

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Determining factors affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School

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DECLARATION

I, Zanele Almina Mntungwa, declare that:

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) This dissertation does not contain other person's data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
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Signed

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DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this work to my son Mlungisi and my family for the sacrifices they made whilst I pursued this dream and milestone. I love you so much.

ACRONYMS

ANA	Annual National Assessment
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
DIBELS	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy Skills
DST	Dynamic Systems Theory
EFA	Education for All
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ELU	Early Literacy Unit
ESL	English Second Language
FAL	First Additional Language
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
HLE	Home Language Environment
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEA	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
IL	Interlanguage
IP	Information Processing
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
L1	Primary language or home language
L2	Second language
LAD	Language Acquisition Device
LB	Literacy Boost
LIEP	Language-in-Education Policy
MILL	Molteno Institute of Language and Literacy
MLE	Multilingual Education
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
PIRLS	Progress in International Literacy Study
PRAESA	Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SCT	Socio cultural Theory
SIL	Summer Institute of Linguistics International
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SMRS	Systematic Method for Reading Success
UG	Universal Grammar
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States
ZAD	Zone of Actual Development
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

ABSTRACT

Learners in South Africa are performing poorly in the area reading and writing English. The South African Department of Education conducted a systemic evaluation of language competence of intermediate phase learners in South Africa and found that a large majority (63%) were below the required competence for their age level. The problem in reading and writing English is also common at Ntuthuko Primary School a public primary school in KwaZulu Natal province. For instance, an observational study and literature at the school indicates that pupils at Ntuthuko Primary School have difficulties in reading and writing English, the First Additional Language. English literacy is one of the key focuses in education. Therefore the purpose of this study is to determine factors that adversely affect English literacy levels at Ntuthuko primary school. The target population for this study were teachers Ntuthuko primary school. Non-probability sampling purposive sampling was used to select a total of 8 teachers. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were used to generate the data needed from participants to understand the research problem under study. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data. The study reveals that factors that adversely affect learners' English literacy include opportunity to learn, aptitude for learning, quality of instructions and family factors. There is need to address factors that adversely affect the English literacy of learners at Ntuthuko Primary School. In addition, there is need to encourage parents to enrol their children in R to help them develop early literacy skills, support parents to develop positive attitudes towards English literacy. Parents should also be encouraged to communicate with learners while teachers should help learners reduce English learning anxiety by showing learners that it is possible to learn to write and speak English proficiently.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The study assessed factors adversely affecting the English literacy of pupils at Ntuthuko Primary School. This chapter presents the introduction, background of the study and the research problem. This is followed by the research questions and the research objectives. Thereafter the aim and significance of the study is presented, together with a brief introduction to the research methodology. The last section of the chapter deals with the definition of terms, the outline of the chapters, and the summary of this chapter.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The future success of children lies in the ability to read and write (Alvarez, 2014). Reading and writing are the most fundamental ways of achieving knowledge and information for social, educational, cultural and professional purposes. English literacy plays a vitally important role in the life of individuals and failing to be literate in English, which is a global language, adversely impacts on one's ability to progress in life. By strengthening English literacy skills at primary school level enables pupils to make a greater progress and attain greater development in most academic areas (Anderson, 2009). Strong English literacy skills are a prerequisite for a success in this modern society. Hence, the goal of the Department of Basic Education in South Africa is to produce pupils who are competent and are able to compete globally which to a large extent is dependent upon having excellent English literacy skills (Department of Basic Education, 2013). Studies show that learners in South Africa are experiencing problems in reading and writing English. The studies indicate that South African learners perform poorly when tested on their reading and writing competencies (Wessels and Mnkeni-Saurombe, 2012). The dismally low levels writing and reading English and quality of competencies shown by South African learners in the foundational skills of literacy; reading and writing will have negative repercussion on learners and the country as a whole. Studies reveal astonishingly low levels of reading and writing English ability across the country (South African Department of Education, 2008:4). A study by Plüddemann (2015:203) found that large numbers of South African children simply do not read and write

English and literacy levels are low. This is tantamount to the failure of the education system to develop capacities in reading and writing English. In response to this problem, the study investigated factors that affect English literacy levels and try to address them and suggest the use of relevant strategies in order to reduce the problem.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Studies show that learners in South Africa are performing poorly in the area reading and writing English (South African Department of Education 2008:5; Wessels and Mnkeni-Saurombe, 2012; Plüddemann, 2015:203). The South African Department of Education (2008:6) conducted a systemic evaluation of language competence of intermediate phase learners in South Africa and found that a large majority (63%) were below the required competence for their age level. The problem in reading and writing English is also common at Ntuthuko Primary School a public primary school in KwaZulu Natal province. For instance, an observational study and literature at the school indicates that pupils at Ntuthuko Primary School have difficulties in reading and writing English, the First Additional Language. English literacy is one of the key focuses in education (Department of Basic Education, 2013). The South African Department of Basic Education introduced Annual National Assessments in 2008 to address the challenges of poor English literacy from Grade 1 to 9, the results achieved by pupils in Ntuthuko Primary School indicate that there is a huge problem as most pupils achieve far below 50%, which is the minimum requirement. Prior research indicates that poor English literacy will have negative effects in the academic performance of the pupils throughout their entire lives and beyond (Brooks, 2013). This study is therefore needed to identify factors that are hampering learners' success in reading and writing English.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do learners' aptitude factors adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School?
- How does the opportunity for English literacy adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School?
- How does the quality of English literacy instructional events adversely affect learners at Ntuthuko Primary School?

- How do family factors that adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To understand how learners' aptitude factors adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School.
- To ascertain how the opportunity for English literacy adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School.
- To determine how the quality of English literacy instructional events adversely affect learners at Ntuthuko Primary School.
- To understand how family factors adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School.

1.6 AIM OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted in order to determine from school governing body members and teachers factors adversely affecting the English literacy of pupils at Ntuthuko Primary School. The reason being that, to progress in life, literacy is vital and a good command of English as an additional language is beneficial to people wishing to work in a modern economy.

1.7 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to identify factors that affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School. In particular, the study addresses factors that hinder English language learners' literacy and strategies that have been put in place to help improve literacy. The study also explores what the school management at Ntuthuko Primary School, teachers, learners and families can do to help improve the English literacy of learners at Ntuthuko Primary School.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is important because it determines the factors that affect pupils' attainment in English literacy and inform school management team on what strategies and policies to put in place to assist teachers to improve pupils' performance in English by applying knowledge management approach in their daily teaching activities. In addition, the study may help parents and teachers to work together on the factors identified to improve pupils' performance. In short, the study may identify factors that affect pupils' attainment in English literacy to ensure that transformational goals facilitate the move beyond policy status to those being achieved at both learner and school levels.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study only focuses on Ntuthuko Primary School in KwaZulu Natal Province. The study does not include the entire management team and employees at Ntuthuko Primary School. However, efforts were made to make the sample as reliable as possible to allow the study to generate findings that are credible.

1.10 BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employs a case study research design and qualitative research methodology. Purposive sampling was used to select participants and data was collected using semi-structured in-depth interviews and document collection. The school learning model is employed inform the study. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse data. Literature deals with factors that influence school learning and the legislation framework. The research office at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) provided ethical clearance while Ntuthuko Primary School provided the gatekeeper's letter.

1.11 DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Factors:** are facts, circumstance, or influence that contributes to an outcome. Factors can be psychological, behavioural, social, technological, and environmental- (Blanch Duran and Flores *et al*, 2012).
- **Learner:** is someone who is learning about a particular subject such as English or learning how to do something such as reading and writing English- (Phantharakphong and Pothitha, 2014:10).
- **English Language:** is a West Germanic language that was first spoken in early medieval England and is now a global lingua franca- (Rasinski, 2012:24).
- **Affect:** is to have an effect on; make a difference to or influence or cause someone or something to change- (Wessels and Mkeni-Saurombe, 2012:12).
- **Fidelity:** the degree to which an intervention or model of instruction is implemented as it was originally designed to be implemented- (Rattleff, 2011: 426).

1.12 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation has five chapters as presented below.

- **Chapter 1: Introduction and background to the study;** this chapter deals with the introduction, background to the study, the research problem, the significance of the study, research questions, research objectives, and aim of the study. This is followed by the definition of terms and limitations of the study, and summary of the chapter.
- **Chapter 2: Literature review;** this chapter presents a summary of the literature on factors that affect pupils' attainment in English literacy. These factors are discussed to contextualise the study.

- **Chapter 3: Research methodology;** the research design, methodology, study site, population, target population, sampling methods, and the sample size are all discussed. In addition, the chapter describes the data collection instruments and analysis techniques. The chapter ends by highlighting ethical measures that guided the study.

- **Chapter 4: Data presentation**

In this chapter, data are presented based on key findings; on the factors that affect pupils' attainment in English literacy. Data presented are aligned to the research objectives underpinning the study.

- **Chapter 5: Analysis and discussion**

This chapter presents and discusses findings in detail together with the theoretical underpinnings of the phenomenon of English school learning. Themes discussed and analysed include opportunity to learn, perseverance, aptitude for learning, ability to understand instruction, quality of instruction, family factors, and others.

- **Chapter 6: Conclusion and recommendations**

The chapter presents conclusions and recommendations based on the key findings.

1.13 SUMMARY TO THE CHAPTER

This chapter presented the introduction and background to the study, the research problem, the significance of the study, research questions, and research objectives. The chapter presented the aim of the study followed by the definition of terms and limitations of the study and summary of the chapter. The following chapter presents the literature review chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW ON SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Literature review is understood as a critical evaluation of what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researchers. This chapter presents literature review on second language acquisition. The first section explores the importance of the primary language in second language acquisition. The second section deals with the importance of second language acquisition, and the importance of English. The chapter is imperative as it contextualises this study on factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School.

2.2 THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The 1996, 2001 and 2011 South African census reflected the following numbers of home language speakers [N = 40 583 573 in 1996; N = 44 819 778 in 2001; and N = 51 770 560 in 2011], according to the 11 official languages (Statistics South Africa 2006:1-5, Statistics South Africa 2003:16; Statistics South Africa 2012:18).

Figure 2.1: Distribution of the South African population by language

SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGES 2011		
Language	Speakers	Percentage
Zulu	11 587 374	22.7%
Xhosa	8 154 258	16.0%
Afrikaans	6 855 082	13.5%
English	4 892 623	9.6%
Northern Sotho	4 618 576	9.1%
Tswana	4 067 248	8.0%
Sotho	3 849 563	7.6%
Tsonga	2 277 148	4.5%
Swati	1 297 046	2.5%
Venda	1 209 388	2.4%
Ndebele	1 090 223	2.1%
Sign language	234 655	0.5%
Other languages	828 258	1.6%
Total	50,961,443	100.0%

Source: Statistics South Africa (2011:12)

The -above statistics unequivocally reveal that the vast majority of South Africans (76.5% in 1996; 77.9% in 2001; and 75% in 2011) have an African language as a home language. English is spoken as a home language by almost 10% of the population. When comparing the distribution of the South African population by language most often spoken at home in the 2011 Census, English is fourth. It is also important to note that the 2011 Census data indicate that the most commonly-spoken home language is undoubtedly isiZulu, which is spoken by 22.7% of the population, followed by isiXhosa (16%), and Afrikaans (13.5%).

When considering the English language in relation to the other ten official languages as indicated in the 2011 Census data, it should be noted that English has no greater status. However, it can be explicitly stated that in practice English is far more widely used. Although English is the primary language of only 8.6% in 1996, 8.2% in 2001, and 9.6% in 2011 of the general South African population, it is the most commonly used second language, making it a lingua franca within the country (Horne & Heinemann 2009:2). Given the fact that currently only 9.6% of the South African population speak English as a primary language, it is surprising that South Africa features sixth when comparing countries with the highest populations of native English speakers [3.7 million] (Crystal 2003:62-65). Additionally, because of its role as a unifying and integrating force in South Africa, it can be viewed as one of the major South African official languages.

Furthermore, as a result of its expanding dominance internationally, learning English can be considered as an essential need to promote the language even further. However, it is worth taking cognisance of a situation in which the ongoing, surreptitious depletion of the indigenous languages may in the long term create a division between those who can speak English and those who cannot. Indigenous languages may become an obstacle. They may no longer function as independent and rich languages of the various communities. Ultimately, this may threaten South Africa's democracy and it may be too late to introduce indigenous languages. Nevertheless, the above discussion provides substantial evidence supporting the view that it is important for learners to learn English. Being able to speak the language is not sufficient to compete globally. It is crucial that learners also develop reading and writing skills in English .

2.3 PERSPECTIVE ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIMARY LANGUAGE IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

The coalescence of the aspects discussed in this section assists the reader in further understanding the link between the languages used in the classroom [L1 and L2], and reading and writing difficulties. This relationship is further extended to bilingualism and multilingualism.

2.3.1 Home language education

It is apparent that language plays a pivotal role in learning. Since language is the main medium of communicating meaning in most learning activities, it is essential that a language that learners understand and speak is used in education. To adequately express their experiences through reading and writing and articulate their knowledge, children require an environment that uses the language they speak (Gacheche 2010:7). Usually people understand their home language best, and are most comfortable speaking it. Generally, the home language is a language one has learned first; one identifies with or is identified as a native speaker of by others; or one knows best (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation 2005).

The home language is regarded as the language that carries educational benefits if used in schools. The value of home language education has been superfluously studied and has been known for numerous years. As early as 1953, a UNESCO committee of experts examining issues regarding language and education established many advantages to home language education. The UNESCO report endorses that it is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his or her home language (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation 1953:11). The report adds that psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his or her mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he or she belongs. Furthermore, educationally, he or she learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium. Moreover, the home language is the most effective engine of a person's culture and indigenous languages are treasures of culture and self-identity (Olaoye 2013:748). Consequently, reading and writing which is context-embedded in the primary language will be less cognitively challenging than reading and writing in an L2.

The United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF] vehemently reiterated UNESCO's support for the use of home language in learning. The UNICEF report states that "there is ample research showing that students are quicker to read and acquire other academic skills when first taught in their mother tongue. They also learn a second language more quickly than those initially taught to read in an unfamiliar language. ... Early mother-tongue instruction is a key strategy to reach the more than 130 million children not in school and help them succeed" (United Nations Children's Fund 1999:41, 45).

Many linguists argue that when it comes to learning a second language it is crucial to first have a solid foundation in one's first language (Taylor & Coetzee 2013:4). Consequently, home language is considered to be an important component of quality education, particularly in the early years. However, most indigenous learners and learners in post-colonial contexts in the world are being taught through the medium of dominant languages in submersion programmes, at least after the first few grades, often from the start (Skutnabb-Kangas 2009:3). It is also apparent that many developing countries are characterised by individual as well as societal multilingualism, yet continue to allow a single foreign language to dominate the education sector (Benson 2005:1).

A growing body of complementary research studies reveals that ESL learners learn more quickly and effectively if they maintain and develop their proficiency in their L1 and justifies the use of the L1 as the most beneficial medium of education. Hakuta's (1990:54) study conducted in 1990 clearly showed that learners with high levels of development in Spanish [L1] also developed high levels of ability in English [L2]. In Dixon's (2010:162) research on English vocabulary in Singaporean kindergartens it was found that children with higher home language vocabulary tended to have higher English vocabulary. This finding opens the question of whether high home language vocabulary aids directly in acquiring English vocabulary, or the practices within families that produce high-vocabulary children encourage the acquisition of vocabulary in both of the child's languages.

Also, several studies on home language instruction in developing countries such as Cameroon, Eritrea, Guatemala and the Philippines conducted by Walter (2013:1-25) elucidates the immeasurable benefits of home language instruction. Walter's research (2013:9) indicates that learners in second language instructional models in developing countries [especially in Africa] require four to five years to learn to read and even after six years, read with low levels of comprehension. In contrast data from Eritrea, Cameroon and the Philippines are consistent in demonstrating that good to average learners read fluently

with good comprehension by the end of Grade 2 and even below average learners are reading well by the end of Grade 3 when being taught to read in their home language. Thus, there is more support for the claim that home language education programmes are capable of producing capable readers in two to three years rather than the five reported for many second language medium programmes.

Furthermore, Walter's study (2013:10-12) on the development of reading skills in home language versus second language programs was conducted in Eritrea and Cameroon. In this case, the performance of Grade 3 children in Eritrea, all of whom were taught reading in their home language, was compared with the reading performance of children in Cameroon being instructed in a second language programme. In the case of Cameroon, the study affirmed that it was not until Grade 4 that a substantial portion of learners began to show progress in learning to read though less than 15 percent could be characterised as good readers and by the end of Grade 5 about 47 percent of children had become fluent readers. By contrast, 85 percent of learners from Eritrea being taught in their home language were in either the early reading or fluent reading categories at the end of Grade 3. In sum, this study conclusively demonstrated that it takes five or six years in a second language instructional model to approximate the reading skills developed in three years [or less] in a home language instructional model.

2.3.2 The South African language situation

In South Africa, there have been studies which do show the correlation between high levels of achievement and home language education, and low levels of achievement and premature use of a second language as medium of instruction. Heugh, Benson, Bogale and Yohannes (2007:24) provide the following example: From 1955 to 1975 when African language speaking learners had eight years of home language education followed by transition to mainly English medium the overall pass rate at the end of secondary school increased to reach 83.7% in 1976, and pass rate in English as a subject reached 78% in 1978. However, the number of years of home language education decreased from eight to four years from 1977, and this was followed by a serious drop in achievement in English as a subject and across the entire curriculum. The pass rate in English as a subject fell to 38,5% by 1984, and by 1992 the average overall pass rate for African learners at the end of Grade 12 dropped to 44% in 1992 (Heugh as cited in Heugh et al. 2007:24). However, the matric results could also have been affected by the large scale disruption of secondary schooling in the 1970s and 1980s.

Additionally, Heugh (2005:7) reinforces that it is almost impossible for learners to learn enough of the L2 in three years to switch to a second language medium of instruction by Grade 4. She reiterates that in countries where there are well-trained educators and sufficient classrooms and schoolbooks, children usually require between six and eight years to learn a second language before they can use it as a medium of instruction. This implies that under optimal conditions they should not switch language medium before Grade 7. Heugh (2005:7) adds that in less well-resourced schools, the research evidence shows that it may be possible to switch medium in Grade 9. Switching medium several years earlier results in educational failure, as countless studies demonstrate .

Moreover, in South Africa, Taylor and Coetzee (2013:6) analysed data from approximately 9000 primary schools that serve predominantly black children who come from the poorest households. These researchers found that among children in schools of a similar quality and coming from similar home backgrounds, those who were taught in their home language during the first three years of primary school performed better in the English tests in Grades 4, 5 and 6 than children who were exposed to English as the language of instruction in Grades 1, 2 and 3-.

2.3.3 Bilingual and multilingual education

In order to reduce the achievement gap of ESL learners, bilingual and multilingual programmes have been advocated. UNESCO has a strong commitment to support home language instruction and bilingual or multilingual education to improve the quality of education, especially for the disadvantaged groups, and to promote cultural and linguistic diversity in all societies (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation 2005). Thus, UNESCO has supported Member States of Asia and the Pacific in undertaking action research on using the home language or bilingual approach in pilot literacy projects for ethnic minority communities in nine Asian countries; namely Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. In most of these countries local languages are used in education, but the extent varies significantly. Of the Asian countries, China provides the most elaborate forms and widest range of local language education models (Kosonen 2005:7). Many local languages are used at various levels of education, in some cases up to the university level.

Multilingual education respects cultural differences and affirms pluralism which learners, their communities and educators bring to the learning process. It is founded on the belief that

a school curriculum which promotes the ideals of freedom, justice, equality and human dignity is most likely to result in high academic achievement and quality education (Nyati-Saleshando 2011:567).

Key clauses in South Africa's constitution illustrate that equal access to education for all children is intended (Republic of South Africa 1996:4[6], 7[9], 14[29], 15[30]). Heugh's (2011:113) subsequent critique of subtractive bilingual models, including ESL programmes in South Africa, demonstrates that these are incompatible with the constitutional goal of equal access to education. Heugh (2011:107-117) clearly demonstrates various components of language education models which spells out different policy planning and possibilities and their implications. According to these models, only a multicultural policy which views multilingualism as a valuable resource, and which implements additive bilingual education for all, will result in equal access to meaningful education and in economic benefits beyond education. This is also echoed by Wolff (2006:36, 54) who perceives multilingualism as an important asset and resource.

Lyons (1995:282) defines perfect bilingualism as the full range of competence in both languages that a native monolingual speaker has in one. However, perfect bilingualism, if it exists at all, is extremely rare, because it is rare for individuals to be in a position to use each language in a full range of situations and thus to acquire the requisite competence. Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2007:342) view bilingual language acquisition as the simultaneous acquisition of two languages beginning in infancy or before the age of three years. On the other hand additive bilingualism refers to bilingualism associated with a well-developed or high-level proficiency in two languages and with positive cognitive outcomes (Heugh 2011:114). The term is applied to a context in which speakers of any language are introduced to a second language in addition to the continued educational use of the primary language as a language of learning. The second language is never intended to replace the primary language in education; rather, it is seen as complementary to the primary language throughout.

Benson (2005:14) asserts that strong models take an additive approach. She mentions two strong forms of bilingual programmes that function only in particular contexts. The first, immersion education, was developed in Canada where the L1 and L2 are both relatively prestigious and where formally educated parents who can assist their children choose for their children to become biliterate. The other, two-way bilingual education, combines native speakers of two different language groups in one classroom so that they learn from each

other. Benson (2005:14) states that neither model is likely to work in most developing countries due to highly asymmetric power relations and the fact that there are few native speakers of the L2. It is also important to note that most research on bilingual education that reflect the benefits of using the home language comes from developed countries in Europe and North America (Kosonen 2005:87) and that most of the bilingual programmes draw on literature from the North. If we consider the Southern African, South American and Asian countries we will be compelled to explore multilingual contexts in which trilingual schooling policies may have to be implemented.

Skutnabb-Kangas (2009:5) emphasises that the most important educational Linguistic Human Right in education for indigenous language children is an unconditional right to primary language medium education, at least during the whole primary education [minimally six but preferably eight years]. Accordingly, as far back as 1995, Young (1995:68) propagated a widespread public educational awareness campaign which stresses the importance and value of additive bilingual education for all South African learners. He believes that such an awareness campaign needs to spell out clearly the role of the L1 in education and the long term advantages of having a solid foundation in its teaching and learning. This form of bilingualism can only develop in social contexts where both languages [and their cultures] are valued and reinforced.

Most researchers agree that additive bilingualism usually has a positive effect on a child's social and cognitive development (Cummins 1996:165-168).

The following study reflects the cognitive benefits of additive bilingualism. Walter's (2013:7-8) research in Cameroon was conducted in a setting where a relatively small population of Fulfuldespeaking people live in the midst of a larger population group speaking a language called Kom. In this kind of setting, a mechanical application of a home language strategy for education would state that the Fulfulde-speaking children should attend a Fulfulde medium school while the Komspeaking children should go to a Kom medium school. However, a home language medium of instruction was not an option in such a setting. In actuality, Fulfulde children are attending both Kom medium schools and English medium schools.

The study revealed that the Fulfulde-speaking children in the Kom medium schools substantially outperformed their Fulfulde-speaking peers in the English medium schools. It was also found that, in the case of English medium scores, more than 70 percent of Grade 1

learners demonstrated zero reading comprehension. According to Walter (2013:8) the most logical explanation for this finding is that the Fulfulde-speaking children are sufficiently bilingual in Kom [and not English] so that they are learning much more in Kom medium schools than are those attending English medium schools. From the data that was gleaned, Walter (2013:8) concluded that home language strategies for education are best suited to settings where there is a high degree of both linguistic homogeneity and monolingualism, and that children can be effectively educated in a second language if and only if they speak that language well when they begin school.

In 1995, Heugh (1995:42-51) viewed the attempts to improve ESL methodologies in South Africa as having superficially-improved results. She believes that subtractive programmes, where the L2 replaces the L1, must be replaced with additive ones. Subtractive bilingualism often occurs when the L1 is not valued and supported by the education system. It is likewise generally agreed that subtractive bilingualism has a negative effect on a child's social and cognitive development and is believed to be culturally alienating and harmful to the child, effectively cutting off the child's traditional and cultural roots and destroying the child's sense of identity.

Subtractive education completely through the medium of a dominant language and early-exit transition can and often do have harmful consequences socially, psychologically, economically, and politically (Skutnabb-Kangas 2009:5). Subtractive and early-exit transitional programmes are strongly viewed by Skutnabb-Kangas (2009:5) as models that belong to weak models or no models of bilingual education. Likewise, Benson (2005:13) claims that weak models take a subtractive approach to the primary language, undervaluing the home language and culture and prioritising the second language.

As early as 1995, Heugh (1995:51) argued that if we in South Africa continue to implement subtractive bilingual programmes in education for any group of learners, then inequality is a foregone conclusion. She emphasises that since subtractive bilingualism in transition-to-English programmes is linked to linguistic racism (linguistic racism) and discrimination against speakers other than English, one of the guiding principles in the constitution is violated by such programmes. Heugh also stresses that removing the L1 from the educational process, represents a drive towards monolingualism, not multilingualism, hence another constitutional provision; namely the provision of multilingualism will be violated. Furthermore, Skutnabb-Kangas (2009:5) highlights the fact various forms of subtractive education are in clear

violation of a range of human rights standards and amount to ongoing violations of fundamental rights.

Reiterating Heugh's (1995) affirmation, Plüddemann (2005:203) argues that the deficit approach [subtractive bilingual approach] to learners' home languages has for years had devastating consequences for the educational performance of African-language speakers. The outcome of the deficit approach is related to the failure of the educational system to cater for African language speakers and its failure to develop a reading and writing capacity. Studies that reflect the poor reading performance of South African learners, which were discussed in Chapter 1 confirms the negative effects of the subtractive bilingual approach.

Heugh (2011:113) reinforces that the objective of a subtractive model is to move the learners from the home language and into the second language as a medium of learning as early as possible. Sometimes this involves a straight-for-second language as the medium of instruction from the first year at school. Heugh (2011:113) adds that the subtractive model is sometimes referred to as the submersion model which literally means that the child is submerged in the second language which leads to a "survival of the fittest" or "sink or swim" scenario. Heugh, Siegrühn and Plüddemann (1995:viii) maintain that subtractive bilingualism is applied to a context in which speakers of usually low-status languages are expected to become proficient in an L2 which is usually a dominant language of high status, such as English. During the process of acquiring the L2, the L1 is either abruptly or gradually replaced as a language of learning in the school. This type of bilingualism is often associated with negative cognitive-outcomes.

In the past, English and Afrikaans-speaking learners in South Africa have been exposed to a limited form of additive bilingual education and African-language speakers have been exposed to a subtractive form of bilingual education. This type of education system greatly disadvantaged and marginalised African-language speakers, denying them the right to quality education. This meant that the South African education system failed to cater for the educational needs of majority of the learners. As a result poor Literacy results were and still are prevalent in many parts of the country. The poor performances of learners in Literacy are exacerbated by the relatively small number of books and environmental print available in the African languages, in relation to English. Although "the Ithuba books, local supplementary reading materials written by South African classroom educators, were created to engage children with high-quality stories representative of the 11 official languages and the South African experience" (Sailors, Makalela & Hoffman 2010:11), it is not sufficient to cater for

the thousands of indigenous language learners. Nevertheless, it is an initiative signifying support for home language instruction.

The absence of a “culture of reading” is thus most apparent in under-resourced disadvantaged areas. Moreover, Gacheche (2010:11) points out that there have been reservations about the lexical capacity of indigenous languages to express the realities of modern science and technology and thus to be effective in classroom instruction. Clearly, the challenges facing the national and provincial education departments to upgrade literacy levels are enormous, but not insurmountable. Therefore, it is imperative that the Department of Education as well as the school management, when implementing language policies, consider the language barriers that exist in schools. It is also crucial for the Department to take heed of the fact that instituting an effective home language-based education system is expensive, but the cost of not having one is greater. Gacheche (2010:34) reports that some of these costs are: dropouts, repetition, keeping children out of school thus breeding ignorance, low self-esteem for learners and linguistic communities, and political and ethnic tension. Although each school is unique and languages will vary, ultimately schools will consist of a diversity of learners speaking a variety of languages. Thus, it would be important for schools to select the most appropriate language programmes for their learners; as Benson (2005:16) affirms that the selection of appropriate bilingual models is the key to educational quality.

As early as 1995, De Klerk (1995:61) recommended a full additive bilingual programme, for children who speak African languages; since it is likely to improve academic performance dramatically. Although bilingualism and multilingualism have enormous positive gains it is extremely important to note that before a local language can be viewed as worth being literate in, it must first have a written and standardised form; as Blommaert (as cited in Gacheche 2010:31) stresses that written language is valued more than spoken and standard language more than dialects. One of the greatest challenges may lie in the fact that local languages are not developed well enough to work effectively in all domains of society.

Thomas and Colliers’ (1997:53-57) examination of six bilingual programmes in a longitudinal study of 42 317 learners in the USA demonstrated that learners who built a strong and long-lasting foundation in their home language while also learning, and learning in, the majority language [English], achieved higher test results than those who moved quickly to the majority language. However, there appears to be a dearth of research studies regarding the above six bilingual programmes that were examined by Thomas and Collier, in South Africa. Research in schools indicates that the advantages of bilingualism seem to take

effect in an additive bilingual environment; where the L2 is added to the L1, which is maintained (Cummins 1996:165-168). Benson (2005:12) contends that in effective bilingual programmes learners become bilingual, or communicatively competent, in the L2 as well as the L1, and biliterate, or able to read, write and learn in both languages. Since these skills take some time to develop, what is noticeable in the early years is the ease at which children learn beginning literacy and content through their L1. After three to four years the effects of biliteracy are more measurable (Benson 2005:12).

Skutnabb-Kangas's (2009:6) comparison of four types of programmes based on research studies reveals the following: children who follow the completely dominant-language medium submersion education from Grade 1; and early-exit transitional programmes, with home language medium education for the first one to two years, followed by using a dominant language as the teaching language are never likely to learn their own language properly [they do not learn to read and write it]. Early-exit programmes are very weak, but even some time spent in the L1 is preferable to submersion because there are so many affective benefits associated with validation of the primary language and culture, and educator-learner interaction is automatically facilitated to some degree by L1 use (Benson 2005:14). Children who are in the late-exit transitional programmes where the transition from the home language medium programme to a dominant language medium programme is more gradual but is mostly completed by Grade 5 or 6 fare somewhat better, but even their results are much below what they could be. However, children who are in programmes where the home language is the main medium of education at least for the first eight years, perform better across the curriculum than those with four or six years of home language medium. The above findings will most definitely assist policy makers in selecting the most appropriate language policies for their schools. Unfortunately, policy decisions about which language to teach in schools are rarely made based on the needs of the majority but rather favour the dominant class (Gacheche 2010:8).

Even when children have a year or two of home language education [early-exit transitional models] before being transitioned to education through the medium of the dominant language, the results are disastrous educationally, even if the child may psychologically feel a bit better initially (Skutnabb-Kangas 2009:4). Ideally the L2 should be introduced in a gradual and systematic manner. Skutnabb-Kangas (2009:4) reiterates that dominant language medium submersion education for indigenous children prevents access to education, because of the linguistic, pedagogical and psychological barriers it creates. It may lead to the extinction of indigenous languages, thus contributing to the disappearance of the world's

linguistic diversity. Contrarily, L1 classrooms allow children to express themselves, contribute to discussions and develop their intellects as conversations are carried out in a familiar language; thus decreasing failure and repetition rates (Gacheche 2010:7). L1 classrooms also contribute to the validation of learners' cultures and keep them grounded in their identity while enabling them to integrate with the wider society .

The above discussion has provided credence for the use of additive bilingual and multilingual models. This conviction is supported by an impressive number of research studies which have documented a moderately strong correlation between bilingual learners' L1 and L2 literacy skills in situations where learners have the opportunity to develop literacy skills in both languages.

2.3.4 Cognitive processes in language development

Many research studies have documented that cognitive processes work less efficiently through the additional language. Comprehension tasks take about twice as long in the L2 as in the L1, and production tasks (tasks that require the learner to produce creative language through speech or writing) take about three times as long. People are much worse at mental arithmetic in their L2 than in their L1. In general, the mind is less efficient in an L2 in whatever it is doing. This is sometimes referred to as "cognitive deficit" (Horne & Heinemann 2009:14). In addition, a child taught in the L1 will learn to read in the L2 faster than a child who has to learn the oral language of the L2 and then try to read in the L2 without any reading skills to transfer from the L1 (Rodriguez & Higgins 2005:241). Since oral language skills develop faster than cognitive and academic skills, it appears that bilingual children will benefit from the use of their L1 during their education .

Walter and Morren (in Walter 2013:18-19) analysed data from Guatemala in an effort to determine whether home language medium education increased the likelihood that children would continue schooling beyond the primary level. One thousand two hundred and two Mayan secondary school learners were asked whether they received their primary education in an L2 or in a Mayan language [home language]. Almost 50 percent of the Mayan learners surveyed indicated that they had graduated from a bilingual school, even though only about 33 percent of all Mayan children attend such schools. These data provide strong statistical evidence that in such contexts, receiving L1 [bilingual] schooling increases the likelihood of going on to secondary schooling. In this case, attending a bilingual school increased the likelihood of proceeding to a higher level of education by 48 percent .

Luckett's (1995:75) earlier report on South African research on the Threshold Project (1990) reflects that many black learners suffer ill effects of subtractive bilingualism owing to the sudden changeover from L1 to L2 medium of instruction. The Project found that learners could not explain in English what they already know in their L1; nor could they transfer into their L1 the new knowledge they have learnt through English. The results of the research indicated that learners had failed to achieve cognitive academic proficiency in either language.

In the same vein, Walter's (2013:1-25) research evidence consistently contradicts the claim that heavy reliance upon the home language for instructional purposes in the early grades will compromise ability to learn and use the second language. It appears that gains in mastery of basic educational skills coming from L1 instruction more than compensate for reduced exposure to the L2 in a classroom context.

From the above discussion it can be deduced that learners who begin schooling in a language they do not speak at home experience failure and often drop out before attaining even minimal literacy (Dixon 2010:141) and that much educational research illuminates the importance of a child receiving, at least the foundation phase of education through the medium of his or her L1. Thus, a policy of national bilingualism would try to avoid the pitfalls of subtractive bilingualism by ensuring that all learners have the opportunity to operate at cognitively demanding levels in their L1. It also means that learners should not be compelled to operate in the L2 (that is, use it as a medium of instruction) before they have achieved academic proficiency using their L1 as a medium of instruction. Only when learners have achieved academic proficiency in their L1 should they begin to operate in an L2 at cognitively-demanding levels.

Heeding these principles, Horne and Heinemann (2009:13) state that presently the South African education policy follows the additive bilingual model. Unfortunately, the low literacy levels in South Africa continue to persist. Thus, it makes one wonder whether schools are implementing the additive bilingual model or whether ESL learners are continuing to learn, even though they have not achieved academic proficiency in their L1 and from as early as Grade R, through the medium of English. Within the context of this study, it should be kept in mind that although isiZulu is taught in some urban schools in KZN, it is not taught as an L1 or used as a medium of instruction. As a result isiZulu-speaking learners who have not achieved academic proficiency in isiZulu will experience barriers to learning; more especially reading and writing difficulties.

2.4 SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Prior to discussing second language acquisition it is incumbent to provide a succinct explication of first language acquisition. Language acquisition is one of the most fundamental human traits. A child acquires any natural languages within a few years without the aid of analytical thinking and without explicit grammar instruction as usually taught in school (Sakai 2005:815). Sakai (2005:815) thus ascribes the origin of grammatical rules to an innate system in the human brain. Children are not given explicit information about the rules, by either instruction or correction. They must somehow extract the rules of the grammar from the language they hear around them, and their linguistic environment does not need to be special in any way for them to do this (Fromkin et al. 2007:319). Saville-Troike (2012:12) endorses the aforementioned provenance by stating that humans are born with a natural ability or innate capacity to learn language.

However, not all L1 acquisition can be attributed to innate ability, for language specific learning also plays a crucial role (Saville-Troike 2012:15). All “normal” children acquire the language that they hear spoken around them without special instruction. They start talking at roughly the same age and they go through the same stages of language development. Their progress is, on the whole, unaffected by differences of intelligence and by differences in social and cultural background (Lyons 1995:253). The ability to acquire language could not be dependent upon intellectual powers alone, since children with clearly superior intelligence do not necessarily begin to speak earlier, or with better results, than children of ordinary intellect (Saville-Troike 2012:15). Thus, the acquisition of L1 is not simply a facet of general intelligence. Observations of children acquiring different languages under different cultural and social circumstances reveal that the developmental stages are similar, possibly universal (Fromkin et al. 2007:319). These factors led many linguists to believe that children are equipped with an innate template or blueprint for language; which is referred to as Universal Grammar [UG] (Fromkin et al. 2007:319).

Linguists regard speaking, signing, and language comprehension as primary faculties of language, that is innate or inherent and biologically determined, whereas they regard reading and writing as secondary abilities (Sakai 2005:815). The L1 is acquired during the first years of life through such primary faculties while children are rapidly expanding their linguistic knowledge. Children master the basic phonological and grammatical operations in their L1 by the age of about five or six, regardless of what the language is (Saville-Troike 2012:13).

In contrast, reading and writing are learned with much conscious effort and repetition, usually at school.

Contrarily, it is conceivable that the acquisition of a second language whether it is learned systematically at school or not, proceeds in quite a different manner. Therefore an understanding of second language acquisition can improve the ability of mainstream educators to assist and support the culturally and linguistically diverse learners' reading and writing skills in their classrooms. The term second language acquisition [SLA] generally refers to the acquisition of a second language by someone who has already acquired a first (Fromkin et al. 2007:342). A basic knowledge of SLA theories is extremely valuable for mainstream educators because it provides insights into why language learners respond to instruction in certain ways. Also, they directly influence educators' ability to provide appropriate reading and writing instruction to learners. In view of the above exposition some of the central theories of SLA will be discussed .

2.4.1 Universal Grammar and second language acquisition

There are rules of particular languages, -such as English and isiZulu, that form part of the individual grammars of these languages, and then there are rules that apply to all languages. Those rules representing the universal properties of all languages constitute a Universal Grammar [UG] (Fromkin et al. 2007:17). Chomsky and Halle (1968:43) affirm that UG is a system of conditions that characterise any human language; a theory of essential properties of human language. Universal Grammar is a theory of the human faculty of knowledge (Chomsky 1997:2) and its concern is with the internal structure of the human mind (Cook & Newson 1996:1-2). The linguist, Chomsky (1977:2), who is a leading proponent of UG, views human languages as being genetically determined and species-specific. He proposed the theory that all people have an innate, biological ability to acquire language (Escamilla & Grassi 2000:1) and UG is part of that innate biologically endowed language faculty (White 1998:1).

Chomsky and his followers have claimed since the 1950s that the nature of linguistic competence in the L1 can be accounted for only by innate knowledge that the human species is genetically endowed with (Saville-Troike 2012:49). This accounts for how children are able to acquire their L1 despite a mismatch between the linguistic input and the complex unconscious mental representation of language that children achieve (White 2012:309). Chomsky theorised that people possess a Language Acquisition Device (LAD), a sort of neurological wiring that, regardless of the language to be acquired, allows a child to listen to

a language, decipher the rules of that language, and begin creating with the language at a very young age (Escamilla & Grassi 2000:1). With the LAD they are able to make or understand utterances that they have not previously heard. Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2007:17) support Chomsky's assertion that there is a UG that is part of the human biologically endowed language faculty. These researchers consider UG as a system of rules and principles that characterise all grammars.

The UG model bases its general claims on the principles and parameters of grammar. Universal Grammar theory holds that the speaker knows a set of principles that apply to all languages, and parameters that vary within clearly defined limits from one language to another (Cook & Newson 1996:2). This implies that UG includes universal principles and parameters which allow for constrained variation across languages (White 2012:309). Cook (2008:215) explains the principles and parameters grammar as follows: What we have in our mind is a mental grammar of a language consisting of universal principles of language, such as the locality principle which shows why a sentence such as "Is Sam is the cat that black" is impossible in all languages, and of parameters on which languages vary, such as the pro-drop parameter that explains why "Shuo" [speaks] is a possible sentence in Chinese, but "speaks" is not possible in English.

When parameters grammar is extended to isiZulu and English one would notice that the pronouns "he" and "she" have definite references to male and female, respectively but in isiZulu the word "yena" refers to both male and female. Also, the isiZulu word "umshana" refers to both niece and nephew. Thus, principles account for all the things that languages have in common; and parameters account for their differences. The UG model claims that these principles and parameters are built into the human mind. Children do not need to learn the locality principle because their minds automatically impose it on any language they encounter, whether it is English, isiZulu or isiXhosa. However, it is the parameter settings that have to be learnt. All the learner requires in order to set the values for parameters are a few samples of the language, for example English sentences must have subjects. Acquiring language implies learning how these principles apply to a particular language and which value is appropriate for each parameter (Cook & Newson 1996:2).

Although UG is based on L1 acquisition, some researchers have extended the UG theory to SLA. Chomsky did not study how people acquire an L2 (Malone 2012:2) but he suggested that, if provided with the correct input, the LAD predisposes all people to the acquisition of a second language in basically the same manner (Escamilla & Grassi 2000:1).

Saville-Troike (2012:52) mentions three important aspects in SLA from a UG perspective. They are the initial state, the nature of interlanguage [IL] and the final state. In the initial state some L1 knowledge is clearly transferred to L2, although exactly which features may transfer and to what degree appears to be dependent on the relationship of the L1 and L2 [perhaps involving markedness of features], the circumstances of L2 learning, and other factors. Markedness refers to language features that differ from the universals (Peker 2014:3). When the L1 and L2 parameter settings for the same principle are the same, positive transfer from the L1 to the L2 is likely. When L1 and L2 parameter settings are different, negative transfer or interference might occur. Saville-Troike (2012:53) maintains that L2 learners may still have access to UG in the initial state of SLA as well as knowledge of L1. Four possibilities have been suggested: Learners retain *full access* to UG as an innate guide to language acquisition, even when they are learning languages subsequent to their L1; learners retain *partial access* to UG, keeping some of its components but not others; learners retain *indirect access* to UG through knowledge that is already realised in their L1 but have no remaining direct access; and learners retain *no access* to UG and must learn the L2 through entirely different means than they did the L1.

If L2 learners attain knowledge that goes beyond the input, this suggests that UG must play a role, providing constraints on interlanguages (White 2012:309). If at least some access to UG is retained by L2 learners, then the process of IL development is in large, part of resetting parameters on the basis of input in the new language. Learners change the parameter setting [usually unconsciously] because the L2 input they receive does not match the L1 setting they have. At the same time, L2 learners can draw on properties of their L1 grammar. If access to UG is still available, then that will limit their choices [as it does in the L1] and their IL grammars will never deviate from structures that are allowed by UG. If learning principles that are part of the language faculty are also still available, then sufficient information to make these changes is available from the positive evidence they receive, that is the input that is provided from experiencing the L2 in natural use or formal instruction. Negative evidence, including explicit correction, is often also provided to L2 learners [especially if they receive from language instruction], and this probably plays a role in parameter resetting for older learners.

For basic L1 acquisition, all children achieve a native final state (Saville-Troike 2012:54). However, for SLA there is great variability which is found in the ultimate level of attainment by L2 learners. The following possibilities within the UG framework should be considered:

all learners may not have the same degree of access to UG; some learners may receive qualitatively different L2 input from others; and some learners may be more perceptive than others of mismatches between L2 input and existing L1 parameter settings .

Although some researchers have extended UG to the L2, Peker (2014:4) believes that the theory may not be applicable to the L2 teaching environment. This is because UG is based on L1 theory and learners may require different types of exercises or activities in class depending on their L1, since they have different marked features. The UG theory claims that if a learner can transfer language universals from L1 to L2, he or she can be successful. However, in view of the fact that English and isiZulu are so dissimilar and markedness is an enormous feature, it can be presumed that isiZulu-speaking learners will experience difficulties in speaking and writing. In this respect, I would agree with the behaviourist view that being a successful learner depends on how similar or different the L1 is to the L2.

2.4.2 The theory of second language acquisition

A concept endorsed by most language acquisition theorists is Stephen Krashen's theory of second language acquisition. Krashen who is an expert in the field of linguistics, specialising in theories of language acquisition and development, created a theory of SLA which is widely known and has had a large impact on all areas of second language research and teaching since the 1980's. Krashen's theory explicitly and essentially adopts the notion of an LAD, which is a metaphor Chomsky used for children's innate knowledge of language (Saville-Troike 2012:47; Escamilla & Grassi 2000:2; Malone 2012:2). An understanding of this theory is crucial to understanding the field of SLA theory and research as a whole. Krashen's theory of SLA consists of five main hypotheses (Krashen 2009:9-32). They are the acquisition-learning distinction, the natural order hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis.

2.4.2.1 The acquisition learning distinction

The acquisition-learning distinction is the most fundamental of all the hypotheses in Krashen's theory. According to Krashen (2009:10) there are two ways of developing a second language: the "acquired system" and the "learned system". The acquired system or acquisition is the product of a subconscious process very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language (Schütz 2007:2). For this system to develop, a

child requires significant interaction and contact with the L2. This interaction with the new language allows the learner to concentrate on the act of communication rather than the appropriate use of grammar (Rodriguez & Higgins 2005:237). According to this theory, the optimal way a language is learned is through natural communication. This implies that isiZulu-speaking learners will have to require numerous opportunities to informally, spontaneously and naturally interact with English-speaking learners in order to develop the acquired system.

The learned system or learning is the product of formal instruction and it comprises a conscious process which results in conscious knowledge about the L2, for example knowledge of grammar rules (Krashen 2009:10). According to Krashen learning is less important than acquisition. Therefore it is important for a learner to develop the acquired system before he or she develops the learned system. However, in most classrooms learning is emphasised more than acquisition (Abukhattala 2013:128). In the traditional classrooms learners are given practice in providing correct answers either structurally or functionally, but always remaining conscious of what they want to say. In more conservative classes they are evaluated on their grammatical and lexical knowledge .

2.4.2.2 The natural order hypothesis

The natural order hypothesis states that acquisition of grammatical structures proceeds in a predictable order (Krashen 2009:11). For a given language, some grammatical structures tend to be acquired early, others late, regardless of the first language of the speaker. However, this does not imply that grammar should be taught in this natural order of acquisition .

2.4.2.3 The monitor hypothesis

The monitor hypothesis explains the relationship between acquisition and learning. The language that we have subconsciously acquired initiates our utterances in a second language and is responsible for our fluency, whereas the language that we have consciously learned acts as an editor in situations where the learner has sufficient time to edit, is focused on form, and knows the rule, such as in a grammar test or when carefully writing a composition (Krashen 2009:1516). The conscious editor is referred to as the monitor. The monitor acts in a planning, editing and correcting function when three specific conditions are met: that is, the second language learner has sufficient time at his or her disposal, he or she focuses on form or thinks about correctness, and he or she knows the rule- (Schütz 2007:3; Hong

2008:65). The role of the monitor is viewed as being minor, being used only to correct deviations from “normal” speech and to give speech a more “polished” appearance.

Krashen (2009:18) suggests that there is individual variation among language learners with regard to monitor use. He distinguishes those learners who always use the monitor and end up so concerned with correctness that they cannot speak with any real fluency [over-users]; those learners who have not consciously learned or who prefer not to use their conscious knowledge [under-users]; and those learners who use the monitor when it is appropriate and when it does not interfere with communication [optimal users].

Educators should aim to produce optimal monitor users. Optimal monitor users do not use their conscious knowledge of grammar in normal conversation, but will use it in writing and planned speech. These learners can therefore use their learned competence as a supplement to their acquired competence. Schütz (2007:3) posits that an evaluation of a person’s psychological profile can help to determine to what group they belong. Usually extroverts are under-users, while introverts and perfectionists are over-users. Lack of self-confidence is frequently related to the over-use of the monitor .

2.4.2.4 The input hypothesis

The input hypothesis is Krashen’s attempt to explain how the learner acquires a second language (Schütz 2007:3); which is the most significant of his five hypotheses (Abukhattala 2013:130) and of fundamental importance in my review of literature. The input hypothesis is only concerned with acquisition, and not learning. According to this hypothesis, the learner improves and progresses along the “natural order” when he or she receives an L2 “input” that is one step beyond his or her current stage of linguistic competence (“i + 1”). “i” represents the current competence of the learner or the learner’s current level of English proficiency and “1” represents the next level (Krashen 2009:20-21) or the more advanced input the educator will provide the child so that he or she may progress beyond the present stage (Escamilla & Grassi 2000:3). Thus, comprehensible input is “i + 1” (Mitchell & Myles 2004:47). For example, if a learner has mastered the present tense, information can be provided in the past tense. The corollary to this is that input should neither be so far beyond the learner’s reach that he or she is overwhelmed, nor so close to his or her current stage that he or she is not challenged at all (Brown 2007:295).

Comprehensible input is an essential aspect of Krashen’s Input hypothesis. Krashen proposes that children require only comprehensible input to activate the LAD and begin

acquisition of an L2 (Escamilla & Grassi 2000:20). This hypothesis maintains that in order to acquire an L2, the learner must understand what is said to him or her. Learners should receive input that is appropriate to their age and language level. This language should be just beyond the learners' current proficiency but easy enough for them to understand. Sufficient comprehensible input is a necessary condition for acquisition of a second language (Cummins 1996:87).

Krashen posits that without comprehensible input, the L2 learner is left with a group of words that are perceived as incomprehensible noise and cannot be processed in the LAD (Escamilla & Grassi 2000:3). Educators need to develop background knowledge, deliver content that is contextualised, and utilise gestures and pictures to make input comprehensible. When ESL learners are assigned to mainstream classrooms and spend most of the day in this environment it is especially critical for them to receive comprehensible input from their teachers and classmates. The notion of comprehensible input, elaborated by Krashen (2009:20-21), is described by Cummins (1996:88) as the central causal variable that determines the extent to which the SLA process is more or less successful. Research has shown that the quality and not quantity of English exposure is a major factor in English acquisition; that is the L2 must be comprehensible (Crawford 1998:2).

From the input phase to the production phase there is a period when learners do not produce any original statements. This is referred to as the "silent period"; a phenomenon most noticeable in child SLA (Krashen 2009:26). Learners require the silent period to internalise the information appropriately. One of the challenges that educators encounter is that the length of the silent period varies from learner to learner. Some learners may have very short periods and begin producing immediately after something has been presented in class. Others seem to take much longer and never volunteer to speak freely in class.

Research has revealed that children acquiring an L2 in a natural, informal linguistic environment may say very little for several months following their first exposure to the L2 (Krashen 2009:26). Children's L2 consists of memorised language; whole sentences learned as if they were one word. Krashen (2009:27) views the silent period as an epoch in which the child is building up competence in the L2 through listening and understanding the language around him or her. In accordance with the input hypothesis, speaking ability emerges on its own after sufficient competence has been developed by listening and understanding.

Learners in formal language classes are usually not allowed a silent period. They are often asked to produce, not only orally but also in writing, very early in an L2, before they have acquired adequate syntactic competence to express their ideas. At present it is very challenging for educators to cope with learners who exhibit long silent periods, especially when terms are short, the syllabus has to be completed and final evaluation is required. In future, it is suggested that the evaluation systems should be modified to give long-silent-period acquirers the opportunity to codify all the new input presented in the class .

2.4.2.5 The affective filter hypothesis

The affective filter hypothesis embodies Krashen's view that a number of "affective variables" play a facilitative role in SLA. These variables include motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety (Krashen 2009:31). It is postulated that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in SLA (Krashen 2009:31; Thomson 2000:139; Schütz 2007:4). This implies that these learners are susceptible to developing better reading and writing skills. Conversely, low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety can combine to raise the affective filter and form a "mental block" that affects the learner's ability to read fluently, to write freely, and prevents comprehensible input from being used for language acquisition. Krashen (2009:32) reinforces that those whose attitudes are not optimal for SLA will not only tend to seek less input, but they will also have a strong or high affective filter. Even if these learners understand the message, the input will not reach the part of the brain responsible for language acquisition, or the language acquisition device. Those whose attitudes are more conducive to SLA will not only seek and obtain more input; they will also have a lower or weaker filter.

The affective filter hypothesis claims that the effect of affect is "outside" the LAD (Krashen 2009 31-32). It still maintains that input is the primary causative variable in SLA and affective variables act to impede or facilitate the delivery of input to the LAD. The affective filter hypothesis implies that our pedagogical goals should not only include supplying comprehensible input, but also creating a situation that encourages a low filter. Thus, the effective language teacher is someone who can provide comprehensible input in a low anxiety situation.

2.4.2.6 Criticisms against Krashen's theory

Krashen's theory has frequently been criticised because there are problems in what researchers call operationalisation of the constructs [for example, there is no independent way

of confirming which knowledge source – acquired or learned – a learner is using as the basis of use and what constitutes comprehensible input], specifically that they are vaguely defined, making empirical testing difficult (Van Patten & Williams 2007:32), the claimed distinction between acquisition and learning is vague and imprecise, and several of its claims are impossible to verify (Peregoy 2009:55; Saville-Troike 2012:47).

Perhaps the most crucial difficulty in Krashen's input hypothesis is found in his explicit claim that comprehensible input is the only causative variable in SLA (Brown 2007:297; Peregoy 2009:55). In other words, success in an L2 must be attributed to input alone. Pedagogy based on direct instruction generally contains little comprehensible input (Van Patten & Williams 2007:31). Such instruction can only contribute to learned knowledge, which is of limited use. In fact, it can obstruct acquisition by limiting learner access to comprehensible input. Also, the importance of output, that is, speaking and writing, cannot be ignored in a balanced view of language acquisition (Peregoy 2009:55). Although it may sometimes be difficult for educators to establish whether something is being "acquired" or "learned", comprehensible input is crucial to both processes.

Brown (2007:297) argues that the notion that speech will emerge in a context of comprehensible input appears to be promising for some learners who are bright, highly motivated and outgoing; speech will indeed emerge. However, we are left with no significant information from Krashen's theory on what to do about the other language learners for whom speech does not emerge and for whom the silent period might last forever.

Escamilla and Grassi (2000:11) provocatively emphasise that while Krashen's Monitor Theory offers numerous linguistic explanations for the acquisition of an L2, it fails to completely address the social and psychological aspects of learning a second language. These additional factors are important in L2 learning. Too often educators are confronted with linguistically capable learners whose feelings of alienation, fear or frustration towards the target culture prevent them from acquiring high proficiency in the L2.

Although Krashen's theory has not gone unchallenged (Thomson 2000:139) and was considered one of the most controversial theoretical perspectives in SLA (Brown 2007:294; Altenaichinger 2003:8), it is viewed as the most ambitious and influential theory in the field of SLA (Van Patten & Williams 2008:25). Peregoy (2009:55) posits that Krashen's theory has been influential in promoting language teaching practices that focus on communication,

not grammatical form; that allow learners a silent period rather than forcing immediate speech production; and creating a low anxiety environment.

Although the UG theory highlights the fact that errors should be corrected, Krashen's theory emphasises that error correction should be minimal because it causes a high affective filter (Peker 2014:4-6). Krashen's theory is particularly prominent among practitioners and has made an insightful and useful contribution to the ESL classroom. It has also laid the foundation for important ideas in contemporary theorising within SLA. Understanding Krashen's theory can assist educators develop appropriate instructional teaching strategies and assessments that guide learners along a continuum of language development, from cognitively undemanding, context embedding curricula, to cognitively demanding, context-reduced curricula.

We can assume that an English medium classroom which establishes a safe, non-threatening atmosphere and which draws on relevant, meaningful and authentic language context and use, will promote second language acquisition more effectively than one that is not characterised by these features. This will certainly include the development of reading and writing skills.

2.4.3 Cummins's theory of second language acquisition

An ESL learner may appear to be able to handle the demands of functioning in an English-only classroom because he or she is competent in a variety of school settings such as talking to a friend in the corridor, playing on the playground, or speaking with the teacher one on one. It might seem natural to assume that a child learning English as a second language becomes fully fluent quickly. But researchers have found that, although ESL learners can develop peer appropriate conversational skills in about two years, developing academic proficiency in English can take considerably longer.

One of the prominent researchers who played an instrumental role in second language acquisition and bilingual research is Jim Cummins. More than 30 years ago, he proposed a framework that has become a widely accepted explanation of how children who appear to get by quite well in conversational English, nonetheless struggle when they need to use it for academic purposes (Cummins in Aukerman 2007:626). Hence, Cummins' theory of second language acquisition consists of two major dimensions: Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency.

2.4.3.1 Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills are the communicative capacity that all individuals acquire in order to be able to function in daily interpersonal exchanges (Brown 2007:219). According to Cummins (2008:71) BICS refer to conversational fluency in a second language. Conversational fluency is the ability to carry on a conversation in familiar face-to-face situations (Cummins 1996:65). Brown (2007:33) describes conversational language as unedited speech, full of “choppy” and often incomplete sentences. Thus, conversational abilities often develop relatively quickly among ESL learners because these forms of communication are embedded in the learner’s familiar everyday life worlds (Gee as cited in Cummins 1996:68). In conversations, instantaneous clarification or feedback is possible. If one of the interlocutors perceives that the other person does not comprehend the conversation, more efforts to explain or clarify will be used to allow the conversation to continue. Also, the vocabulary used in daily conversation is somewhat limited in scope, it is devoid of technical terms, and syntax is simpler than that used in academic language. Cummins (1996:65) reinforces that this is the kind of proficiency that the vast majority of native speakers of English have developed when they enter school at age five. It involves the informal language of conversation, often referred to as the “language of the playground” in that most children learn BICS through informal interaction with their peers (Rodriguez & Higgins 2005:237).

This beginning communicative level is typically context embedded and cognitively undemanding (Williams 2001:751). It involves use of high frequency words and simple grammatical constructions and communication of meaning is typically supported by cues such as facial expressions, gestures and intonation (Cummins 1996:65). These extra-linguistic features provide ESL learners with cues that can assist in comprehending the conversation and, as a result make relatively few cognitive demands on the learner. Examples of this level include simple greetings, information requests, descriptions, and expressions of feelings (Williams 2001:751). It is the language a person requires to function in society or to socialise with family and friends (Escamilla & Grassi 2000:4).

Cummins (1996:65) maintains that ESL learners generally develop fluency in conversational aspects of English within a year or two of exposure to the language either at school or in the environment. Williams (2001:751) asserts that it usually takes an ESL learner two to three years to develop proficiency in communicative language and Brown (2007:33) affirms that it generally takes ESL learners two to three years to be on grade level for conversational

English. Escamilla and Grassi (2000:4) contend that it usually takes a learner two to five years to acquire a high proficiency in BICS.

2.4.3.2 Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

According to Cummins (2008:71) Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) -refers to the learner's ability to understand and express, in both oral and written modes, concepts and ideas that are relevant to success in school. It refers to the language skills that are associated with literacy [being able to read and write] and cognitive development (Rodriguez & Higgins 2005:237). Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency is that dimension of proficiency in which the learner manipulates or reflects upon the surface features of language outside of the immediate interpersonal context- (Brown 2007:219). The notion of CALP is specific to the social context of schooling, hence the term "academic".

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency is academic language, or the language of texts (Avalos, Plasencia, Chavez & Rascón 2007:320), -which fundamentally differs from conversational language. The term CALP is used interchangeably with academic language proficiency. Academic language proficiency refers to the ability not only to use language for reading and writing but also to acquire information in content areas (Drucker 2003:23). It includes knowledge of the less frequent vocabulary of English as well as the ability to interpret and produce increasingly complex written and oral language (Cummins 1996:65). As learners progress through the grades, they encounter far more low frequency words, complex syntax, and abstract expressions that are virtually never heard in everyday conversation. Learners are required to understand linguistically and conceptually demanding texts in the content areas [for example, Science and Mathematics] and to use this language in an accurate and coherent manner in their own writing.

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency -develops through social interaction from birth but becomes differentiated from BICS after the early stages of schooling to reflect primarily the language that children acquire in school and which they need to use effectively if they are to progress successfully through the grades (Cummins 2008:72). Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency relies heavily on decontextualised language. In decontextualised language there is no shared social context that one can rely upon in figuring out what something means, or what one should say (Aukerman 2007:627). Thus, Aukerman

(2007:627) and Williams (2001:751) perceive CALP as the decontextualised or context-reduced, cognitively demanding language used in school.

Mastery of the academic functions of language is a formidable task. Learners are required to step outside the familiarity of their everyday life-world and carry out tasks that are only minimally supported by familiar contextual or interpersonal cues (Cummins 1996:68). These tasks also typically require high levels of cognitive involvement for successful completion. As learners progress through the grades, they are increasingly required to manipulate language in cognitively-demanding and context-reduced situations that differ significantly from everyday conversational interactions. This level of language development includes such skills as comparing, classifying, inferring, problem solving, and evaluating. Success in school depends on proficiency of this level. Moreover, Escamilla and Grassi (2000:5) maintain that if the educator uses comprehensible input in the lessons while simultaneously developing CALP vocabulary, the majority of the learners will meet the cognitive challenges presented by the educator.

Several large-scale studies have reported that, on average, at least five to seven years is required for ESL learners to attain grade norms on academic aspects of English proficiency (see 2.3). Although there is a conceptual difference between BICS and CALP, they are developmental in nature, in that CALP is developed after BICS. Typically, proficiency in BICS is an indicator of a learner's ability to process the language of CALP (Rodriguez & Higgens 2005:237). Thus, a child who has already acquired BICS can proceed to learn CALP skills, but a child who does not have BICS is unprepared to obtain the cognitive skills necessary for CALP acquisition. Hence, to assume that learners who demonstrate a beginning level of language proficiency understand the more difficult academic language of content lessons is problematic. To summarise, BICS is the foundation from which CALP develops.

Although Cummins's influential BICS/CALP framework is considered as one of the major contributions to SLA, several criticisms have been levelled. Aukerman (2007:626-629) explains why she is no longer convinced that the BICS/CALP framework helps us understand ESL learners as well as we need to. Given how it is interpreted, she believes that it may do a disservice to children by categorising them as unready to learn. Aukerman (2007:629) provides the following example which explains her criticism of the BICS/CALP distinction. In kindergarten, a child who spends time in buses and subway trains might find discussing means of transport easy (BICS), but another child without such experiences would find the

same discussion quite cognitively challenging (CALP), yet the second child might know far more than the first child about animals, hospitals, or fairy tales. Thus, it would be iniquitous to say that one learner has more CALP than another. Similarly, it would be unfair to say that an ESL learner has less CALP than a learner whose primary language is English; especially if the ESL learner is proficient in the L1 and not the L2.

Context is always in some crucial sense about what is familiar to the child; and having a context for understanding depends precisely on what is considered to be BICS. Thus, Aukerman (2007:632) believes that it is ultimately destructive to view proficiency in decontextualised language as a prerequisite for successful participation in school. Language must be in context, to be meaningful at all. Cummins himself has recognised that good teaching is context-embedded, not decontextualised. But because CALP-oriented instruction seeks to move learners gradually away from context-embedded linguistic activities towards ever more decontextualised language use (Cummins 1996:66-72), context is principally viewed as a temporary steppingstone on the way to serious academic learning (Aukerman 2007:633). Also, context is considered primarily from the educator's point of view, as if it was transparent and meant just one thing to everybody, rather than being something that is figured out from multiple angles by different children (Aukerman 2007:633).

Although Cummins (2008:77) mentions that the BICS/CALP distinction has been critiqued by numerous scholars who view it as oversimplified, reflective of an "autonomous" rather than an "ideological" notion of literacy, an artifact of "test-wiseness", and a "deficit theory" that attributes bilingual learners' academic difficulties to their "low CALP", he (Cummins 2008:7779) has responded to these criticisms by providing substantial evidence and perceptions on the relevance and validity of the BICS/CALP framework. Furthermore, Cummins (2008:79) stresses that the BICS/CALP distinction was not proposed as an overall theory of language proficiency but as a very specific conceptual distinction that has important implications for policy and practice. It has drawn attention to specific ways in which educators' assumptions about the nature of language proficiency and the development of L2 proficiency have prejudiced the academic development of bilingual learners. However, this distinction is likely to remain controversial, reflecting the fact that there is no consensus regarding the nature of language proficiency and its relationship to academic development.

2.4.4 Chaos Theory, Complexity Theory and Dynamic Systems Theory within second language research

Saville-Troike (2012:86) mentions that what she chose to call Complexity Theory, is closely related to what others in SLA refer to as Dynamic Systems Theory (Van Geert 2007), Complex Systems Theory and Chaos Theory. It is important to note that in many publications the labels Chaos, Complexity, Complex Adaptive Systems, Nonlinear Systems, and Dynamic Systems are often used almost interchangeably to refer to a class of theories (De Bot 2008:167). What they have in common is a focus on the development of complex systems over time. Although I provide a brief elucidation of these theories, for the purpose of my research the term Dynamic Systems Theory [DST] will be used. It is interesting to note how similar the three theories are.

Thus, the strong similarities have permitted researchers to use these labels interchangeably. De Bot (2008:167) contends that chaos is unpredictability rather than lack of order. He cites Lorenz who showed that, in complex systems, small differences in initial conditions can lead to larger and unpredictable differences over time. As a result of sensitivity to initial conditions, the behaviour of systems that exhibit chaos appears to be random, even though the system is deterministic in the sense that it is well defined and contains no random parameters (De Bot 2008:167). The two main lines within Chaos Theory are that chaos can emerge out of the interaction of variables and differences in initial conditions, and that there is universal order in seemingly chaotic patterns (De Bot 2008:167).

Complexity Theory looks at “what happens at the edge of chaos” (Lewin in De Bot 2008:167). Research on chaos has shown that complex systems develop more or less predictably for some time and then more or less suddenly begin to show chaotic behaviour (De Bot 2008:167). A basic concept of Complexity Theory as it applies to SLA is that all languages, and varieties of language, are complex systems with interconnected components and stages of learner language (Saville-Troike 2012:86). Saying that a complex system has interconnected components implies that levels of language like phonology, vocabulary, and discourse are interdependent in their development. In the process of development, the different components become more orderly, more structured or organised, over time (Saville-Troike 2012:86).

A major assumption underlying a great deal of L1 acquisition research has been that the acquisition of language has a clear beginning and end state, and a somewhat linear path of development for each individual (De Bot, Lowie & Verspoor 2007:7). Similarly, in much SLA research, an L2 learner no matter what his or her L1, is predicted to go through highly similar stages in acquiring the L2 (Ionin 2007:27; De Bot et al. 2007:7). Such a view of language learning is often associated with an Information Processing (IP) model. While it is certainly true that linguistic research over the last decades has substantially contributed to our understanding of the universal and specific properties of languages, the alleged uniformity and predictability of language development is challenged by the evidence of variation in different types of language acquisition and diachronic language change (Plaza-Pust 2008:250-251). The data reveal that language development in its multiple forms is characterised by a succession of stable and unstable states, which does not fit into the linear models of change conceived of within the generative paradigm.

There have been a preponderance of linguistic and language acquisition studies that have not adhered to the linear view. They have shown that language, language acquisition, and language attrition are much more intricate, complex, and even unpredictable than a linear position will allow. For example, Larsen Freeman (2007:35) asserted that the SLA process was more complex, gradual, nonlinear, dynamic, social, and variable than had been recognised; and Lantolf and Thorne (2007:219) affirm that variability in the development of any given learner and across learners is a characteristic of L2 acquisition.

Verspoor, Lowie and Dijk's (2008:229) case study on variability in L2 development revealed that, even for an advanced learner, the system can be far from stable. These researchers report that although a general increase over time is apparent, the development is nonlinear, showing moments of progress and regress. Additionally, De Bot (2008:171) cites Larsen-Freeman who emphasises that learning is not simple linear growth on the basis of input; there are backslides, stagnations, and jumps, and like the unpredictability of avalanches, it is not clear which instances of input or instruction lead to which instances of learning.

Also, Verheyden (2011) (as cited in Verspoor 2012:533) argues that variation between learners is the norm. When she tested three different multilevel growth models against the writing development of 30 L2 learners, she found that a dynamic model in which no growth curve was imposed at all worked significantly better than two models that did impose such a growth curve on the data. This implies that these young L2 writers each follow their own changeable developmental path, as one would expect from a DST perspective.

Linguistic theories such as cognitive linguistics and functional linguistics, acquisition theories such as the competition model recognise that there are independent variables, not only within the language system, but also within the social environment and the psychological make-up of an individual (De Bot et al. 2007:7). What these theories have in common is that they recognise the crucial role of interaction of a multitude of variables at different levels: in communication, in constructing meaning, in learning a language and among languages in the multilingual mind.

Dynamic Systems Theory developed as a branch of mathematics (Van Geert 2007:47). Dynamic systems are systems that change over time (De Bot 2008:167) and are characterised by what is called complete interconnectedness (De Bot et al. 2007:8). This implies that all factors or variables involved in language development are interrelated, interact with each other over time, and therefore changes in one variable will have an impact on all other variables that are part of the system. For example, although bilinguals clearly are able to separate their languages in use, cross-linguistic effects, such as interference, mean that the languages must be connected at some level (Opitz 2012:702).

Dynamic systems are nested in the sense that every system is always part of another system. Systems tend to settle in what are referred to as “attractors” (De Bot 2008:167). An attractor state is a relatively stable state of a system, and the error is relatively stable in that it remains fixed for a long time [or forever] (Van Geert 2007:47). An attractor state is insensitive to small perturbations. Van Geert (2007:47) provides the following example: If an L2 speaker is made aware of the error in reading or writing, it is likely that he or she is capable of correcting it once, but then spontaneously falls back on the error state.

An attractor state can be reached from many different starting points. The typical error of the L2-speaker may also result from different acquisition trajectories in different speakers. Finally, an attractor state may change if the system is dramatically altered or enriched or if a significant perturbation is applied. Thus, a typical error may disappear if the speaker receives extensive training or moves to a different linguistic environment in which the exposure to the L2 by L1speakers is considerably greater. An attractor emerges spontaneously, or self-organises as a result of the interplay or interconnectedness of all the variables or “forces” that constitute the dynamic system at issue (Van Geert 2007:47). The attractor state can be associated with fossilisation. Brown (2007:270) defines fossilisation as the relatively permanent incorporation of incorrect linguistic forms into a person’s L2 competence. In this regard, some errors become permanent and are resistant to change if not corrected.

Since the development of some dynamic systems appears to be highly dependent on the initial state, minor differences at the beginning may have dramatic consequences in the long run. This is referred to as the “butterfly effect” (De Bot et al. 2007:15). The following research evidence points towards the occurrence of the butterfly effects in SLA. It has been shown that L1 literacy is a crucial condition for the successful acquisition of an L2 (Cárdenas-Hagan, Carlson & Pollard-Durodola 2007:255), and that phonological awareness and word recognition skills in L1 affect recognition in L2 (Durgunoglu, Nagy & Hacin-Bhatt in De Bot et al. 2007:15). It has been argued repeatedly that a problem in one particular area of language learning affects other areas (De Bot et al. 2007:15). Consequently, the effect of phonemic coding difficulties may not be limited to reading and writing skills, but is likely to proliferate to the development of oral language. From the above evidence it can be tentatively inferred that very subtle problems in early childhood, like a middle-ear infection, may have a long lasting effect at all levels of SLA. Although this assumption is speculative, there is a growing body of evidence pointing to the casual relationship between problems in L1 acquisition and the acquisition of an L2 which is a strong indication that difficulties in SLA are at least partly due to the initial conditions butterflying their way through the process of SLA (De Bot et al. 2007:15)

The “butterfly effect” can be aptly linked to Cummins’s developmental interdependence hypothesis. The inference here is that if an isiZulu-speaking learner experiences difficulty in reading and writing in isiZulu then that learner will most certainly experience difficulty in reading and writing in English. Thus, the difficulties experienced in reading and writing in isiZulu are seen to be butterflying their way throughout the process of reading and writing in English. Additionally, if a learner experiences reading difficulties he or she will unquestionably experience writing difficulties; because the development of reading skills is a prerequisite for the progress of writing skills.

Van Geert (2007:47) asserts that the major idea behind the cognitive and language growth model discussed in his article is that cognitive growth occurs under the constraint of limited resources, with either mutual support or competition for resources among the cognitive growers that constitute a person’s cognitive and language system. Chief among De Bot et al.’s. (2007:11-12) article are the concepts: “limited resources”, and “connected growers”. The notion that resources, such as attention span and memory capacity are limited is critical in explaining certain aspects of SLA. The fact that resources are limited helps to explain why learners allocate different amounts of attention to different subsystems or dimensions of language (LarsenFreeman 2007:36). As these DST researchers, De Bot et al. (2007:12) note

that although sometimes the resources compete; at other times, it is possible for them to cooperate. There can also be compensatory relations between different types of resources. For example, effort can compensate for lack of time, or motivation can compensate for limited output from the environment. The relationship that exists and its changing nature is a key concept in explaining the dynamism, stability, and variation to account for different patterns in learner language (Larsen-Freeman 2007:36).

Not all subsystems require equal amounts of resources. Some “connected growers” support each other’s growth. The following example of the relationship between lexical development and the development of listening comprehension is mentioned in De Bot et al. (2007:12): with increasing listening comprehension, words are understood and interpreted more easily, stimulating development of lexical skills. Knowing more words makes the understanding of spoken language in turn easier. In this way the two connected growers need fewer resources than two growers that are unconnected .

The IP model is often associated with a UG approach to language by assuming that creativity in language use cannot be accounted for without some innate mechanisms particular to language learning. Thus, a DST approach to communication is incompatible with an IP model. From a DST perspective, language acquisition emerges through interaction with other human beings within a social context .

UG-based approaches typically do not take social factors into consideration, focusing instead on linguistic and age-related factors and it is possible that the DST approach should pay more attention to social and cognitive factors (Ionin 2007:28). Thus, it appears that UG-based and DST approaches focus on very different aspects of SLA. However, Plaza-Pust (2008:250-269) argues for a link between a DST approach and UG. She uses the metaphor of the turbulent mirror to describe the order and chaos that characterises systems. As Plaza-Pust (2008:250) indicates, “linguists have not been very keen on entering turbulent mirror worlds and their unpredictable landscapes”. She argues for a mediation function of UG between stability and change with universal principles or constraints as stabilising factors and functional categories as potential agents in change. This leads to a more open perspective on UG as a part of the language system that is not completely encapsulated but interacts with other aspects of language and the social environment in which it is used (De Bot 2008:176).

Ionin’s (2007:28) critique of the DST model and UG-based approaches is based on De Bot et al.’s (2007) article. She argues that it does not seem very fair to criticise existing, developed

theories for not incorporating all possible factors, when no alternative theory is presented that does incorporate these factors. Given the lack of a concrete model of SLA, it may be a good idea to limit the potential scope of the DST model. She contends that instead of treating the DST framework as an alternative to UG-based approaches, it may be more productive to view L2 approaches as dealing with very different phenomena. Additionally, Weideman (in Verspoor 2012:534) warned that as time passes DST will reveal its own blind spots, and should be treated with the equivalent critical circumspection as the linguistic paradigms it will soon replace. He reiterates that it will take experimenting, meta-analyses and results [with their associated degrees of variation and variability], before DST finds a stable theoretical framework.

However, Van Geert (2007:47) supports the views of De Bot et al. (2007:7-21). He emphasises that these authors view DST as a promise for the future, an overarching theory in SLA that takes into account the interconnectedness that is so characteristic of complex, developing systems, including the cognitive and social factors that help shape the process of SLA. Van Geert (2007:47) considers DST as a quintessential future approach to human action, cognition and behaviour, including language; Larsen-Freeman (in Verspoor 2012:534) argues that DST offers a new set of concepts; Opitz (2012:701) reinforces that a helpful perspective for holistically capturing language acquisition and attrition in bilinguals may be found in dynamic approaches to language development; and De Bot et al. (2007:7) claim that because DST takes into account both cognitive and social aspects of language development, it can provide a coherent approach to various issues in SLA.

2.4.5 Socio cultural Theory and second language acquisition

Over the past decade or so, there has been a notable increase in SLA research that is informed by a Socio cultural Theory of the mind [thereafter, Socio cultural Theory {SCT}] (Swain & Deters 2007:820; Lantolf 2007:31). For example, the seminal article of Firth and Wagner (2007) argued for a re-conceptualisation of SLA research; incorporating a balance between the cognitive and the social. They argued that SLA research was too dominated by psycho-linguistic thinking and called for research that made sense in the socially embedded experiences of L2 speakers in their own worlds.

Also, researchers such as De Bot, Lowie and Verspoor (2007) and Van Geert (2007) interested in DST, and its variants [emergentism, and chaos and complexity theory] of which Larsen-Freeman (2007) was a major contributor have shown an interest in the implications of their theoretical stance for SLA. This theoretical perspective has its origins in the writings of

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the Russian psycholinguist Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1896-1934), who argued that it was essential to incorporate the study of human culture and history into the effort to understand the development of the human mind .

Since the 1980s, the foremost figure advocating the relevance of Sociocultural Theory to SLA has been James Lantolf (Mitchell & Myles 2004:193). Lantolf (2007:31) is of the opinion that SCT makes an even stronger claim than DST with regard to the role of social processes in cognitive and linguistic development. In Lantolf's (2000:31) view, Vygotsky's argument is that specifically human mental activity emerges as a result of the internalisation of social relationships, culturally organised activity, and symbolic artifacts, in a particular language.

The theory of development from a Vygotskian perspective proposes an interaction between the child's social world and his or her cognitive development (Seng 1997:4). Great emphasis is placed on the culture in which the child develops, and in particular, on the effect of the constructive role of peer interactions in relations. Interaction is viewed as a means of providing comprehensible input to the learner and also as fundamental to an individual's cognitive and affective growth (Clark & Clark 2008:104).

The central claim of SCT is that individuals are fundamentally socially organised entities and that therefore the very source of human development resides in the environment (Lantolf 2007:32). Supporting Vygotsky's influential views, Firth and Wagner (2007:768) state that language is not only a cognitive phenomenon, the product of the individual's brain, it is also fundamentally a social phenomenon, acquired and used interactively, in a variety of contexts for myriad practical purposes.

The higher voluntary forms of human behaviour have their roots in social interaction, in the individual's participation in social behaviours that are mediated by speech (Rieber & Carton 1987:21). Thus, Lantolf (2000:1) emphasises that the most fundamental concept of SCT is that the human mind is "mediated". SCT takes into account the complex interaction between the individual acting with mediational means and the socio-cultural context (Swain & Deters 2007:821). Following Vygotsky's writings, Van Compernelle and Williams (2013:279) distinguish between two broad categories of mediation. Firstly, 'psychological tools', the culturally constructed artifacts that are integrated into human mental functioning. Secondly, "human mediation", that supports an individual's internalisation of psychological tools.

Lantolf and Thorne (2007:205) express the view that language is the most powerful cultural artifact that humans possess to mediate their connection to the world, to each other, and to themselves. Cook (2008:230) posits that language learning is a social mediation between the learner and someone else during which socially acquired knowledge becomes internal. Language is viewed as a socially constructed intellectual tool, a “mediation” used in action; and participation in social activities is importantly mediated by the use of language (Toohey 2000:12). This implies that, according to SCT, the development of the individual always passes through [that is, is mediated by] others, whether they are immediately present as in the case of parents guiding their children or educators guiding learners, or displaced in time or space, as when we read texts produced by others, or participate in activities such as work, organised in specific ways by a culture (Lantolf 2007:32). Clark and Clark (2008:104) elucidate this view. They maintain that SLA is facilitated by interaction between the learner and a more proficient English speaker. Through interaction with more able English speakers, L2 learners have access to models of language structure and are provided with opportunities to practise what they are learning, therefore moving forward in SLA. Likewise, Toohey (2000:12) affirms that from a Vygotskian perspective, an L2 could be seen as one among many mediating means people use to participate in social activities.

Besides mediation by symbolic artefacts, Lantolf and Thorne (2007:203) maintain that another form of mediation is regulation. These researchers distinguish between three stages of regulation. In the first stage, children are often controlled by the use of objects in their environment to think. This stage is referred to as object-regulation. The second stage, termed other-regulation, includes implicit and explicit mediation by parents, siblings, peers, and educators. This involves varying levels of assistance and is sometimes referred to as scaffolding. Self-regulation, the final stage, refers to the ability to accomplish activities with minimal or no external support. Self-regulation is made possible through internalisation – the process of making what was once external assistance a resource that is internally available to the individual. To be a proficient user of a language is to be self-regulated. However, self-regulation is not a stable condition. Even the most proficient communicators, including L1 speakers, may have to reassess earlier stages of development when confronted with challenging communicative situations.

A significant facet of Vygotsky’s theory is the Zone of Proximal Development [ZPD]. The ZPD is defined as “the difference between a child’s actual development level as determined by independent problem solving” and “potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Adamson

2005:146; Gifford & Mullaney 1997:9; Lantolf & Thorne 2007:210; Seng 1997:6; De Bot, Lowie & Verspoor 2005:59; Lantolf & Appel 1998:10; Mitchell & Myles 2004:196). Hence, the ZPD characterises the difference between what the learner is capable of himself and what he can become capable of with the assistance of an educator (Rieber & Wollock 1997:29).

Gifford and Mullaney (1997:10) describe the two main characteristics of ZPD. First, the task that the learner undertakes must be a little above that individual's current level of ability; it should stretch his or her capabilities, but not be completely beyond him or her. In this respect, Krashen's comprehensible input theory aligns with Vygotsky's ZPD. In Krashen's terms, the task must be at the $i + 1$ level. Second, there must be an adult or a more skilled peer to mediate between the learner and the task or problem at hand.

Contrarily to the above, Lantolf and Thorne (2007:213) highlight the two general misconceptions about the ZPD. The first is that the ZPD is the same thing as scaffolding or assisted performance, and the second is that it is similar to Krashen's notion of $i + 1$. Scaffolding refers to any type of adult-child or expert-novice assisted performance, where the goal is to complete the task rather than to help the child develop, and therefore the task is usually carried out through other-regulation (Lantolf & Thorne 2007:213).

Scaffolding, unlike ZPD, is thought of in terms of the amount of assistance provided by the expert to the novice rather than in terms of the quality. With regard to the misconceptions about the ZPD and Krashen's $i + 1$, the fundamental problem is that the ZPD focuses on the nature of the concrete dialogic relationship between expert and novice and its goal of moving the novice towards greater self-regulation through the new language, while Krashen's concept focuses on language and the language acquisition device, which is assumed to be the same for all learners with very little room for differential development.

Saville-Troike (2012:119), and Lantolf and Appel (1998:10) assert that the ZPD is an area of potential development, where the learner can achieve that potential only with assistance. Thus, in view of the above Lantolf (2007:32) contends that it is in the ZPD that individuals are able to perform at high levels of ability than they can alone. According to SCT, mental functions that are beyond an individual's current level must be performed in collaboration with other people before they can be achieved independently.

Gifford and Mullaney (1997:10) emphasise the interesting aspect of ZPD. They propagate the idea that what individuals can do today with the collaboration of an adult or more capable

peer; they can do competently on their own tomorrow. Thus, the potential developmental level of the learner becomes the next actual developmental level as a result of the learner's interactions with others and the concomitant expanding of cognitive abilities. Therefore, it is important that learners work together in pairs and groups. Clark and Clark (2008:3-4) also acknowledge this view when they argue that input from the educator is not the only factor that creates the opportunity for SLA; peer-peer interaction also facilitates effective learning. Lantolf and Thorne (2007:211) mention that one of Vygotsky's most important findings is that learning collaboratively with others, particularly in instructional settings, precedes and shapes development.

An essential teaching skill that is involved in Vygotsky's theory is "scaffolding". Watts-Traflet and Truscott (2000:261) describe "scaffolding" as thoughtful ways of assisting learners in experiencing successful task completion. "Scaffolding" is an instructional process by which the educator adjusts or modifies the amount and type of support offered to the child that is best suited to his or her level of development (Seng 1997:11). The concept implies that educators intervene more at tougher parts, so that task difficulty is always within the ability range of the learner. Language within scaffolding performs the function of a tool that assists in mediating the minds of those involved in the task (Luria in Mantero 2003:255). The implication is that the educator has to be familiar with the learner's ZPD in order for supportive scaffolding to occur. A distinction is drawn between the ZPD and the Zone of Actual Development [ZAD] (Lantolf & Appel 1998:10; Mantero 2003:255). Whereas the ZPD determines the success of what a person can do with some assistance; the ZAD includes the tasks that an individual can successfully perform without assistance.

Scaffolding in reading and writing is paramount in that it is regarded as an integral part of reading and writing instruction. If we know that all readers and writers require scaffolding at some point, it seems obvious that ESL learners would need even more of it. According to Brown and Broemmel (2011:35) there are two basic premises to the way we conceptualise deep scaffolding. Firstly, the core of deep scaffolding is to regard ESL learners as "glass half-full", not "half-empty" by recognising ESL learners' potential as readers [and writers] based on the fact that they are competent speakers of their L1. ESL learners are often perceived as learners who are deficient of language and skills. Thus, looking at the "glass half-full" is to acknowledge ESL learners' personal backgrounds and prior knowledge as strengths not as weaknesses because they have age-appropriate life experiences in their L1. ESL learners' linguistic and cultural knowledge in their L1 should be taken as a steppingstone to build success. Secondly, deep scaffolding benefits both L1 and L2 learners.

It is important to note that L1 learners who read and write below grade level will also require more scaffolding than their proficient peers and even those learners who are reading and writing on or above grade level can gain from highly interactive discussions that arise from deep scaffolding. Consequently, Brown and Broemmel (2011:35) stress that educators must not only provide more scaffolding, but more meaningful scaffolding.

Brown and Broemmel (2011:35) explain how deep scaffolding can be linked to Krashen's comprehensible input. If texts are written at $i + 1$, they will be easily comprehensible to ESL learners. However, most texts are written up to two grade levels above the grade for which they are intended. Thus, in practice, ESL learners who read well below grade level encounter texts written far beyond their i level, even as much as $i + 10$ or $i + 20$. By applying Krashen's comprehensible input to scaffolding, the goal becomes raising the comprehensibility of a text. Therefore, deep scaffolding specifically focuses on reducing the difficulty of texts through multiple scaffolding efforts. Hence, educators can no longer afford to think that ESL learners can learn to read and write once they master English. Educators now have a responsibility to be informed that many of the instructional practices that assist ESL learners understand can also support L1 learners, and that all learners can benefit from the active instruction that is a critical part of deep scaffolding.

Overall, SCT claims that language is learned through socially mediated activities. The socio cultural framework supports the view that some learners may be more successful than others because of their levels of access to or participation in a learning community, or because of the amount of mediation they receive from experts or peers, and because of how well they make use of that help (Saville-Troike 2012:123).

A decade after Firth and Wagner (1997) called for a better balance between the cognitive and the social in SLA research, substantial progress has been made in developing models of L2 acquisition that document the impact of social context on the cognitive processes presumed to underlie SLA (Tarone 2007:845). One such model is the sociolinguistic approach.

In her article, "Sociolinguistic approaches to second language acquisition", Tarone (2007:848) presented empirical evidence to demonstrate the relationship between social context and L2 use. This evidence provides support for the view that L2 use is not just about cognition in a vacuum. Rather, the learner's L2 input and processing of the L2 input in social settings are socially mediated; and social and linguistic contexts affect L2 acquisition, use, choice, and development.

SCT provides a crucial perspective on SLA. The emphasis is on the culture in which the child develops. Since language and culture are related, culture plays a major role in language development. Hence, educators need to acquire knowledge on the learners' cultures in order to provide appropriate reading and writing instruction to L2 learners. This study assists in appropriate mediation and scaffolding, which provides opportunities for learners to reach the ZAD and which leads to self-regulation.

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter presented literature review on what has been published on the topic under study. The chapter deals with literature review on second language acquisition, the importance of the primary language in second language acquisition and second language acquisition, and the importance of English. The chapter helps to contextualise this study on factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School. The following chapter presents the research methodology underpinning the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Research methodology is a systematic process or specific procedures or techniques used to conduct research. There are three types of research methods; quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Quantitative research methodology is used to collect data that is reduced into statistics through an active control of all aspects such as variables in the actions and representation of the respondents. The focus of quantitative research is on quantities of the phenomenon. Qualitative research methodology is used to generate an in-depth understanding of the reasons, motivations, and opinions for the existing research problem. Mixed methods research is research that combines elements of qualitative and quantitative methods by generating in-depth understanding of a research problem supported by statistics. This study used qualitative research methodology discussed below to investigate into the factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School in KwaZulu-Natal. The chapter starts by presenting the methodology followed by the research design, study site, target population and techniques used to select participants. The data collection instruments, data quality control measures, and ethical issue for consideration are also highlighted. The chapter ends with a summary of the chapter.

3.2 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative research methodology designed to generate data on the quality of the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research methodology is effective at digging deeper into the research problem. Scholars such as Denzin and Lincoln (2013) argue that qualitative research methodology is effective in generating data on people's attitudes, views, opinions, desires, feelings, behaviour, and other issues related to the research problem. Therefore, qualitative research methodology was selected for this study because the method is effective in conducting an in-depth investigation into the phenomenon under study. Qualitative research methodology was appropriate for this study because the rationale of the study is to ascertain the views, feelings, attitudes, and opinions of the participants on the factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School. Qualitative

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research methodology was also chosen because of its capacity to interpret the meaning of the research problem through data informed by people's perceptions and experiences of life, in this situation in relation to people's perceptions and experiences of the factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School. The method was also chosen because of its effectiveness in exploring meanings participants make of the research problem and its ability to investigate into a phenomenon in a natural setting allowing the generation of reliable data on the factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School. In other words, qualitative research methodology was chosen because the method allows researchers to collect up-close data by talking to participants and assesses how participants react to the situation under study. Creswell and Plano (2011) said that in natural settings participants tend to be truthful in their responses. This also influenced the selection of the qualitative research method so as to generate credible findings. Qualitative research methodology was chosen for the study because scholars (Grbich, 2013 and Hesse-Biber, 2012) argue that qualitative methodology builds a complex way of reasoning about a research problem. Therefore, the method was chosen to help the study build patterns, themes, and categories of abstract units of information on the research problem in order to have a systematic understanding of the research problem. Qualitative research methodology was chosen because of its emergent design. This means that qualitative research methodology provides a flexible research process that is not limited by rigid prescribed phases and processes but changeable in the course of research as need arises (Hill, 2012). This methodology was deemed appropriate because of the complex nature of the phenomenon of the factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School". In short, qualitative research methodology allowed the researcher to navigate an appropriate research approach that the research problem under study may require to be understood.

3.2.1 Attributes of qualitative research

Qualitative research adopts a person-centred and holistic perspective. It develops an understanding of people's opinions about their lives and the lives of others. It also helps the researcher to generate an in-depth account that presents a lively picture of the research respondents' reality (Holloway & Wheeler 1996:8). In qualitative research, the researcher is required to be a good listener, non-judgmental, friendly, honest and flexible. The researcher works from the point of understanding the research respondents without imposing pre-existing expectations (Mouton & Marais 1992:204). Qualitative research is a form of content analysis covering a spectrum of approaches ranging from empirical phenomenological

psychology to hermeneutical-phenomenological psychology, depending on the data source (Holloway and Wheeler 1996:2-3; Van der Wal 1999:55). Qualitative research includes ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory and historical research. A number of features are common to all approaches but the origins of the approaches are different. Ethnography, for example, originates from anthropology, which is concerned with the study of culture. Phenomenology has its base in philosophy and is concerned with the 'lived experience' as perceived by the informant, while grounded research has been developed from the discipline of sociology. Historical research offers an understanding of past events (Rosalind 2007:232).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

There are different types of research designs that include explanatory research design that explains the research problem, the descriptive research design that describes the research problem, experimental research design used to establish a relationship between the cause and effect of a situation and others. This study used a case study research design that holds that an effective way of studying a phenomenon is to focus on a particular issue or entity or organisation (Jaccard and Becker, 2010). A case study research design was chosen to allow this study to focus on one research problem of the factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School. Ivankova (2015) said that a case study research design allows researchers to dig deeper into the phenomenon under study to gain in-depth understanding of the research problem. Therefore, a case study was selected to allow the researcher to delve deeper into the research problem of the factors adversely affecting English literacy levels to have a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Merriam (2009) argues that a case study allows researchers to employ different methods of studying the same research problem. This quality was found desirable because it allowed the issue of factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School to be studied using different methods. This enabled the study to generate comprehensive, rich, and multi-faceted data to understand the research problem better than when using one research method.

In short, a case study was deemed appropriate blueprint for this study because of its ability to allow researchers to focus on one specific research problem and School. As a result, a study was able to elicit rich data to understand the research problem in this case, factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School.

3.4 STUDY SITE

A study is defined as place where a study is conducted in or from. The study was conducted at Ntuthuko Primary School, a public state primary school located at St Pius Catholic Church, Empangeni, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa.

3.5 TARGET POPULATION

Maxwell (2012) defines a target population as a specific population that a researcher is interested in conducting the study with. Pascale (2011) explains that a target population is a given population from which a sample is selected to provide data needed for the study. The target population were fifteen teachers (Department of Basic Education Annual Report, 2017).

3.6 SAMPLING STRATEGIES

Creswell (2014) argues that there are different types of sampling methods; probability and non-probability. Probability sampling methods include simple random sampling, cluster sampling, stratified sampling, systematic random sampling, and multistage sampling that generate a representative sample of the population. Non-probability sampling methods include among others convenience sampling, quota sampling, self-selection sampling, purposive sampling and snowball sampling that employ are dependent on the judgment of the researcher to select participants. Sampling is defined as a process a researcher employs to select people or units to participate in the study. Seidman (2013) understands sampling as the selection of a small part or portion of units or population to represent the entire population. It is from the small portion of the population from which data is collected. This study used non-probability sampling method because the study is qualitative in nature and this was appropriate as there is no statistical requirement to have a larger population and it is suitable to gather in-depth data. Non-probability method entails that units or participants are selected to participate in the study based on the judgement of the researcher. In particular, the study uses purposive sampling. This technique allows the researcher to select participants informed by the purpose of the study and researcher's knowledge of the population under study (Rubin, 2008). The researcher purposively selects participants who are able to give him or her information to understand the phenomenon under investigation. Six teachers selected to

participate in the study. These participants were selected purposefully based on the time they have been Empangeni and their knowledge of factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary- School.

3.7 SAMPLE

A sample is as a subgroup of the whole population chosen to be part of the study to provide data needed (Mirriam, 2008). The sample for this study was purposively selected and included 8 teachers.

3.8 SAMPLE SIZE

A sample size is the total number of people a researcher selects to be part of the study. The sample size for this study is eight (8).

3.9 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

In-depth interviews were used to collect data needed for this study.

3.9.1 In-depth interviews

Scholars seem to agree that there are three types of in-depth interviews; structured, semi-structured and unstructured. For this study, semi-structured in-depth interviews used for several reasons; they allow a research process to focus on the research problem that helped the research process in this study to be focused (Creswell, 2009). Semi-structured interviews are flexible therefore they allowed the researcher to probe participants to share in-depth information that answers the research questions underpinning the study. Yin (2009) argues that in-depth interviews can be prepared in advance, which allows the researcher to adequately prepare for the interviews and generate in-depth data. Babbie (2010) said that semi-structured in-depth interviews give participants freedom to answer questions as they understand them. This allowed the study to generate data reflecting participants' views that is critical in this study. Eighteen in-depth interviews with six teachers and four SGB members

were conducted to provide data needed to understand the research problem under study. In-depth interviews were preceded by four in-depth interviews; two teachers and two SGB members not included in the main study. The in-depth interview guide was developed using the theoretical framework focusing on the themes highlighted in appendix C.

3.9.2 Document Collection

Document collection is defined as a process of gathering documents with information needed to understand the research problem under study (Creswell, 2014). In this case, documents were collected including policies, annual reports, projects, programmes, vision, and mission statement for Ntuthuko Primary School.

3.10 DATA QUALITY CONTROL

In order for a study to generate findings that are reliable, data quality control measures should be put in place. This study employed the following data control measures:

3.10.1 Credibility

The study used this data control measure by ensuring that methods used in this study are those that have been used by other researchers and have been found to be reliable in operating generating credible research results (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013). In addition, only participants who are willing to be part of the study were included in the study.

3.10.2 Transferability

This data quality control measure were used to succinctly and adequately highlight the context of this study and the findings to help researchers find it easy to ascertain transferability of the research findings.

3.10.3 Dependability

The researcher ensured that the methodology used in particular data collection instruments are scientific to allow interested researchers to use the methodology to conduct research and realise the similar results (Hill, 2012).

3.10.4 Conformability

The study ensured that results generated in this study are confirmed by literature review and participants if results presented reflect their views shared during semi-structured in-depth interviews about factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School.

3.11 DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis was used to analyse data. The researcher started by familiarising himself with the data on factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School in KwaZulu-Natal by immersing herself fully into the data collected. The researcher then generated initial codes or features of the data related to the research topic under study, and search for themes by starting to interpret the collated codes. The researcher then review the themes against the code extracts and the thematic themes generated from data. Then, the researcher defined and rename themes into a unified story of the data as presented through themes on factors adversely affecting English literacy levels at Ntuthuko Primary School.

3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Research Ethics Committee at the University of KwaZulu-Natal provided ethical clearance. The gatekeepers' letter was provided by the relevant authority at Ntuthuko Primary School. Dignity for all participants are not violated. Participants provided with adequate information about the nature of the study and their role in the study was adequately and clearly explained to participants to allow them to make decisions based on correct facts or information about the study; to participate or not to participate in the study. Other principles upheld include, privacy ensuring that respondents' identify were kept private, anonymity by not putting names to completed interview guides, and confidentiality of the respondents by keeping their information in a private and secure locker. In addition there is no link to the respondents in the draft. Data collected has been securely stored and will be destroyed five years after completion of this research

3.13 SUMMARY

The chapter discussed the step by step methods that will be implemented to conduct the study. First, the research methodology is presented followed by the research design, study site, target population and techniques that will be used to select participants. The data collection instruments, data quality control measures, and ethical issues for consideration are also discussed. The chapter ends with a summary of the chapter. The following chapter presents data and the analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses and interprets the findings on factors adversely affecting the English literacy of pupils at Ntuthuko Primary School under study. Themes discussed and analysed include aptitude factors, opportunity to learn, quality of instruction, and family factors. This study set out to achieve the research objectives presented below. The chapter ends with a summary.

4.2 RESEARCH PROCESS FOLLOWED IN THE STUDY

Data collection started after the gatekeeper's letter was granted by the school under study and ethical clearance granted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The researcher emailed all municipal workers the interview guide and asked for their consent. All participants received a consent form that provided adequate information on the nature of this study. After receiving consent, the researcher started the process of data collection using semi-structured in-depth interviews. The data collected was analysed using a deductive thematic analysis technique. This allowed the coding and the generation of themes to be informed by the conceptual framework underpinning the study.

4.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To understand how learners' aptitude factors adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School.
- To ascertain how the opportunity for English literacy adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School.
- To determine how the quality of English literacy instructional events adversely affect learners at Ntuthuko Primary School.
- To understand how family factors adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School.

4.4 APTITUDE FACTORS

The section presents findings on learners' aptitude factors that adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School. This finding is discussed because majority of respondents reported this theme.

Here is what a participant said reflecting views of other participants:

Learners' English literacy is adversely affected because we have teachers with different linguistic, cultural backgrounds and different skills levels. These differences affect how fast and easy learning will be. Some teachers lack the aptitude to present lessons that can grip learners' attention and retention of lessons by failing to employ visuals, analogies, down-to-earth practice exercises (Interview E1, 2018).

In agreement, another participant said that:

English literacy for the learners is adversely affected because of teachers who are not able to keep learners interested in what they are taught and this has influence on how learners grasp English materials taught. To me, teachers' low aptitude adversely affects learners' English literacy (Interview E8, 2018).

On the other hand, participants said that learners' aptitude as well adversely affects their English literacy. A participant put it well that:

Some learners lack special ability needed to learn English no matter what teaching methods teachers apply. Lack of aptitude is seen in the competence scores learners achieve in class that leave much to be desired. In addition, some learners do not have the general ability to master linguistic and non-linguistics skills. This contributes to learners' slow and difficulties found in learning English. Learners with low aptitudes make it challenging for us teachers to do our work (Interview E7, 2018).

In support of the findings above, Abukattala (2013) found that of all the core competencies recognised to contribute to English learning and sustainable development, none is quite as central as the teachers' aptitude to teach reading and writing and learners' aptitude to learn reading and writing.

The finding on teachers' lack of aptitude is in agreement with Wolff (2016) who found that teachers in South Africa had low interest in teaching work orientation, implementation of teaching principles and methods. This finding is supported by Verspoor (2012) who argues that most foundation phase educators in South Africa are uncertain about the methods and approaches that they need to use in order to teach reading and writing to beginning readers at school (Phajane and Mokhele, 2013:463). In addition, teachers are not trained to teach English reading (Gove and Cvelich, 2010). This implies that some educators do not have the capacity to teach English reading and writing. As a result of the limited qualifications of educators, they are not familiar with the different methods of instruction of English.

In addition, Chamberlain (2015:197) argues that apartheid in South Africa left an inadequately trained teaching force lacking the capacity to develop learners' literacy to effective levels (Hart, 2014:2). Simply put, the study suggests that teachers lack teaching skills. Therefore, without teaching aptitude it is difficult for teachers to coordinate learners as it requires a teacher to have skills to do so. Walter (2010) said that the aptitude of a teacher about a situation is the decisive one and the entire process of teaching is based on this.

The finding that learners lack aptitude to read and write is supported by Taylor and Coetzee (2013) who said that learners in South Africa lack foundational, complex cognitive skills on which formal education depends. This means that learners lack ability to learn a second language faster and with less effort. Olaoye (2013) identified four factors in English language aptitude learners have challenges with, and these are phonemic coding ability, grammatical sensitivity, inductive language learning ability and rote learning ability. The view is reinforced by Malone (2012) who found that reading and writing deficits are endemic in South African Schools. In agreement, Piper (2010) said that learners' lack of the needed aptitude to learn English is a crisis in education and the plight of early grade learners. An attributing factor to this catastrophe is the fact that many children are learning English through the medium of English which is their second language (Meier, 2013). Nassaji (2011) said that lack of the working memory and some forms of intelligence (De Jong and

DasSmaal, 2015) to be some of the challenges that adversely affect learners' English acquisition. Mantero (2013) found that there is a link between lack of aptitude and English literacy.

4.5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGLISH LITERACY

This sections presents and discusses findings on how the opportunity for English literacy adversely affects English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School. This was one of the research objectives in this study.

Here is what a participant said reflecting views of other participants:

The problem we have is that we teach learners English which includes culture but learners have no opportunity to be part of the population that speak English they are learning. This adversely affects learners' English literacy (Interview E3, 2018).

Another participant said that:

Our schools lack reading materials making it difficult for learners to read. In addition, we do not have public libraries with learner specific materials (Interview E4, 2018).

In agreement, another participant said that:

There is no English learning support to learners outside the school environment. Some learners come from homes that use languages different from English. In some of these same homes there are no print materials to read and neither do we have public libraries that are learner appropriate (Interview E6, 2018).

The findings suggest that learners' English literacy is adversely affected by lack of opportunities to practice the English language they learn. In agreement, Piper (2009) said that when learners have no opportunities to practice a second language it is difficult to experience improvement. In agreement, Plüddemann (2015) said that lack of opportunity to practice what is learnt hinders learners from translating theory into practice which is critical in language development. In support of the finding Kosenen (2015) said that lack of practice makes learners fail to extract rich rewards from practice as they are not able to learn and

practice English at the same time. In agreement, Krashen (2009) said that when people have no opportunity to practice what they learn they miss out on the opportunity to differentiate between what they hear teachers say and what learners themselves hear themselves say. This means that learners are denied an opportunity to notice errors and try to reduce errors.

With regards to the finding that lack of literacy environment such as libraries adversely affect learners' English literacy, Huimin (2008) said that lack of libraries means that children are not provided and exposed to high-quality reading materials and rich language experiences during the crucial preschool and elementary school years. In agreement, Horne and Heinemann (2009) explained that lack of libraries keen in enhancing the children literacy skills by providing them high quality materials and involving them in reading programmes hinders learners' English literacy. A study by Gumede and Cawood (2016) found that children who did not participate in reading programmes gained less literacy skills than those who participated in the reading programme. The same study also found that libraries encourage children to spend more time with books. Moreover, Heugh (2011) revealed that library programmes can encourage parents to play greater roles in their children's English literacy development by encouraging their children to participate in library programmes.

4.6 QUALITY OF ENGLISH LITERACY INSTRUCTIONAL EVENTS

This section presents and discusses how the quality of English literacy instructional events adversely affect learners at Ntuthuko Primary School.

4.6.1 Attitudes

The study found that teachers' attitudes toward English literacy instructional events adversely affect learners' English literacy. A participant put it this way:

We teach learners using the assimilation approach where we seem to reject native languages and identify with the English language (Interview E6, 2018).

Another participant in agreement said that:

We do not teach English in a way that promotes integration of both native and English languages. This is because of the way teachers think or feel about English. We need acculturation teaching attitudes when teaching English (Interview E5, 2018).

In agreement, Harr (2008) found that teachers prefer to use the assimilation method of teaching by rejecting the native language and identifying with English. Sometimes teachers use enculturation or marginalisation method of teaching that rejects indigenous languages and this adversely affects English literacy. The view above is supported by Hart (2014) who said that teachers in South Africa are not able to use teaching methods that involve a high level of acculturation towards English language culture. The teachers did not encourage learners, did not provide feedback on writing activities, and were not interested in their writing problems. In addition, teachers prefer to teach without designs for teaching programmes that would allow a high level of contact with the English language speakers in order to obtain optimal proficiency in English.

4.6.2 Language anxiety

Findings show that language anxiety adversely affects English instructional events. Here is what a participant said echoing views of majority of participants:

Learners have English language anxiety because of the way teachers present lessons. Learners experience worry, tension and nervousness when learning English because teachers make it appear as if English is the most difficult subject to study. Of course learning anxiety is a normal psychological happening but it is worsened by the way teachers make English appear as a hard nut to crack (Interview E1, 2018).

Another participant said that:

The unique classroom process teachers create makes it easy for learners to have an arousal of their automatic nervous systems. I know that English is different from indigenous languages but the atmosphere we create in classrooms makes learners anxious. As teachers we create anxiety among learners that makes them sweat, tensed up and have some headache. This makes learners to have a behaviour of missing classes and postponing assignments (Interview E6, 2018).

In agreement, another participant said that:

The way we teach English makes learners to have English-specific anxiety. We make learners to have fear of tests, fear of assessments, and fear of speaking English (Interview E4, 2018).

The findings suggest that the way teachers' approach English instructional events contribute to learners' anxiety that adversely affect their English literacy. In support of the finding Gacheche (2010) argues that "depending on the instructional approach of a teacher, he/she can cause anxiety in some learners to affect their learning of a foreign language. Brown (2014:141) states that teachers' instructional approach can adversely affect the state of mind of learners connected with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt and worry. MacIntyre and Gardner (2011) distinguish anxiety learners can experience into: trait anxiety, when learners have some general predisposition to be anxious and state anxiety, which can be experienced in English class situation. They also identify three components of foreign language anxiety: communication apprehension, fear of negative social evaluation and test anxiety. Hence, De Vos (2015) cautions that it is important for teachers to create a class atmosphere that minimises English language anxiety because both too much and too little anxiety may hinder the process of successful English language learning (Brown, 2014:143). Bailey (2013) in support of the finding said that learners' relationship with teachers could increase anxiety, and therefore teachers' approach to teaching can exacerbate English language anxiety-to adversely affect learners' English literacy.

4.6.3 Cultural factors

The study found that some teachers tend to discard culture in their teaching methods, which adversely affect English literacy. Here is what a participant representing other participant said that:

One of the challenges is that we teach English as a language when one has to learn about the English culture as well. Therefore, it is important for teachers to teach two things at the same time; English and its culture. As you may be aware, language is part of the culture and culture is part of language. Teaching English without linking it to culture adversely affects learners' English literacy because it is like teaching a language in a vacuum (Interview E1, 2018).

The view above is supported by another participant who said that:

The problem we face is that we teach English in a vacuum. Language and culture are interlinked therefore an attempt to separate the two means that we are compromising the value of both. Therefore, as teachers we have to learn the English culture as well because it through culture that language finds full expression and meaning (Interview E8, 2018).

The views above are supported by Adamson (2013) who said that it is difficult to teach a language without teaching the culture of the language taught because language is part of a culture, and a culture is part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture (Brown, 2017:189). The finding is also supported by Ball (2011) who argues that culture as an ingrained set of behaviours and modes of perception is important in the learning of the English language (Brown, 2007:189). Therefore the relationship between language and culture is important in determining the degree of teaching and acculturation of English (Tong and College, 2016:524). Mitsutomi and MacDonald (2015:232) asserted that “learning English equals learning a culture which birthed it”. Einhorn (2012:55) endorses the above assertions that learning a second language is also learning a second culture. Thus, Rajabi and Ketabi (2012:707) affirm that learners who are said to have acquired a language are those who are able to align themselves with the culture of the target language- taught.

The finding therefore suggests that until educators and learners strive to teach and learn not only English but the culture respectively in which English is embedded then learners' English literacy will continue to be adversely affected.

4.6.4 Lack of culturally appropriate teaching materials

The study found that lack of culturally appropriate teaching materials adversely affect English literacy. A participant had this to say:

The problem that I see is that teachers fail to teach learners using activities and materials that are culturally appropriate to enable them have a conducive environment to learn English (Interview E2, 2018).

In agreement, another participant said that:

The reading and writing materials we use in teaching English are not culturally familiar to our learners (Interview E6, 2018).

The view above is supported by another participant who said that:

...the issue is that when teaching English teachers seem not to be aware that through our curriculum we are teaching an alien language and culture. Unfortunately, we teach English using materials that are not culturally appropriate (Interview E3, 2018).

The findings above are supported by Bakova (2011) who argues that when learners are taught English using activities that are not culturally correct it is difficult to transform the ways in which learners organise their thoughts. Consequently, Rajabi and Ketabi (2012:706) stress that educators should be more selective in choosing appropriate items for reading and writing according to the learners' cultures. In agreement, Cook (2008) stated that it is important for teachers to consider cultural contexts in their assessment of learners' cognitive development. Thus, it is not surprising that Drucker (2013:25) and Rajabi and Ketabi

(2012:706) found that children had poor reading comprehension and reading efficiency when texts used in learning were not culturally- familiar.

In support of the finding above, Abu-Rabia (2016:589595) concluded that English curricula are more meaningful when they relate to learners' personal lives and cultural backgrounds and that culturally familiar items facilitate English reading and writing. Additionally, Doganay, Ashirimbetova and Davis (2013:15) revealed that non-culture-based activities have negative influence on the development of linguistic and communicative competencies of English learners. In short, the findings seem to suggest that non-culture-based exercises were not effective in stimulating and improving learners' English literacy.

4.6.5 Teachers' lack of capacity

The findings show that teachers' lack of capacity adversely affects English literacy. A participant put it this way:

Teachers lack capacity to impart basic skills and knowledge to read and write. This is because of limited qualifications of teachers who most the times are not aware of effective teaching methods. Thus, learners are taught by ill-equipped teachers making learners to have weak English language foundation (Interview E6, 2018).

Another participant in agreement said that:

Teachers are poorly trained to teach reading and writing English. Therefore, teachers' knowledge of English does not meet the desired standards. This makes it difficult for teachers to evaluate courses and learners (Interview E5, 2018).

The findings above are supported by Cummins (2016) who argues that teachers in South Africa not adequately equipped to impart strong basics of reading and writing. However, educators should be commended for their invaluable contributions towards developing young minds, though studies show that most foundation phase educators in South Africa are uncertain about the methods and approaches that they need to use in order to teach reading

and writing to primary school learners (Phajane and Mokhele, 2013:463) and educators are not trained to teach reading (Gove and Cvelich 2010:2). This implies that educators do not have the capacity to teach reading and writing. The limited qualifications of educators makes them not to be familiar with the different methods of instructing English. This situation is exacerbated by universal primary education expansion that has pushed some systems to the brink in terms of teacher supply; for example, pupil-teacher ratios are on the rise in South Africa (Gove and Cvelich, 2010:13).

Trudell (2012:17) reinforce the findings above by stating that educators in South Africa are poorly trained to teach reading and writing in the primary language and to teach English as an additional language. Thus, many teachers' knowledge of English and the English language system is not up to standard (University of South Africa, 2009:191). Brown (2017) said that the English teachers use in the classroom does not serve as an ideal example to the learners.

Furthermore, Cenoz and Gorter (2008) said that many educators are unprepared for the special needs and complexities of fairly and appropriately assessing English language learners and have little understanding of the challenges faced by learners in the process of acquiring English (Lenski, Ehlers-Zavala, Daniel and SunIrminger, 2006:24).

4.6.6 Oral assignments

The study found that learners' English literacy is affected by oral assignments. Here is what a participant said that:

We are encouraged to instruct learners to read loudly especially in groups. To me this approach does learners a disservice because learners fail to read for meaning but to pass assessments (Interview E8, 2018).

The view above is supported by another view that:

Learners read aloud. Then marks are awarded to learners individually. To me this is not the best approach to teach reading (Interview E1, 2018).

The views above are supported by Adams and Jones (2015) who said that assessing learners using the reading aloud method usually works against meaningful reading as learners tend to read to be heard and not reading to find meaning in what they are reading. In agreement, Chamberlain (2015) found that the strategy of reading aloud is somehow problematic because reading for learners is about memorising sounds and decoding words.

4.7 FAMILY FACTORS

This section presents and discusses findings on the family factors that adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School.

A participant had this to say:

You will be surprised to hear that some learners come from homes where no adult has been to school. I am not saying that parents do not understand the importance of education but cannot adequately support learners as far as learning English is concerned at home (Interview E7, 2018).

Another participant said that:

I think parents fail learners because they do not motivate them enough or should I say they lack skills and the correct attitude to encourage learners to learn English (Interview E6, 2018).

In agreement to the findings above, Dörnyei and Skehan (2013:613) said that one reason for poor English literacy is undoubtedly because learners are not better motivated at home (Cook, 2008:136).

In agreement, Dörnyei (2014:273) asserts that parental motivation is one of the main determinants of English literacy. The view above is supported by Clark and Clark (2008) who found that motivation concerns the direction and magnitude of human behaviour. These researchers perceive motivation as more specifically relating to the choice of a particular

action, the persistence with it, and the effort expended on it. Parental motivation, from an English literacy perspective, involves the attitudes and affective states that influence the degree of effort that learners receive from family members to learn English language (Ellis, 2000:75).

Ellis (2000:75) further said that many parents in South Africa who are not educated have challenges to promote integrative motivation which is encouragement to learners to learn English language because one strongly identifies with or wishes to become part of its associated culture (Midraj, Midraj, O'Neill and Sellami, 2008:44; Adamson, 2005:60; Leaver *et al.*, 2005:104); instrumental motivation which is encouragement to learners to learn English language for its practical value, such as to pass an examination, to get a better job (Ellis 2000:75; Adamson 2005:60-61; Leaver *et al.*, 2005:104).

According to Honna and Takesita (2015), it is difficult for families to motivate learners when themselves are not English literate therefore fail to see genuine interest while children should learn English language. In other words, families seem to be ill-equipped to influence learners to see the potential gains of English literacy (Dörnyei, 2014:274)

4.7.1 Early schooling

The study found that the age of learners adversely affect English literacy. A participant said that:

Some parent want their children to be in school even when they are too young to learn English proficiently. Therefore, learners are affected adversely because they learn English when their brain is not able to effectively acquire and master the English language (Interview E2, 2018).

In support of the view above, another participant said that:

In South Africa we admit children to grade 1 at the age of five. Therefore some learners are young to master English. In some cases some learners join school late making it difficult to grasp English. For me learning a language like English is biological. Therefore there is need to teach learners English at the right time (Interview E6, 2018).

The findings are supported by Crystal (2014) who said that age is one of the most important factors adversely affecting English literacy. He argues that there is a special relationship between language and the left hemisphere of the brain. Language is controlled by the left hemisphere of the brain. The process whereby one hemisphere of the brain is specialised for the performance of certain functions is known as lateralisation (Lyons, 2015:249). The process of lateralisation is maturational, in the sense that it is genetically pre-programmed, but takes time to develop. Lateralisation, which appears to be specific to human beings, is generally thought to begin when the child is about two years old and to be complete at some time between the age of five and the onset of puberty (Lyons, 2015:249). Lyons (2015:249) maintains that it is a widely held view nowadays that lateralisation is a precondition of the acquisition of language. A crucial point to consider is the fact that language acquisition begins at about the same time as lateralisation does and is normally complete by the time that the process of lateralisation comes to an end (Lyons, 2015:249-250). Further support for this finding comes from the finding that it becomes progressively more difficult to acquire language after the age at which lateralisation is complete. Moreover, behavioural tests and brain imaging studies show that late exposure to language alters the fundamental organisation of the brain for language (Fromkin *et al.*, 2007:53). In fact there seems to be what is frequently referred to as a critical age for language acquisition in the sense that language will not be acquired at all, or at least not with full mastery of its resources, unless it is acquired by the time the child reaches the age in question. This position is most strongly associated with puberty and acquiring the phonological system of the second Language.

In short, there is a preponderance of research evidence that supports the finding above that starting to learn English early or late has adverse effects on English literacy.

4.7.2 Learners' family background

Findings show that the learners' family background adversely affect English literacy. A participant stated that:

Some learners have parents who lack confidence because of their cultural background such that they feel that their local languages are inferior to English. As a result, parents are not able to encourage their children to develop English skills in their homes (Interview E1, 2018).

In the same vain, another participant said that:

Parents fail to play their roles to stimulate learners to learn English because in some cases parents do not understand or appreciate linguistic interactions (Interview E5, 2018).

The views above are supported by Cummins (2011:20) -who affirmed that -a way in which home environment affects the learner's school performance is through lack of the linguistic stimulation. He explained that if parents are ashamed of their cultural background or feel that they speak an inferior dialect they may not encourage their children to develop English language skills in the home. Thus, children's English language abilities that is, the development of concepts and skills in the English language may be poorly developed on entry to school. This leaves children without a conceptual basis for learning English in school situation, and consequently they may achieve only low levels of English literacy. In this case, children's performances in school, as well as the proficiencies they develop in English language, will tend to reflect the ambivalent attitudes of their parents and the pattern of linguistic interactions they have experienced- in the home (Butler and Hakuta, 2016).

4.7.3 Family socio-economic status

The study shows that the learners' family's socio-economic status adversely affect English literacy. A participant stated that:

Our learners have inequalities they are born into by the virtue of their parents and their home that it is difficult to have resources needed to enhance their English literacy. Some parents cannot afford to buy reading materials for their children and other amenities that can expose children to English (Interview E3, 2018).

The view above is supported by another participant who said that:

Some of learners are born in poor neighbourhoods and have poor peer environments that affect their opportunities to be exposed earlier to English and these are inequalities that affect their English literacy school life (Interview E4, 2018).

The findings above are in agreement with Adamson (2015) view that that learners' family socio-economic status affects their English literacy development as some children live in totally rural areas with no electricity, taps, television, and print media, and attend schools with limited resources. This family socio-economic status affect learners' motivation to improve their English literacy.

In agreement, De Bot (2008) found that learners from low socioeconomic level homes are at a disadvantage in schools because they lack an environment that influences their English literacy success at school. In particular, low socioeconomic level homes cannot afford to buy books that have been found over many years in many of the large-scale international studies, to be one of the most influential factors in students' English literacy achievement. De Witt and Booysen (2017) added that from the beginning, parents with lower socioeconomic status are not able to provide their children with the financial support and home resources for individual English literacy enhancement. As parents are likely to have lower levels of education, they are also less likely to provide a less stimulating home environment to promote English cognitive development. Parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are also not able to provide the needed psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for English literacy success at school.

4.7.4 Gender identity

The study found that the learners' gender adversely affect their English literacy. A participant stated that:

Learners find themselves in an environment with old believes that female learners are good at learning English and this affects male learners' English literacy as they tend to do little because they believe English is a subject for female learners (Interview E1, 2018).

Another participant had this to say that:

Male learners do not perform well in the English subject because most boys do not go to very nice preschools and elementary schools like girls. This is because there a lot of good private schools for girls than for boys (Interview E8, 2018).

In reflecting on challenges male learners face with regards to English literacy, Firth and Wagner (2017) said that boys often develop the cognitive capacity for reading later than boys. Poor school attendance by boys might, however, also explain male's poor English literacy. In almost all studies conducted in Africa on English literacy (Piper, 2010:5; Kochetkova and Brombacher, 2013:14; Sprenger-Charolles, 2008:9), findings show that girls develop their English literacy faster and better than boys. Although several factors could have contributed to these results, it appears that girls are more inclined and receptive to reading English than boys. Educators need to take cognisance of these findings and provide appropriate and sufficient English reading support to boys so that they can reduce this English reading deficit or even catch up with their female counterparts.

4.7.5 Lack of parental involvement and support

The study found that lack of parental involvement and support adversely affect English literacy. A participant said that:

Parents are not involved in their children's English literacy in spite of the fact that parental support to learners plays an important role in learners' English literacy especially when it comes to reading and writing (Interview E2, 2018).

In agreement, another participant said that:

The major challenge that I see is that there is no support learners get from parents. For example, most of the isiZulu learners who are not coping with learning English are those from homes where parents do not speak English. In addition, some learners live with grandparents who have low literacy level (Interview E6, 2018).

The findings suggest that parent's lack of involvement in their children's English reading and writing deny children an opportunity to enhance their English literacy. In agreement, Gumede and Carwood (2016) said that the quality of parental input, involvement and support is crucial to English learners' reading and writing achievements. The quality of parental input is also critical to English learner achievement. In support of the findings above, Horwitz (2011) said that the development of the individual is mediated by, amongst other individuals, parents guiding their children. Parents who have low literacy levels are not able to facilitate their children's English reading and writing skills. Therefore, apart from their educators, English learners cannot have any access to models of English language structure in their homes. As a result these learners experience enormous challenges in achieving considerable English literacy. This finding is reinforced by Heugh (2011) who found have low illiteracy levels. Thus, grandparents are not be able to assist in developing the learners' English reading and writing skills.

4.8 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter discussed and interpreted the findings on factors that adversely affect the English literacy of pupils. Themes discussed and analysed include opportunity to learn, aptitude for learning, quality of instructions, and family factors. This chapter ends with this summary. The following presents conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with conclusions and recommendations based on the key findings on the factors that adversely affect the English literacy of learners at Ntuthuko Primary School. Conclusions and recommendations presented are related to the findings on the adverse effects of learners' opportunity to learn, aptitude for learning, quality of instructions and family factors to English literacy. The chapter ends with a summary.

5.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE ONE - TO UNDERSTAND HOW LEARNERS' APTITUDE FACTORS ADVERSELY AFFECT ENGLISH LITERACY AT NTUTHUKO PRIMARY SCHOOL

The study found that teachers' aptitude negatively affect learners' English literacy. The findings imply that teachers lack critical abilities known to be effective in contributing to learners' English literacy and this makes it difficult for learners to have English literacy skills needed. In agreement, Heugh (2011) found that teachers lack skills that are central to the English learning-process.

On the other hand, the study found that learners do not have the aptitude to read and write English. This entails that learners lack cognitive skills on which formal English literacy depends. As a result, learners learn English slow and with struggle. This finding does not come as a surprise because Krashen (2009) found that learners in South Africa have challenges with rote learning, grammatical, inductive language learning ability and phonemic coding abilities. The findings suggest that there is a huge problem in the education sector when it comes to primary school learners' English literacy. The problem is partially caused by the use of English as medium of instruction for English learning. (Horwitz, 2011).

5.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE TWO - TO ASCERTAIN HOW THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ENGLISH LITERACY ADVERSELY AFFECT ENGLISH LITERACY AT NTUTHUKO PRIMARY SCHOOL

The study found that learners' English literacy is negatively affected by lack of opportunities to practice the English language making it difficult to improve their English literacy as they have no opportunities to put theory into practice and realise the benefits of practicing English.

The study also found that learners' English literacy is adversely affected by lack of libraries. This means that learners do not have an opportunity to be exposed to appropriate reading materials that are crucial in English literacy. In addition, the findings suggest that the challenge of English literacy is not only about lack of libraries but there are also no libraries that are committed to enhancing learners' English literacy skills by running reading programmes and providing high quality English learning materials. This finding is supported by Huimin (2008) who found that learners in South Africa who did not participate in English reading and writing programmes had low literacy skills compared to those that participated in the programme.

5.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE THREE - TO DETERMINE HOW THE QUALITY OF ENGLISH LITERACY INSTRUCTIONAL EVENTS ADVERSELY AFFECT LEARNERS AT NTUTHUKO PRIMARY SCHOOL

The study found that the quality of English literacy instructional events adversely affect learners' English literacy. First, the findings show that teachers use the assimilation approach of teaching that embraces English language at the expense of native languages. In some instances, the findings show that teachers marginalise indigenous in their teaching methods. In agreement, Ionin (2017) found that teachers in South Africa fail to apply teaching methods that promotes high level of English acculturation and teaching plans that allow learners to be in contact with English language speakers to increase learners' English literacy.

Second, the study found that learners have English language anxiety that adversely affects their state of mind causing feelings of uneasiness, self-doubt, worry and frustration because of the way English is taught. The English anxiety causes fear of negative social evaluation, assessment anxiety and communication apprehension. The finding is supported by Bailey (2013) who said that the way English is taught increases learners' anxiety.

Third, the study found that educators and learners fail to teach and learn English and culture respectively and this adversely affect learners' English literacy. In short, teachers and learners do not learn the English culture when culture and English are intricately interlinked therefore cannot be separated without losing the value of either language or culture. In other words, learners find it hard to learn English because they only learn English and not the English culture. Kosenen (2015) said that learners need to learn both English and English culture because a person cannot learn English without learning a culture that gave birth to English.

Fourth, the study found that lack of culturally appropriate teaching materials adversely affect learners' English literacy. The findings show that teachers use teaching materials that are not culturally correct making it difficult for learners to grasp English. In support of the findings Rajabi and Ketabi (2012:706)'s study revealed that learners have poor English literacy when teachers use learning materials that are not culturally familiar to learners.

Fifth, finding show that teachers are not adequately equipped to teach needed basics of English reading and writing. The finding does not come as a surprise because some studies in South Africa show that many foundation phase teachers are ill-trained to employ teaching approaches that increase English literacy (Rajabi and Ketabi, 2012:706; Phajane and Mokhele 2013:463) and educators are not trained to teach reading (Gove and Cvelich, 2010:2). What the study is suggesting is that some teachers lack capacity to teach English reading and writing. This situation is worsened by the rising pupil-teacher ratios (Gove and Cvelich, 2010:13).

Sixth, the study found that learners are assessed using the method of reading aloud that seems to undermine meaningful reading because learners tend to memorise sounds and decode words and therefore miss the opportunity to engage in meaningful reading.

5.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE FOUR - TO UNDERSTAND HOW FAMILY FACTORS ADVERSELY AFFECT ENGLISH LITERACY AT NTUTHUKO PRIMARY SCHOOL

The study found that family factors adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School. The study found that learners lack parental motivation and involvement to encourage them to learn English. Ellis (2010:75) attributed learners' lack of parental motivation and involvement to parents' low education levels such that they have challenges to encourage their children to learn English. Findings also show that parents have difficulties in motivating learners because parents are not English literate making it difficult for parents to encourage children to learn English. The findings are in agreement with Johnson and Christensen (2008)'s view that many South African families are ill-equipped to highlight potential gains of English literacy to motivate learners. (Dörnyei, 2014:274).

The findings show that early schooling when lateralisation or when the brain is not able to perform certain learning functions adversely affect learners' English literacy. Hart (2014) said that lateralisation starts at the age of two or more years old and completes when a child is five years or more. Goren (2013) said that the critical issue to consider is that language acquisition begins at about the same time as lateralisation does and completes by the time that the process of lateralisation comes to an end. The finding suggest that learners start English learning early before or later after the critical age for language acquisition has started or after has it has completed making it difficult to learn English. The study is supported by Kara (2013) who said that starting to learn English early or late has adverse effects on English literacy.

The study found that learners' family background adversely affect English literacy. Some parents are not proud of their dialect making it difficult for parents to encourage children to learn English. As a result, learners have no conceptual basis for learning English in school and end up achieving low levels of English literacy.

Further, the study found that family socio-economic status adversely affects learners' English literacy. Some children come from areas with no electricity, television, and print media, and attend schools with limited resources. Hence, learners' motivation to improve their English literacy is adversely affected. This finding is supported by Lamb (2014)'s study that shows that learners from low socioeconomic level homes are disadvantaged in schools because they

lack an environment that influences their English literacy success. For example, low socioeconomic level homes makes it difficult for learners to buy books that are core in influencing English literacy achievement. The study seem to suggest that parents with lower socioeconomic status are not able to provide their children with the financial support, home resources, stimulation, and psychological support to motivate the development of skills necessary for English literacy success.

The study found that “gender identity perceptions that male learners face challenges with regards to English literacy compared to female learners adversely affect male learners’ English efficacy. The study attributes this finding to the view that boys often develop the cognitive capacity for reading later than girls, and boys tend to go to poor schools. Olaeye (2013)’s study is in agreement with the findings above as it explains that it appears that girls in the current situation are more inclined and receptive to reading” English than boys.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents recommendations informed by on factors that negatively affect English literacy.

5.6.1 Recommendations to the school

- There is need for schools to encourage parents of isiZulu-speaking learners to make an effort to teach their children English at home.
- Teachers should be taught that for learners to effectively follow the integration model of acculturation for the English language and culture must be respected and learners should receive exposure to the English language.
- Teachers need in-service training in English language methods and theories to allow effective teaching of English language. Teachers should try to integrate different types of teaching methods such as the language experience approach, the phonic approach, and Teaching Handwriting Reading And Spelling Skills (THRASS) when teaching reading.
- There is need for school libraries to be prioritised and include library resource education in the curriculum. This may help to ensure that school libraries are

effectively used. Schools should buy culturally correct books for the school library. This simply means that there is need for the school to have library corners in classrooms.

- Teachers and educators should encourage free voluntary English reading and writing.
- The school and parents should be encouraged to interact to overcome possible barriers and pull together in encouraging English literacy. Participation of parents in school activities does not only ensure that parents provide necessary support to children in their school English work, but it can also motivate learners to take more interest in their English studies. Schools authorities should explore why there is lack of collaboration between teachers and parents in school activities and further explore the ways of encouraging them to become more involved in their children's English reading and writing and to meet the educators more frequently.
- There is need to have culturally familiar English texts and topics to assist to reduce reading and writing anxiety.
- Enriching English literacy classrooms should be provided in order to motivate learners to read and write.
- Educators are encouraged to identify, assess, and provide support to learners experiencing English reading and writing difficulties. Early identification of English reading and writing deficits may lead to early intervention programmes.
- The school should put in place a school support team to provide support and assistance to English learners who experience reading and writing difficulties.
- Basic English phonics must be taught and revised daily and educators must pronounce the words slowly, clearly, and correctly.
- Co-operative learning which includes group work and peer work should be encouraged. English-speaking and isiZulu-speaking learners should be encouraged to work together to assist in building English learners' self-esteem and in developing their social conversational skills through shared experiences.

- The study suggest that girls generally outperform boys on English reading and writing tasks. There is need for educators to provide texts that will be appealing for boys to read and also topics that will fascinate boys.

3

- Schools management teams should make an effort to accelerate children's English reading, writing, speaking, and comprehending to the expected levels. Schools should work together with the departments of education to address the challenges revealed in this study.
- There is need to support learners from families with low socio-economic status. This can be done by providing them study texts, psychological, financial and emotional support they need to enhance their English literacy.

5.7.2 Recommendations to the Parents

- It is important for all parents to enrol their children in Grade R. This will assist in developing early literacy skills. Parents need to take cognisance of the fact that the formative years of childhood are crucial for cognitive development, and deficits arising from a lack of mental stimulation early on cannot be made up for in later schooling.
- Parents are encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards English reading, to accompany their children to the library to borrow books, to regularly read to their children, and to listen when their children read. Parents should be motivated to encourage their children to read every day and to allocate time when both the parents and their children can read together. It is the parents' responsibility to provide enriching English language environments for their children since the learners' linguistic landscapes play a pivotal role in English literacy. Parents need to be accountable for providing appealing age appropriate books that also correspond to the developmental levels of the learners. Hence, parents are required to develop strong impact-beliefs.
- Parents should be informed that more proficient learners are in reading and writing in their primary language, the more proficient they will be in reading and writing in their second language.

- Parents should be informed that their children must obtain maximum exposure to English language as well.
- Parents should communicate with the learner's teacher in order to discuss the learner's English reading and writing progress. The areas of concern should also be discussed.
- There is need to address learners' English reading and writing anxiety at home in collaboration with schools by providing a nonthreatening print-rich literacy environment and by providing consistent support and encouragement at home and school.
- Parents should be informed to develop integrative motivation.
- Parents should assist in providing intensive support for learners who experience English reading and writing difficulties. Parents should consult the school's institutional level support team for assistance.

5.8 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This research set out to consider four objectives concerning factors adversely affecting the English literacy of pupils at Ntuthuko Primary. An appropriate research plan was drawn up and qualitative research methodology was conducted. The research findings are supported by the literature and as such all four objectives were suitably researched and appropriate recommendations have been made. The chapter ends with this summary.

5.9 REFERENCE LIST

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APPENDIX A

In- depth Interview guide

I.....(full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT:

DATE:

.....

In- depth Interview guide

Preamble:

- Introduce myself.
- Thank the participant for agreeing to the meeting.
- Briefly describe the purpose of the study. I will proceed explaining why I am interested in the factors that adversely affect English literacy levels at Ntuthuko primary school and what I hope to achieve.
- Explain that it is **their** experiences in their workplaces including their opinions I'm seeking and encourage them to express themselves freely.
- Explain to the participant that they have a right to confidentiality and anonymity. They are allowed **not to** answer all questions and can take a break/leave the interview at any time.
- Explain the need for recording their answers.
- Ask if they have any questions.
- Request the participant to read and **sign** the informed consent forms.

Interview

- How do learners' aptitude factors adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School?
- How does the opportunity for English literacy adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School?
- How does the quality of English literacy instructional events adversely affect learners at Ntuthuko Primary School?
- How do family factors that adversely affect English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School?
- What are the policy/strategies put in place to improving English literacy at Ntuthuko Primary School?

Closing Remarks

- Is there anything else on these issues that you feel should be addressed in this interview?

Thank you for your valuable time!

APPENDIX B

Declaration Letter

This is to declare that I, Zanele Mntungwa, will ensure that the respondents' privacy is protected. I will not use the participants' name in any of the information received from this study or in any of the research reports. Any information received in the study will be recorded with a code number that will be secured. When the study is completed, the key that shows which code number goes with your name will be destroyed. Participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

I also confirm that respondents have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

Please contact **Zanele Mntungwa** if you have any questions about the study, or would like more information.

Cell no.: 0836749202

Email: mazetmashobane@gmail.com

Address: Richards Bay

Supervisor: Alec Bozaz

Contact: 0312608350

Alternatively you may contact the UKZN Humanities and Social Science Research and Ethics Committee:

Mrs Mariette Snyman

Humanities and Social Science Ethics (HSSREC) Research Office,

Govan Mbeki Building, Westville Campus, Private Bag X54001, DURBAN 4000

Tel: 031 260 8350

Snymanm@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this research exercise.

Sincerely,

Zanele Mntungwa

APPENDIX C
Consent Form



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Title of research project:

DETERMING THE FACTORS AFFECT ENGLISH LITERACY LEVELS AT
NTUTHUKO PRIMARY SCHOOL

Name and Position of Researcher:

Zanele Mntungwa, student at the School of Management, IT and Governance, University of
KwaZulu-Natal.

CONSENT FORM

I, _____, confirm that I have read the information sheet that
describes this study and have had an opportunity to ask questions so as to understand the
purpose of the study.

I understand that my participation is **voluntary** and that I am free to withdraw at any time
without giving any reason.

I understand that I do not wish to answer all the questions if I **do not** wish to and may take a
break or leave the interview at any time.

I understand that if I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or
if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

Mrs Mariette Snyman

Humanities and Social Science Ethics (HSSREC) Research Office,
Govan Mbeki Building, Westville Campus, Private Bag X54001, DURBAN 4000
Tel: 031 260 8350 Snymanm@ukzn.ac.za

I am aware that any information I provide will be treated in the strictest confidence.

I agree to take part in this interview.

Please tick box

Yes No

☐☐

I give permission for brief extracts of my interview to be used for research purposes with strict adherence to anonymity.

☐☐

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature of witness: _____
(where applicable)

Date: _____

Signature of translator: _____
(where applicable)

Date: _____

APPENDIX D

Research Proposal Approval Letter

Letter to assist students in obtaining Gatekeepers Letters

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

March 23, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AS PART OF THE(Master Of Commerce in Leadership Studies) QUALIFICATION

Name: Matingwa ZA

Student No:202001108

Dissertation Topic:TO DETERMINE WHICH FACTORS ADVERSELY AFFECT ENGLISH LITERACY LEVELS AT NTUTHUKO PRIMARY SCHOOL

We confirm that the above student is registered at the University of UKZN for the Master of Commerce in Leadership Studies Programme. It is a requirement of their Programme that the student undertakes a practical research project in his/her final year of study.

Typically this project will be a "practical problem solving" exercise, and necessitates data gathering through questionnaires or personal interviews.

Your assistance in permitting access to your organization for purposes of conducting the research is most appreciated. Please be assured that all information gained from the research will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Furthermore, should you wish any results or findings from the research "to be restricted" for an agreed period of time, this can be arranged. The confidentiality of information and anonymity of personnel will be strictly adhered to by the student.

If permission is granted, kindly confirm this by signing off on the following:

"I am aware of the nature and extent of the document and I am satisfied with all the obligations imposed therein."

Please note that additional information or conditions can be supplied by you.

Name in Full: WELILE C. NZAMA

Designation: CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALIST

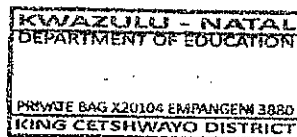
Company Name & Stamp: MTIONJANFENI CIRCUIT MANAGEMENT CENTRE

Received by *W. Nzama*

Thank you for your assistance in this regard.

Yours sincerely

MR A BOZAS (Supervisor)



17 October 2011

Page 1

APPENDIX E

Ethical Clearance



30 May 2018

Mrs Zanele Alminah Mntungwa (202001108)
Graduate School of Business & Leadership
Westville Campus

Dear Mrs Mntungwa,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0329/018M

Project Title: Determining which factors adversely affect English Literacy levels at Mtshushu Primary School

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 17 April 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



Professor Shonuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Mr Alec Bozas
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Muhammad Hoque
Cc School Administrator: Mrs Zarina Bullyraj

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Professor Shonuka Singh (Chair)

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Telephone: +27 (0) 31 261 2867/6350/4557 Fax: +27 (0) 31 269 4608 Email: xmbag@ukzn.ac.za / human@ukzn.ac.za / ethics@ukzn.ac.za

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DETERMINING WHICH FACTORS ADVERSELY AFFECT ENGLISH LITERACY LEVELS AT NTUTHUKO PRIMARY SCHOOL

by Zanele Almina Mntungwa

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