), who maintains that it is essential that ESL learners receive specialist support in the language domains in which they experience difficulty, such as in the domain of grammar.

In addition, the learning of the content contained in the school curriculum should be viewed in relation to the linguistic and cognitive processes inherent in these tasks. As Clegg (1996, p. 15) asserts that the curriculum is "the hook on which to hang language development and vice versa". This means that the school must discover ways of integrating the second language and the academic development of ESL learners, and teachers must connect language and curriculum content in a rewarding and comprehensive manner. Measures which can assist in making the input in the classroom more accessible comprise of common redundancy techniques for example, repetition, explanation, examples, explicit boundary markers, visual support, questioning and corrective feedback, motivating learners to extend utterances, and modelling the teacher's language (Wong Fillmore, 1985; Ellis, 1992). Additional classroom facilitators include: discourse "embeddedness" or utilising the context to support meaning; ensuring that learners have the language skills required to carry out the tasks, by utilising explicit and predictable task sequences (Wong-Fillmore, 1985); and encouraging the acquisition of language skills required for particular subjects (i.e. the information processing and study skills needed for the subject) (Clegg, 1996).

Furthermore, despite the fact that the overall results indicated that the majority of the ESL children in the current study displayed a LI profile, this was not readily apparent in the item analysis. Only in the semantics sub-test was the overlap between children with LI and the ESL children in this study clearly shown, as both groups were unable to produce two different verbs for the same pictured scene, and both experienced difficulty in learning a new word in an informal manner. Similarly, Genesee et al. (2004) maintain that ESL children and children with SLI both have the same weakness in vocabulary knowledge, in particular verbs. In contrast, other developmental error patterns tended to indicate that the ESL children in the current investigation were following TD children albeit at a slower rate. In the semantic sub-test they had a low presence of prepositional contrast error types, produced the error pattern for the verb contrasts typical of younger TD children, and for the pragmatic skill of producing the correct *wh*-question their progression pattern showed they were advancing from the common error made by the DELV research sample at 5-6 years, which is asking the incorrect *wh*-question for the information required, or asking an all purpose question to a similar level as the older children in the DELV research sample who produce all or almost all of the single *wh*-questions correctly, but still frequently get the double *wh*-question incorrect (de Villiers, P., 2004). These performance patterns further emphasise the need for continued research on the progression of these ESL children's English language acquisition.

Gender Differences in Performance

T-tests were also carried out to ascertain if there were any gender differences in the performances of the ESL children on the DELV. The results showed that across all three sub-tests, the scores obtained by the male and female learners in this study were not significantly different from one another. This result is in agreement with the findings of Bornstein et al. (2004), who found in their longitudinal research on language performance that only between the ages of 2-5 years, did females consistently outperform the males. The results from the t-tests can be found in appendix 14.

Validity of the DELV for the South African Context

A correlational analysis was performed to determine how the ESL children's scores on the DELV, related to teacher and parent ratings of the ESL children's English language proficiency.

The results showed that for both the syntax and semantics sub-tests, there was a positive weak correlation with the teacher rating (syntax: r = 0.21; semantics: r = 0.13), and for the pragmatics sub-test there was a positive moderate correlation (r = 0.4). These findings contrast with the results from Gutierrez-Clellen and Kreiter's (2003) study on bilingual children, which found that the teachers' proficiency rating was significantly related to the children's grammatical performance in both the L1 and L2. These opposing results could be due to the fact that in Gutierrez-Clellen and Kreiter's (2003) study they utilised spontaneous narratives, whereas in the current study a formal language assessment tool was used (i.e. the DELV) to assess the children's language abilities. In addition, the narratives utilised by Gutierrez-Clellen and Kreiter (2003) do not necessarily tap the underlying cognitive skills which the DELV is based on. Furthermore, these poor correlations between the three sub-tests and the teachers' proficiency ratings, may be linked to differences in the criteria or frame of reference (i.e. L1 English speaker or English as a L2) utilised by the teacher (Gutierrez-Clellen & Kreiter, 2003). Several teachers may use a monolingual criterion and therefore may undervalue language proficiency (Gutierrez-Clellen & Kreiter, 2003). Other teachers may have lower standards established from their experience of working with ESL children, and consequently may overrate the children's English abilities (Gutierrez-Clellen & Kreiter, 2003). Moreover, the stronger relationship between the pragmatics sub-test and teacher rating, may result from the fact that two of the tasks in the pragmatic sub-tests namely, question asking and narratives, are mentioned several times in the OBE assessment standards for the learning outcomes in grade one (Department of Education, 2002). Therefore, the teachers are more likely to associate oral language proficiency with these types of tasks. The correlational analysis between the ESL children's scores on the DELV and teacher rating of English language proficiency can be found in appendix 15.

The results pertaining to the parents' proficiency ratings revealed that for both the syntax and the pragmatics sub-tests, there was a positive weak correlation with parent rating (syntax: r = 0.25; pragmatics: r = 0.38), and for the semantic sub-test there was a positive moderate correlation (r = 0.45). The stronger relationship between the semantics sub-test and parent rating, indicates that the parents are probably relating language proficiency with "the expression and understanding of meaning" (de Villiers, J., 2004, p.73). Intuitively, meaning is acquired from the context in which it occurs, which in this setting is the English-medium classrooms. Therefore, the parents are likely to be estimating language proficiency according to how children are progressing in school (i.e. attaining meaning from the classroom), especially since they themselves are second language speakers of English. The correlational analysis between the ESL children's scores on the DELV and parent rating of English language proficiency can be found in appendix 16.

These generally weak correlations between the DELV scores and the parent and teacher proficient ratings, do not imply that the DELV is an unsuitable tool for assessing the language abilities of South African ESL children. Gutierrez-Clellen and Kreiter (2003) maintain that a major downfall of language proficiency rating scales, are their potential lack of reliability across participants. In addition, there is a dearth of research evaluating the utilisation of language proficiency rating scales, in indicating children's language status or in revealing actual language production in bilingual children (Gutierrez-Clellen &Kreiter, 2003). Thus, it is proposed that the DELV is in fact a useful measure of South African ESL children's English language skills (required for school success), but that it should be used in conjunction with other measures. A further limitation may have been the construction of the rating scales, as the teachers were not asked to rate language for academic purposes specifically. In future research the results on the DELV should perhaps be correlated with performance on academic tasks such as reading comprehension and written language.

Results Regarding Language Exposure and Experience

These results were attained from the language questionnaires given to the parents and teachers.

In general, the majority of the ESL children in this study come from multilingual homes in which isiZulu dominants. This finding is in line with the Census (2001), as Gauteng has the most widespread distribution of home languages with isiZulu being spoken the most. Similarly, Braam's (2004) study, on the attitudes of teachers and parents at a primary school in the Western Cape, showed that the parent's L1 (Afrikaans) attained the higher dominance percentage. In other words, it is the language that is spoken the best and the most frequently in the home (Braam, 2004).

Exposure to the L1/isiZulu

The exposure to the L1/isiZulu comes mainly from the fact that it is the language spoken at home, with family members, relatives and friends, as well as in the neighbourhood. This is in line with Braam's (2004) study, which showed that the L1 (Afrikaans) was the preferred language to be spoken at home.

Quality of the isiZulu Language Models

The main language models of isiZulu are the parents. The vast majority of parents in this study reported that they spoke isiZulu as their first language, and rated their proficiency as a first language speaker. In terms of the language used in their education, most of the parents in this study reported that they were educated in an English medium school. They stated that they used isiZulu daily at home with family and friends, and occasionally at work. In addition, a large majority spoke additional languages. The four most prevalent additional languages were: English, SeSotho, isiXhosa and isiNdebele. For these additional languages, the greatest number spoke English. It was reported to be used daily, at work, to talk to colleagues, for paperwork, for business communication, at home for helping with homework, reading the newspaper, and for speaking to foreigners. The majority of the parents in this study rated their proficiency in English as not excellent, but competent and

fluent. These results showed that for work related communication, the parents tended to use English on a daily basis and isiZulu occasionally. This is in line with the results of Braam's (2004) study in which most of the parents stated that they chose to use English when speaking to their employer. According to Braam (2004), this reveals that English is used mainly with individuals in power positions, therefore indicating that for these parents there is a relationship between power, economy, and English. Additional language models for isiZulu included family members, relatives, neighbours and teachers. The majority of these models were reported to mix languages, the most common being isiZulu and English. Their proficiency ratings in these two languages were mainly, like a first language speaker for isiZulu, and not excellent, but competent and fluent for English.

Therefore, the results revealed that the ESL children in this study grow up in a home environment where at least two languages are spoken by their parents. Consequently, these ESL children have an awareness of the importance of knowing different languages especially English, as the language that their parents use the most at work. In addition, their exposure to isiZulu is comprised of models who mix isiZulu most commonly with English. This is likely to underline the importance of English for these children.

Exposure to English

The ESL children's first exposure to English occurred for most, between the ages of 3 and 4 years old at crèche. The current exposure to English mainly comes from media-related activities such as watching television, and listening to the radio, as well as from school-related activities such as, the input in the classroom, homework, and reading. Similarly, Braam's (2004) study showed that 82% of the children reported that they preferred watching television programmes in English, in contrast to only 15% who stated that television programmes in their first language were their favourites.

In addition, it is interesting to note that the majority of parents in this study stated that their children are the most proficient in English. This is probably due the fact that their children are being educated in English, and are beginning to attain literacy skills in this language.

Quality of the English Language Models

The language models for English included the ESL children's peers, parents, siblings, relatives, friends, parent's colleagues, and the teacher. The responses received for the proficiency ratings of the language models and their mixing of languages, mirrored those findings for the isiZulu language models (i.e. The majority were rated as competent and fluent for English, and like a first language speaker for isiZulu. In addition, they were shown mainly to mix languages mostly between isiZulu and English). Interestingly, siblings were not mentioned as language models for isiZulu. This result is in line with Braam's (2004) study, which found that the learners were more likely to speak English to their siblings. Braam (2004) maintains that the learners' tendency to speak English more to their siblings compared to their parents or grandparents, suggests a generation shift towards English.

The language models most likely to give a more stable input in English are the teachers, which is due to the fact that the language of instruction at school is English. The results (as mentioned in the methodology) showed that only one teacher is a first language English speaker. Of the second language English speakers, only two rated their proficiency in English as like a first language speaker. The rest of the teachers rated themselves as not excellent, but competent and fluent. This raises the issue of the quality of the English language input that these children are receiving at their English medium schools. However, these teachers bring to the classroom what the English first language teachers cannot, which is that they will share their first language with some of their learners. In addition, the fact that on average these teachers tend to speak four additional languages means that they can relate to the majority of the learners in their class. Thus, these teachers are able to provide a better understanding of concepts by using the child's L1 in the classroom. This was shown in this study as two of the teachers revealed that

they used other languages to explain concepts in the classroom, and an additional teacher expressed the use of this strategy to the researcher in a personal communication. This strategy of using the children's L1 to explain specific concepts, was also utilised by the teachers in Braam's (2004) study to increase learner performance. Furthermore, the fact that half of the teachers completed their entire tertiary education in English, implies that they have attained a high level of proficiency in English (Braam, 2004). In addition, the two first language Afrikaans speaking teachers reported that English had become the dominant language at home. This could be the result of the generation shift towards English as mentioned by Braam (2004).

Parents' Perceptions towards isiZulu and English

In terms of the attitudes towards the importance of isiZulu and English, a larger number of parents in this study reported that isiZulu was important compared to those who said English was important. The main reasons given for the importance of isiZulu consisted of the fact that isiZulu is their home language, the need to maintain and develop pride in one's identity and culture, and the ease of communication to relatives, the community and elders. This is in line with the results of Braam's (2004) study, which revealed that parents have strong feelings of identity towards their home language, as they displayed a definite preference for the use of their L1, outnumbering English by 22%. Despite the apparently high value that the parents in this study placed on their home language, the majority chose English as the preferred medium of education. The foremost reasons provided for this choice include the perception that the mastery of English is required for higher school performance, increased opportunities for tertiary education, increased vocational opportunities, ease of communication with other South Africans, and the emphasis on the options available due is to its international status. These results are in agreement with Heugh (2000), who maintains that parents select the schools that they believe will provide their children with a better education, and these just happen to be English medium schools. In addition, these beliefs support the higher status given to English as the means for an improved lifestyle.

Implications

There are three major factors, which were revealed from the data obtained on the parent and teacher questionnaires.

The first factor is the larger emphasis placed on English. This is demonstrated in the fact that parents speak English at work, which according to Braam (2004) reveals that English is used mainly with individuals in power positions, thereby indicating that for the parents in this study there is a relationship between power, economy, and English. In addition, there appears to a generation shift towards English exhibited by exclusion of siblings as isiZulu language models, which suggests that the ESL children in this study tend to speak more English to their siblings compared to other family members. This generation shift towards English is also displayed in responses of the two first language Afrikaans speaking teachers, who reported that English had become the dominant language at home. However, this does not imply that the participants in this study do not value their L1. In fact the opposite is true, as a larger number of parents reported that isiZulu was important compared to those who said English was important, especially for the reason of cultural identity and pride. Nevertheless, the parents in this study still chose English as the preferred medium of instruction, as they viewed it as providing better opportunities for their children. These results are in line with de Wet's (2002) study, which showed that postgraduate education students felt that English was the most important South African language, in the domains of politics, education, science and technology. Only in the domain of culture were African languages found to be more important than English (de Wet, 2002). In addition, Plus 94 Research on the population's use of the eleven official languages, published in the Sunday Times, indicated that despite the fact that English is the first language of only 10 percent of South Africans, it is preferred by 64 percent of the population as the "main" official language, and is the language of choice for business interactions (Ntshingila, 2006).

The second factor lies in the influence that the ESL children's proficiency levels in isiZulu have on their English development. The Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis asserts that the level of proficiency a child achieves in the L2 acquired in the school context, is dependent on the particular underlying language skills attained in the child's L1 (Cummins, 1979, 1980). The ESL children in this study have been exposed to a multilingual environment with their principal language models (i.e. their parents) speaking at least two languages. Additional first language isiZulu models included other family members, relatives, neighbours, and teachers, with the majority of these models reported to mix languages. This linguistic exposure could be a contributing cause in the generally poor results obtained on the DELV, as Cummins (2001a) claims that the variety in the manner in which children's L1 has been fostered by their linguistic experience before school, facilitates the differential effects in their acquisition of the L2.

Lastly, the third factor pertains to the ESL children's linguistic experience in the classroom. In terms of the quality of the English language models provided by the teachers, all of the teachers in this study (except one) are second language speakers of English, with only two who rated their proficiency in English as like a first language speaker, and the remainder who rated themselves as not excellent, but competent and fluent. However, the fact that half of these teachers completed their entire tertiary education in English, implies that they have indeed attained a high level of proficiency in English (Braam, 2004). Furthermore, in this context where all the learners and the majority of the teachers are second language speakers of English, there is the potential for both the school and teachers to provide many of the important aspects of a facilitating environment (Clegg, 1996) such as, the acknowledgement of the learners' culture and language, utilisation of the learners' L1 to foster ESL development, appropriately modified input for the learners' needs (as the teachers are themselves ESL speakers), and a better understanding of discourse embeddedness, linguistic tasks demands, and support for the development of English skills set at a suitable pace.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions were drawn from the data obtained on the DELV, the parent language questionnaires and rating scales, and the teacher language questionnaires and rating scales.

On the basis of the results obtained on the DELV, it was concluded that the groups of ESL children from the three schools would be treated as one larger group. The results from this larger single group showed that the ESL children in this study obtained low means for all three sub-tests of the DELV. Taking into consideration Leonard's (1991) claim that SLI children merely represent the low end of the normal distribution of language ability, these results appear to indicate that there may be an overlap in language ability between ESL and SLI children. The results also showed a wide range of scores for each sub-test, which is indicative of a large degree of individual variation amongst these ESL children. This aspect of individual variation in L2 acquisition is well documented, as Paradis (in press) claims that there is in fact a larger degree of variation in L2 learning compared to L1 acquisition, and both Paradis' (2005) study and the Edmonton ESL study, found individual variation in language performances. The implication of this substantial variation is that below average results obtained by ESL learners on a measure such as the DELV, cannot be interpreted in relation to the population on which the test was standardised, to signify language impairment. Genesee et al. (2004) propose that language aptitude has the potential to be an important component in accounting for this large variation in L2 learning. Thus, this relationship between variation in L2 acquisition and language aptitude should be explored further, as it is feasible that measures of language aptitude skills will aid in making the distinction clearer, between those ESL children that are just slow to learn English and those that require intervention.

In terms of the placing the scores obtained on the DELV into the relevant categories (i.e. weakness, low average, average, and strength), the ESL children in this study performed better in the pragmatics sub-test, in contrast to the syntax and semantics sub-tests. The explanation for this may be that the conceptual basis underlying pragmatics skills may be more easily transferred from the L1 to the L2 (Paradis, 2007). Therefore, teachers can utilise pragmatic related tasks as positive reinforcement, due to the likelihood that these ESL children are more likely to succeed on these tasks. This categorisation of the scores in each sub-test was also utilised to detect impairment on the DELV. The results showed that the majority of the ESL children's performances reflected a language impairment (LI) profile, with less than 20% of the ESL children in this study displaying no need for intervention. Two significant issues emerged from these performance patterns. The first is that this high percentage of weak performance and suspected LI raises the concern regarding these ESL children's academic language proficiency in English, which is vital for success in an English-medium school. The second is the danger of over-diagnosis of language impairment, as it is impossible to have such a large percentage of children demonstrating LI. Thus, it would be beneficial to continue to document these ESL children's development of English language skills, as the current study has only focused on their performance at the end of grade one. Two alternative measures, which may have the potential to distinguish between language difference and language disorder, and therefore are recommended to complement the results obtained from the DELV, are dynamic assessment and language-processing capacity (Roseberry-McKibbin & O'Hanlon, 2005).

In contrast to the categorisation of scores mentioned-above, this strong pattern of LI was not clearly evident in the results obtained from the item analysis in each sub-test. The item analyses showed that several error patterns demonstrated that the ESL children in this study paralleled children with LI whereas, other error patterns indicated that these ESL children were following monolingual TD children albeit at a slower rate. These performance patterns further emphasised the need for continued research on the progression of South African ESL children's English language acquisition, as

Paradis (2005) asserts that it is crucial for professionals to set appropriate performance expectations, grounded in a good understanding of early ESL development. The results from the item analyses also revealed that the most difficult item for the ESL children in this study was the double *wh*-question (pragmatics sub-test), as not one child was able to express this type of question correctly. In addition, the results showed that the ESL children in this study experienced particular difficulty with the task of producing the correct articles and verb-contrasts. The overall percentage correct for articles was only 27.9%, and for verb contrasts was 24.11% correct. These generally poor results supported both assertions that articles are particularly problematic for ESL speakers (Seymour et al., 2003) and that ESL children and children with SLI both have a particular weakness in their verb vocabulary (Genesee et al., 2004).

An important implication which emerges from these results is that the weak English language abilities detected by the DELV, need to be addressed more directly in the classroom. It is suggested that the areas of difficulty in English for the ESL children, and their learning of the curriculum must be integrated in the classroom, as Clegg (1996, p.15) asserts that the curriculum is "the hook on which to hang language development and vice versa". In other words, the school needs to discover ways of integrating the second language and the academic development of ESL learners, and teachers must connect language and curriculum content in a rewarding and comprehensive manner. Furthermore, the implication for SLPs arises from the fact that with their expertise in the process of language acquisition, SLPs play a vital part in assisting the school and teacher in implementing effective language teaching strategies. Measures which can assist in making the input in the classroom more accessible include: redundancy techniques; discourse "embeddedness" or utilising the context to support meaning; ensuring that learners have the language skills needed to carry out the tasks, by utilising explicit and predictable task sequences (Wong-Fillmore, 1985); and encouraging the acquisition of language skills required for particular subjects (i.e. the information processing and study skills needed for the subject) (Clegg, 1996).

Moreover, the results from the DELV revealed the ESL children's learning potential, which is the focus of dynamic assessment (which was recommended earlier for the use with ESL children). This was shown in the *wh*-question asking task (pragmatics sub-test), where the ESL children's responses greatly improved when provided with extra scaffolding (in the form of a second prompt). The implication now arises of discovering the most effective teaching strategies to enable these ESL children not only to produce the correct question forms, but also to master the other English language skills needed for success in an English-medium school setting.

Gender performances showed no differences between the male and female ESL learners in this study across all three sub-tests. This result is in agreement with the findings of Bornstein et al. (2004), who found in their longitudinal research on language performance that only between the ages of 2-5 years, did females consistently outperform the males. It would be interesting to investigate if this pattern of gender performance for the ESL learners persisted throughout their schooling career. In terms of the suitability of the DELV for the South African context, the correlational analyses between the DELV sub-tests, and parent and teacher ratings of the ESL children's English proficiency, revealed generally weak relationships. However, this does not mean that the DELV is an inappropriate tool for assessing the language abilities of South African ESL children, as Gutierrez-Clellen and Kreiter (2003) maintain that a major downfall of language proficiency rating scales are their potential lack of reliability across participants. Furthermore, there is a dearth of research evaluating the utilisation of language proficiency rating scales, in indicating children's language status or in revealing actual language production in bilingual children (Gutierrez-Clellen & Kreiter, 2003). Moreover, an additional limitation may have been the construction of the rating scales, as the teachers were not asked to rate language for academic purposes specifically. In future research the results on the DELV should perhaps be correlated with performance on academic tasks such as, reading comprehension and written language.

The parent and teacher questionnaires revealed three main issues. First, is the emphasis placed on English. The results displayed that despite the larger number of parents who reported that isiZulu was important compared to those who said English was important (especially for the reasons of cultural identity and pride), the parents in this study still favoured English as the preferred medium of instruction. The reasoning behind this choice is that the parents view English as providing an improved lifestyle for their children. The concern arises that if one examines the results in this study, it appears that the education programmes currently in place may not be the most effective in achieving these desired high levels of English proficiency. Second, is the effect that the ESL children's linguistic exposure in their L1 may have on their L2 development. The results showed that the ESL children in this study have been exposed to a multilingual environment, with their principal language models (i.e. their parents) speaking at least two languages. This linguistic exposure could be a contributing cause in the generally poor results obtained on the DELV, as Cummins (2001a) claims that the variety in the manner in which children's L1 has been fostered by their linguistic experience before school, facilitates the differential effects in their acquisition of the L2. This proposition by Cummins (2001a) also indicates a positive implication for parents, as it means that by stimulating the language in which the parents and their child are the most proficient, will encourage higher levels of L2 acquisition. Third, is the influence of the ESL children's linguistic experience in the classroom. In the current educational setting where this study was conducted, all the learners and the majority of the teachers are second language speakers of English. Therefore, there is the potential for both the school and teachers to provide many of the important aspects of a facilitating environment (Clegg, 1996). For example, the utilisation of the learners' L1 to foster ESL development, and appropriately modified input for the learners' needs (as the teachers are themselves ESL speakers) etc. However, in order for this to occur the implication emerges for those involved in education, to develop classroom materials in the home languages.

Against the backdrop of these findings and their implications, an evaluation of this study was deemed essential in order to measure its effectiveness, and determine the value of its results (Robson, 1993). Therefore, the limitations of this study need to be acknowledged. Firstly, the generalisation of findings to the population of ESL learners as a whole is limited, due to the use of non-probability sampling. Secondly, this study did not administer the phonology sub-test of the DELV, as it was believed to be too specific to the African American population. Thereby, restricting the use of the DELV in accurately identifying impairment. Thirdly, this study displayed a relatively narrow focus, as it concentrated only on the oral English language abilities of isiZulu speaking children, in inner city schools at the end of grade-one. In addition, in terms of the parent language questionnaire and rating scale, the level of English utilised should have been slightly more simplified, as a result of the variety of English proficiency levels of the parents. Furthermore, the questions regarding the children's initial exposure to English ought to have been dealt with in greater detail. In other words, the questions should have required more specific answers.

To bring this research report to a close, it is useful to return to the focus of the investigation. The current study centred on the oral English language abilities of ESL learners, in inner city school settings in Gauteng. More specifically, the English language skills required for school success were targeted, utilising the very effective DELV assessment tool. The DELV's potential in addressing language for academic purposes for ESL children, and detecting those ESL children who will cope with schooling in their L2, can only be truly evaluated if follow-up studies are conducted. In addition, the DELV should be used in conjunction with other assessment tools of language ability such as, language aptitude measures, language-processing skills, and dynamic assessment, in order to attain a more accurate measure of the English language development of typically developing ESL learners.

Recently, the Education Minister, Naledi Pandor (2006), announced the education department's plan to establish a six-year mother tongue education programme, in which the objective is to utilise the learners home languages as a media of instruction in the foundation and intermediate phase. One of the challenges that the implementation of this programme will face is that in provinces such as Gauteng, with its widespread diversity of home languages, it would be virtually impossible for every child to be educated in their home language. As a consequence, the issue of successful L2 learning for academic purposes will remain a prominent feature in South African education, whether this L2 learning occurs right from the start of the child's education or later in the child's schooling career. Any L2 educational programme, including the ones already in operation (such as, the schools documented in this study), should follow the tenets of the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis (Cummins, 2000). This hypothesis states that the "transfer of academic skills and knowledge will occur across languages under appropriate conditions of student motivation and exposure to both languages" (Cummins, 2000, p. 194). One of the issues that will need to be dealt with in this newly proposed mother-tongue education programme with regard to the 'appropriate conditions of student motivation', is the high value parents place on English proficiency skills, as they view English as providing increased vocational and educational opportunities. Therefore, the government will need to reassure parents, as the Education Minister Naledi Pandor did in 2005, when she was advocating the increased use of South African indigenous languages in school, that this does not imply that the relevancy of attaining proficiency in English would be ignored, as this would be "a foolhardy objective on any minister's part" (Naledi Pandor, 2005, p.8). In terms of 'exposure to both languages', the SLP can be involved in teacher training in which teachers are instructed to distinguish between academic proficiency and conversational proficiency, as well as to devise techniques to facilitate L2 skills for academic purposes. Furthermore, parents can be empowered to develop the children's L1 skills, as the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis further asserts that the level of proficiency a child achieves in a L2 acquired in the school context, is a dependent on particular underlying language skills attained in the child's L1 (Cummins,

1979, 1980). There are three major areas that would be beneficial for parents to concentrate on, as Cummins (1979) maintains that these domains are firmly linked, and affect the acquisition of academic language proficiency. They are: firstly, "vocabulary knowledge" which refers to the child's comprehension of the ideas or meanings embodied in words (Becker, 1977, in Cummins, 1979), Secondly, are metalinguistic skills in particular, the comprehension that print is purposeful, and the understanding that written language is unlike spoken language (Smith, 1977, in Cummins, 1979) and lastly, is the capacity to decontextualise language (Cummins, 1979).

As the time has come to depart from the ESL children's continuing journey through the South African education system, a final concluding thought comes from the State of the Nation Address, given by President Thabo Mbeki, on the 9th February 2007.

"We should today, even more confidently, speak together of freedom. We should dare to act in concert to pursue the "happiness that can come to men and women if they live in a land that is free".

We are not there yet. But no one, except ourselves, shall ensure that this dream is realised. And so, let us roll up our sleeves and get down to work, fully understanding that the tasks to build the South Africa for which we yearn is a common responsibility we all share. "

(Thabo Mbeki, 2007, p.17).

In this speech President Thabo Mbeki, states that more than ever we as a nation can speak more assertively of freedom, but there remains much to be accomplished by all of us, to create a South African we all desire. This is also true for the education system, in which great advances have been made. However, the issue of optimising L2 learning to reach its full potential still needs to be reached. This can be achieved though continued research, teacher training by those involved in language-related fields, and adherence to linguistic theory.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

UMnyango WezeMfundo
Department of Education

Lefapha la Thuto
Departement van Onderwys

Date:	12 September 2005
Name of Researcher:	Kallenbach Amy
Address of Researcher:	53 Kallenbach Drive
	Linksfield
	2198
Telephone Number:	(011) 6152186
Fax Number:	(011) 6152186
Research Topic:	The language abilities of a group of South African Zulu-English grade one learners
Number and type of schools:	6 Primary Schools
District/s/HO	Johannesburg East

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

Permission has been granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met, and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted:

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
2. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*
3. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*

Office of the Senior Manager – Strategic Policy Research & Development
Room 525, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001 P.O.Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000
Tel: (011) 355-0488 Fax: (011) 355-0286

4. *A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.*
5. *The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.*
6. *Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Senior Manager (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.*
7. *Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year.*
8. *Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.*
9. *It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.*
10. *The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.*
11. *The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.*
12. *On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Senior Manager: Strategic Policy Development, Management & Research Coordination with one Hard Cover bound and one Ring bound copy of the final, approved research report. The researcher would also provide the said manager with an electronic copy of the research abstract/summary and/or annotation.*
13. *The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.*
14. *Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Senior Manager concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.*

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

ALBERT CHANEE
ACTING DIVISIONAL MANAGER: OFSTED

The contents of this letter has been read and understood by the researcher.	
Signature of Researcher:	
Date:	19/09/05

APPENDIX 2

GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

JOHANNESBURG EAST DISTRICT D9

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Enq.: Gugu Kumalo

22 September 2005

53 Kallenbach Drive
LINKSFIELD
2198

ATTENTION: AMY KALLENBACH

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

Dear Madam;

This letter serves to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 21 September 2005 with regards to you conducting research in the Johannesburg East District.

Kindly be informed that approval is hereby granted. Please ensure that you adhere to the conditions outlined on your permission letter from Mr Albert Chanee, the Acting Divisional Manager: OFSTED.

Yours in Education

J.B MATABANE
DISTRICT DIRECTOR

"At the Cutting edge"
Tel: +27 (11) 403-9201
E-mail: jessjcam@gpg.gov.za
Fax: +27 (11) 403-2055 / 1117
Web: www.education.gpg.gov.za
125 Simmonds Street, Educen Building, BRAAMFONTEIN
Private Bag X18, BRAAMFONTEIN, 2017

APPENDIX 3

Dear Principal,

My name is Amy Kallenbach and I am a Masters student in Speech Pathology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting a study to investigate the English language abilities of grade-one, isiZulu speaking, English second (ESL) learners. isiZulu has been selected as the home language as it is the most prevalent language in South Africa. I wish to invite your school to participate in this study.

If you kindly grant me permission to conduct the study at your school, the grade-one teachers will be provided with information and permission slips regarding the research. If the teachers agree to participate, they will be asked to identify the isiZulu speaking ESL learners in their classroom, to supply their answers to a brief language questionnaire, and complete a short language proficiency rating scale on these children. The parents of the children will also be given information sheets and permissions slips about the research. If parents allow their child to participate, they too will be required to supply answers to a language questionnaire, and complete a short language proficiency rating scale on their child. The children who participate in the study will be given a simplified description of the study, and their verbal consent to participate will also be requested.

If the parents allow their child to participate and the child gives consent, then the child will be tested on a formal language assessment tool. The parent and teacher questionnaires and rating scales will also be provided, and returned to the researcher when completed.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Teachers, parents, and the children are free to refuse to participate, and to withdraw at any time during the study. They will not be penalised or disadvantaged in any way. Furthermore, all responses are strictly confidential and anonymity is assured.

If there are any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Your co-operation would be highly valued.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Amy Kallenbach
(Masters student)
(011) 615-2186/082 331 0150

I hereby give permission to the researcher to conduct the above-mentioned study at this school.
Principal: _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

APPENDIX 4

Dear Teacher,

My name is Amy Kallenbach and I am a Masters student of Speech Pathology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting a study to investigate the English language abilities of grade-one, isiZulu-speaking, English second language (ESL) learners. isiZulu has been selected as the home language as it is the most prevalent language in South Africa. I wish to invite you to participate in this study.

If you do decide to participate, you will only be required to complete three tasks. Firstly, to identify those children in your class whose home language is isiZulu. Secondly, to answer a few questions on a language questionnaire. Lastly, to complete a short language proficiency rating scale for each child you identified.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to participate. If you choose not to participate, or wish to withdraw from the study at any time, you will not be penalised or disadvantaged in any way. In addition, all the responses obtained remain strictly confidential and anonymity is assured.

Should you have any queries, you can pass these concerns onto the principal who will then contact me. Subsequently, I will gladly respond to these queries to the best of my ability.

Your participation and contribution to this study would be greatly appreciated.

Please return the consent form below, indicating whether or not you wish to participate.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Amy Kallenbach
(Masters student)

Consent form

I _____ give consent/ do not give consent to participate in this study

Teacher: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Contact numbers: _____

APPENDIX 5

Dear Parent/Guardian,

My name is Amy Kallenbach and I am a Masters student of Speech Pathology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting a study to investigate the English language abilities of grade-one, isiZulu speaking, English second language (ESL) learners. isiZulu has been selected as the home language as it is the most prevalent language in South Africa. I wish to invite you and your child to participate in this study.

If you decide to participate, your child will be tested on a formal language test. Your child's teacher will also be expected to complete a language proficiency rating on your child. In addition, I will also need you to fill in a formal consent form, a brief language questionnaire, as well as to complete a short rating scale on your child's ability to express himself/herself in English.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to allow your child to participate. If you decide not to participate, or wish to withdraw your child at any time during the study, you or your child will not be penalised or disadvantaged in any way. In addition, all the responses acquired will remain strictly confidential. Your child's identity will only be known to the researcher.

Should you have any queries, you can pass these concerns onto the principal who will then contact me. Subsequently, I will gladly respond to these queries to the best of my ability.

Your participation and contribution to this study would be greatly appreciated.

Please return the permission slip below, indicating whether or not you wish to participate.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Amy Kallenbach
(Masters student)

Permission Slip

I _____ give permission / do not give permission for my child, _____ to participate in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Contact numbers: _____

Teacher's name: _____

Formal consent form:

I, hereby consent to allow my child to participate in this study. Furthermore, I give the researcher Amy Kallenbach permission to use the responses in the write up of the study, and in any further publications or presentations.

I understand that I am free to refuse to participate, or withdraw my child and discontinue participation in this study at any time, without it being held against me or my child in any way.

I understand that privacy will be maintained and that any responses will remain strictly confidential and anonymous. I am also aware that if I have any questions at any time, they will be answered.

Parent: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

I have fully explained the procedures and their purpose. I have asked whether or not there are any questions regarding the procedures and have answered these questions to the best of my ability.

Researcher: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 6

Hello, my name is Amy. I am at university and I am working on this big project. I would like you to be a part of my project. It's about children who speak Zulu and English, just like you do. I want to see how well you do on some activities in English. This is not for marks, and if you don't want to do the activities you don’t have to. If at any time you do not want to do the activities anymore tell me, and we will stop. You will not get into any trouble if you decide to stop.

Will you help me with my project? Circle yes or no.

Yes No

My name is _____

The date today is _____

APPENDIX 7

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

Division of the Deputy Registrar (Research)

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Kallenbach

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE **PROTOCOL NUMBER 50813**

PROJECT The Language Abilities of South African Zulu-English Grade One

INVESTIGATORS Miss A Kallenbach

DEPARTMENT Human & Comm Development/Speech Pathology

DATE CONSIDERED 05.08.02

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE* Approved unconditionally

This ethical clearance is valid for 2 years and may be renewed upon application

DATE 05.08.29 **CHAIRPERSON** .....
pp (Professor C Penn)

*Guidelines for written 'informed consent' attached where applicable

cc: Supervisor : Mrs H Jordaan
Human & Comm Development

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10005, 10th Floor, Senate House, University.

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we 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. **I agree to a completion of a yearly progress report.**

This ethical clearance will expire on 1 February 2005

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES

APPENDIX 8

PARENT/GUARDIAN PROFICIENCY RATING SCALE:

Proficiency = how well the child expresses him/herself in a language.

Name: _____ *Date:* _____

Name of child: _____

Please fill in the rating scale below:

Circle the relevant rating for English:

0 Not able to speak the language, knows a small number of words or phrases, not able to say sentences, only makes sense of a handful of words.

1 Not able to speak the language, knows a small number of words or phrases, comprehends the overall meaning of what is being spoken about.

2 Low levels of competency with grammatical mistakes, small vocabulary, comprehends the overall meaning of what is being spoken about.

3 Adequate levels of competency with a certain amount of grammatical mistakes, limited social and academic vocabulary, comprehends the meaning of the majority of what is spoken about.

4 First language competency with a few grammatical mistakes, sufficient vocabulary, comprehends the meaning of the majority of what is spoken about.

DK Don't know

PROFICIENCY						
Ability to speak in English	DK	0	1	2	3	4

(Adapted from Gutiérrez-Clellen & Kreiter, 2004)

Thank you, for taking your time in completing this rating scale. ☺

APPENDIX 9

TEACHER'S PROFICIENCY RATING SCALE:

Proficiency = how well the child expresses him/herself in a language.

Name: _____ *Date:* _____

Name of child: _____ *Grade:* _____

Age of child: _____

Please fill in the rating scale below:

Circle the relevant rating for English:

1 Not able to speak the language, knows a small number of words or phrases, not able to say sentences, only makes sense of a handful of words.

5 Not able to speak the language, knows a small number of words or phrases, comprehends the overall meaning of what is being spoken about.

6 Low levels of competency with grammatical mistakes, small vocabulary, comprehends the overall meaning of what is being spoken about.

7 Adequate levels of competency with a certain amount of grammatical mistakes, limited social and academic vocabulary, comprehends the meaning of the majority of what is spoken about.

8 First language competency with a few grammatical mistakes, sufficient vocabulary, comprehends the meaning of the majority of what is spoken about.

DK Don't know

PROFICIENCY						
Proficiency in English	DK	0	1	2	3	4

(Adapted from Gutiérrez-Clellen & Kreiter, 2004).

Thank you, for taking your time to complete the rating scale. ☺

APPENDIX 10

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S LANGUAGE QUESTIONNAIRE:

Name: _____ *Relationship to child:* _____

Name of child: _____ *Date of birth:* _____

Age of child: _____ *Grade:* _____

Date: _____

Please answer the questions below:

1) What is your home language? _____

2) Do you speak more than one language? Yes No

   a) If no, you need to go to question 9.

   b) If yes, what are they?

   _____

3) What languages do you and your family speak at home?

   _____

4) Which language is spoken the most?

   _____

5) When do you use your various languages?
   E.g. English: at work, to talk to my colleagues, paperwork.
   isiZulu: at home, to talk to my family.

   _____
   _____
   _____

6) How often do you use your languages?
E.g. English: daily.
isiZulu: daily.
isiXhosa: only use it when I go down to the Eastern Cape.

_____
_____
_____

7) What language were you educated in:

a) At school: _____

b) At university/college: _____

8) How would you rate your competency in your languages? (See key below and use the appropriate number)

Key:
1. Like a first language speaker
2. Not excellent but competent and fluent
3. Strenuous but I can get my meaning across
4. With an extreme amount of effort
5. Only a handful of words

(Adapted from Putz, 1995 cited in de Wet, 2002)

a) First language/home language. E.g. isiZulu: 1

_____

b) Other languages. E.g. English: 2
isiXhosa: 3

_____
_____

9) At what age was your child exposed to his/her second language (i.e. English) and in what setting? E.g. at 3 at crèche, at 7 when he started school, from about a year from friends and family etc.

_____
_____

10) How much exposure is there to the home language (i.e. isiZulu)? Please give as much **detail** as possible. E.g. isiZulu is spoken amongst the family at home.

_____
_____
_____
_____

11) Who speaks to your child in isiZulu?

_____

a) Does he/she mix languages when speaking to your child? If yes, which languages?

_____
_____

b) Rate their language proficiency using the rating scale above.

_____
_____
_____

12) Do you believe that it is important to be fluent in the home language (i.e. isiZulu)? If yes, why?

_____
_____
_____

13) How much exposure is there to English? Please give as much **detail** as possible. E.g. All the TV he watches is in English, English is spoken at his soccer practice etc.

_____
_____
_____
_____

14) Who speaks to your child in English?

_____

a) Does he/she mix languages when speaking to your child? If yes, which languages?

_____
_____

b) Rate their language proficiency using the scale above.

_____
_____
_____

15) Do you believe it is important to be fluent in English? If yes, why?

_____
_____
_____

16) Which language do you think your child expresses him/herself the best in?

_____

17) Would you prefer your child to be educated in isiZulu or English? State the reasons for your answer.

_____
_____
_____

Thank you, for taking your time to complete the questionnaire. ☺

APPENDIX 11

TEACHER'S LANGUAGE QUESTIONNAIRE:

Name: _____

Grade that you teach: _____

School name: _____

Date: _____

Please answer the questions below:

1) What is your home language? _____

2) Do you speak more than one language? Yes No

   c) If no, you do not need to answer the rest of the questions.

   d) If yes, what are they?

   _____

3) What languages do you and your family speak at home?

   _____

4) Which language is spoken the most?

   _____

5) When do you use your various languages?
   E.g. English: to teach my class, to talk to my colleagues.
   isiZulu: at home, to talk to my family.

   _____
   _____
   _____

6) How often do you use your languages?
E.g. English: daily.
isiZulu: daily.
isiXhosa: only use it when I go down to the Eastern Cape.

_____
_____
_____

7) What language were you educated in:

c) At school: _____

d) At university/college: _____

8) How would you rate your competency in your languages? (See key below and use the appropriate number)

Key:
1. Like a first language speaker
2. Not excellent but competent and fluent
3. Strenuous but I can get my meaning across
4. With an extreme amount of effort
5. Only a handful of words

(Adapted from Putz, 1995 cited in de Wet, 2002)

c) First language/home language. E.g. isiZulu: 1

_____

d) Other languages. E.g. English: 2
isiXhosa: 3

_____
_____

Thank you, for taking your time to complete the questionnaire. ☺

APPENDIX 12

♦ **ANOVA: *Syntax Sub-test*-with all three groups**

SUMMARY

Groups	*Count*	*Sum*	*Average*	*Variance*
Syn-A	20	294	14.7	36.32632
Syn-B	19	227	11.94737	16.27485
Syn-C	17	284	16.70588	28.09559

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	206.4482	2	103.2241	3.818641	0.02823	3.171621
Within Groups	1432.677	53	27.03164			
Total	1639.125	55				

Key:
Syn-A: syntax sub-test for school 1
Syn-B: syntax sub-test for school 2
Syn-C: syntax sub-test for school 3

SS = sum of squares
df = degrees of freedom
MS = means squares

- **ANOVA: *Pragmatics Sub-test*-with all three groups**

SUMMARY

Groups	*Count*	*Sum*	*Average*	*Variance*
Prag-A	20	289	14.45	13.41842
Prag-B	19	245	12.89474	18.09942
Prag-C	17	237	13.94118	27.68382

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	24.30149	2	12.15075	0.629092	0.537009	3.171621
Within Groups	1023.681	53	19.31473			
Total	1047.982	55				

Key:
Prag-A: pragmatics sub-test for school 1
Prag-B: pragmatics sub-test for school 2
Prag-C: pragmatics sub-test for school 3

SS = sum of squares
df = degrees of freedom
MS = means squares

♦ **ANOVA: *Semantics Sub-test*-with all three groups**

SUMMARY

Groups	*Count*	*Sum*	*Average*	*Variance*
Sem-A	20	389	19.45	25.20789
Sem-B	19	357	18.78947	13.61988
Sem-C	17	360	21.17647	29.27941

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	53.92152	2	26.96076	1.198177	0.309784	3.171621
Within Groups	1192.578	53	22.50148			
Total	1246.5	55				

Key:
Sem-A: semantics sub-test for school 1
Sem-B: semantics sub-test for school 2
Sem-C: semantics sub-test for school 3

SS = sum of squares
df = degrees of freedom
MS = means squares

APPENDIX 13

♦ Two sample t-test: scores from school 1 and scores from school 2

	Syn-A	*Syn-B*
Mean	14.7	11.94737
Variance	36.32632	16.27485
Observations	20	19
Pooled Variance	26.57155	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	37	
t Stat	1.66686	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.051993	
t Critical one-tail	1.687094	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.103987	
t Critical two-tail	2.02619	

Key:
Syn A = scores on syntax sub-test from school 1
Syn B = scores on syntax sub-test from school 2

♦ Two sample t-test: scores from school 1 and scores from school 3

	Syn-A	*Syn-C*
Mean	14.7	16.70588
Variance	36.32632	28.09559
Observations	20	17
Pooled Variance	32.5637	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	35	
t Stat	-1.06556	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.14696	
t Critical one-tail	1.689573	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.293919	
	2.03011	

Key:
Syn A = scores on syntax sub-test from school 1
Syn C = scores on syntax sub-test from school 3

♦ Two sample t-test: scores from school 2 and scores from school 3

	Syn-B	*Syn-C*
Mean	11.94737	16.70588
Variance	16.27485	28.09559
Observations	19	17
Pooled Variance	21.83755	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	34	
t Stat	-3.05014	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.002206	
t Critical one-tail	1.690923	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.004412	
t Critical two-tail	2.032243	

Key:
Syn A = scores on syntax sub-test from school 1
Syn C = scores on syntax sub-test from school

APPENDIX 14

- **Two sample t-test: Comparison of gender performances on the syntax sub-test**

	Syn-M	*Syn-F*
Mean	15.85714	13.88095
Variance	29.67033	29.57085
Observations	14	42
Pooled Variance	29.5948	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	54	
t Stat	1.177107	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.122158	
t Critical one-tail	1.673566	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.244315	
t Critical two-tail	2.004881	

Key:
Syn-M = Male learners' scores on the syntax sub-test
Syn-F = Female learners' scores on the syntax sub-test

- **Two sample t-test: Comparison of gender performances on the pragmatics sub-test**

	Prags-M	***Prags-F***
Mean	14.42857	13.54762
Variance	10.72527	21.96109
Observations	14	42
Pooled Variance	19.25617	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	54	
t Stat	0.650522	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.259057	
t Critical one-tail	1.673566	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.518113	
t Critical two-tail	2.004881	

Key:
Prags-M = Male learners' scores on the pragmatics sub-test
Prags-F = Female learners' scores on the pragmatics sub-test

- **Two sample t-test: Comparison of gender performances on the semantics sub-test**

	Sem-M	*Sem-F*
Mean	20.14286	19.61905
Variance	30.13187	20.77816
Observations	14	42
Pooled Variance	23.02998	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	54	
t Stat	0.353689	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.362475	
t Critical one-tail	1.673566	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.724949	
t Critical two-tail	2.004881	

Key:
Sem-M = Male learners' scores on the semantics sub-test
Sem-F = Female learners' scores on the semantics sub-test

APPENDIX 15

- **Correlational analyses: between the scores obtained on the syntax sub-test, and *teacher* rating of English language proficiency**

	Syntax	*Teac-Eng.*
Syntax	1	
Teac-Eng	0.213249	1

Key:
Teach-Eng = Teacher rating of English proficiency

- **Correlational analyses: between the scores obtained on the pragmatics sub-test, and *teacher* rating of English language proficiency**

	Prags	*Teac-Eng*
Prags	1	
Teac-Eng	0.402741	1

Key:
Teach-Eng = Teacher rating of English proficiency
Prags = Score on the pragmatic sub-test

- **Correlational analyses: between the scores obtained on the semantics sub-test, and *teacher* rating of English language proficiency**

	Semantic	*Teac-Eng*
Semantic	1	
Teac-Eng	0.131761	1

Key:
Teach-Eng = Teacher rating of English proficiency

APPENDIX 16

- **Correlational analyses: between the scores obtained on the syntax sub-test, and *parent* rating of English language proficiency**

	Syntax	*Par-Engl*
Syntax	1	
Par-Engl	0.24736	1

Key:
Par-Engl = Parent rating of English proficiency

- **Correlational analyses: between the scores obtained on the pragmatics sub-test, and *parent* rating of English language proficiency**

	Prags	*Par-Engl*
Prags	1	
Par-Engl	0.38375	1

Key:
Par-Engl = Parent rating of English proficiency
Prags = Score on the pragmatic sub-test

- **Correlational analyses: between the scores obtained on the semantics sub-test, and *parent* rating of English language proficiency**

	Semantic	*Par-Engl*
Semantic	1	
Par-Engl	0.449532	1

Key:
Par-Engl = Parent rating of English proficiency