

AN EXPLORATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR TEACHING
LANGUAGE THAT FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHERS BRING INTO
THE ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN TEACHING (ACT) PROGRAMME.

By

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DECLARATION

Submitted in fulfilment/partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education, in the Graduate Programme in Teacher Development Studies,
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I, Pandora Pemrose Sibongiseni Mcaba, declare that the research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, and is my original research. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late parents, Barnabas and Alice Mcaba. My late mother-in-law, May. My late brother, Bongani, and sisters, Nombulelo, Bongiwe, Sbongile, Bongeka: I know they would be very proud of me for the attainment of this degree. My deepest thanks to my family with the continued support they graced me with during this time of study. A special thanks to my husband, Andile, and daughter, Siphokazi, for the sacrifices they made and inspiration during the difficult times I encountered.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the knowledge base that Foundation Phase teachers have regarding language teaching when they enrol on the Advanced Certificate in Teaching (ACT). The ACT is a part-time programme for practicing teachers who already have a teaching diploma. The purpose of this study was to explore the teachers' knowledge base, with the focus on English First Additional Language (EFAL) and Home Language (HL). Data was collected from eighty-six students registered for ACT at UKZN. The approach adopted for this study is an interpretive approach. Quantitative data was collected through tests and qualitative data through interviews. The focus of the test was on Content Knowledge (CK), Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) and beliefs that Foundation Phase teachers have regarding the teaching of language EFAL and HL.

South Africa has performed poorly in the studies conducted in the South African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ), (2002) and Progress in International reading (PIRLS), (2006, and 2011). In the Annual National Assessment (ANA), learners did not achieve as per the required standard, which was 50%. Many studies conducted have identified language gaps especially with reading in Foundation Phase (FP), hence many reading intervention strategies were initiated by the Department of Education, but results have not been promising. In 2011, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) were introduced with English as an additional compulsory subject in the FP with the hope that learners would develop English competence (DBE, 2011). However, language results were consistently poor.

Teachers in the FP have to be in possession of a distinctive body of knowledge to be able to teach effectively. At the same time, Literacy content knowledge is not enough if teachers do not have appropriate strategies to teach each literacy component. It is important for teachers to understand how to connect CK and PCK. The research findings were that teachers' content and PCK was lacking, as most teachers did not get trained in curriculum transformation and could not implement the necessary changes. Teachers in this study did not identify a similar body of CK required by FP teachers to teach, which shows there is little agreement amongst teachers regarding this. At the same time, a quarter of teachers struggled to diagnose reading errors in English and isiZulu, despite the fact that isiZulu teachers were the majority in the

study. Regarding PCK, 23% of participants seemed not able to articulate how they could use the example of a picture of a market place as a resource to enhance language.

Participants noted that the reasons for learners' lack of language acquisition were external factors like the lack of resources and lack of parental support. Many did not see their own pedagogy as a reason for learners not developing language skills effectively.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACE – Advanced Certificate in Education

ACT – Advanced Certificate in Teaching

ANA – Annual National Assessment

BICS – Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

CALP – Cognitive Language Proficiency

CAPS – Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements

CEA – Centre for Evaluation and Assessment

CK – Content Knowledge

DBE – Department of Basic Education

DHET – Department of Higher Education and Training

EFA – Education for All

EFAL – English First Additional Language

FFL – Foundations for Learning

FP – Foundation Phase

HL – Home Language

LiEP – Language in Education Policy

LOLT – Language of Learning and Teaching

NCS – National Curriculum Statements

NDP – National Development Plan

NEEDU – National Education Evaluation and Development Unit

NLG – New London Group

NPDE – National Professional Diploma in Education

OBE – Outcomes Based Education

PCK – Pedagogic Content Knowledge

PEI – Presidential Education Initiative

PIRLS – Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies

QIDS-UP – Quality Improvement Development Support Upliftment Programme

QSP – Quality Schools Project

RNCS – Revised National Curriculum Statements

RTL – Reading to Learn

SACMEQ – Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality

TIMSS – Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

This study explores the knowledge base that Foundation Phase teachers have regarding English as a First Additional Language (EFAL) and Home Language (HL) when they enrol on the Advanced Certificate in Teaching (ACT). In this chapter the background is explained, the purpose and rationale described, the key research questions outlined and the structure of the thesis described. The implications of the implementation of curriculum reforms for learners and the findings from other intervention programmes are highlighted.

1.2. Background of the study

South African learners' performance in Literacy and Numeracy has been observed to be disappointing, as reflected in a number of studies: Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ II); (2002); Department of Education Systemic Evaluation; Trends in International Mathematics and Science studies (TIMSS) (2011); Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies (PIRLS); (Howie et al., 2006, 2011) and Annual National Assessment (ANA); (Department of Basic Education, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012). Jansen (1999) argues that the roots of our education crisis do not lie with Grade 12, but in the Foundation Phase (FP) where the system fails to provide children with Numeracy and Literacy basics that can be built in later years.

A number of projects have been initiated geared towards addressing the demands of the challenges in education policy reform. Teachers were confronted with challenges to implement the education changes. The Presidential Education Initiative (PEI) (1999) funded research which evaluated projects where teachers were developed in the challenges they

faced in curriculum implementation (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999). However, the projects did not equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills that would make them effect changes successfully. The findings were that there has been a mismatch on language levels of learners and teachers, as in many classes teachers do not speak or teach in the language some learners speak. Multilingualism has been promoted by curriculum agents, but findings were that teachers were not capable of developing other languages like English as they themselves had challenges with English.

Taylor and Vinjevold (1990, p. 230) highlight that,

“On the issue of pedagogy, many teachers model the surface forms of learner centred activities, without apparently understanding the learning theories underlying them and certainly without using them as a medium for enabling learners to engage with substantive knowledge and skills”.

Lack of resources contributed to lack of competencies in learners and teachers developed a negative connotation on language achievement.

Curriculum changes in South Africa have included Outcomes Based Education (OBE), Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS), National Curriculum Statements (NCS) and Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). To mention some PEI projects amongst the many: The PEI project conducted in the Eastern Cape to assess the impact of the Quality Schools Project (QSP), which has also shown no improvement in Mathematics and Language; Foundations for Learning (FFL); Quality Improvement Support Upliftment Programme (QIDS-UP); Drop all and Read; Reading to Learn and Ithuba Writing Project are programmes initiated by the Department of Basic Education geared towards learner performance, which had not been very effective (DBE, 2007a,2007b, 2008a, 2008b).

In addition, in the media reports, not encouraging pictures of the low levels of literacy in the Foundation Phase were published and printed (Lawrence, 2011). These publications were in the Times (2007), Business Day (2007) and Cape Times (2008), where there has been a call for the improvement of Literacy and Numeracy. A recent media article has appeared in the Teacher (2013), where the discussion was on English language as a barrier the teachers experience in the classes they teach. The teacher who wrote this article shared the frustration he and learners experienced because learners had serious problems in English as the medium

of instruction. This is one of the examples which show how language is problematic in teaching and learning.

Mbatha (2011, p. 55) affirms that the “Foundations for Learning programme was introduced as a response to national, regional and international studies that have shown low levels of reading, writing and counting in South African children”. At the same time, lesson plans and assessment guidelines were designed to help teachers in teaching and learning (DBE, 2008). However, Mbatha (2011) states that, although these plans were helpful, quality of education is still inadequate.

With all this being said, Cochran-Smith and Zeichner (2005) see a need for teacher knowledge to be researched, as the language results in learners they teach have not been pleasing. As their proposal does not refer only to South Africans, this means that language problems are evident worldwide. CK and PCK in language, as per the research questions for this study, seem to be lacking in Foundation Phase teachers despite the interventions mentioned above.

Pearson (2007) asserts that it is the solemn responsibility of any profession to monitor the professional knowledge of its members. In the same way, Abbot (1988) highlights that all professions should have the knowledge base in order to perform well. Similarly, in the Education Trust Report (2008), it is argued that knowledge base is the foundation of education achievement.

Taylor and Vinjevold (1999) state that teachers are the implementers and the interpreters of curriculum vision in the classroom they teach. However, Darling-Hammond (1991) sees this top-down approach as contributing to challenges teachers face in their classroom practices (see also Kallaway, 2007). Correspondingly, Ebrahim, Verbeek, and Mashiya (2011) note that the agency of teachers has been limited because they have to follow specific guidelines from the curriculum developers which make teachers technicians rooted in system needs (Christie, Harley & Penny, 2004). Brozo and Simpson (2003) have the same feeling that once a teacher has to follow a set of prescriptions, effective teaching can be compromised. Brozo and Simpson (2003) further affirm that for teachers to be able to have realistic expectations and change in their teaching strategies, opportunities for experimenting and reflection should be given. If teachers were given an opportunity to give their inputs and be trained well as implementers in curriculum design, perhaps there would be a noticeable improvement in teaching and learning.

Taylor and Vinjevold (1999) report on how, in thirty-eight Presidential Education Initiative (PEI) projects, teachers' conceptual knowledge has been emphasised. However, studies prove teachers' knowledge to be disappointing, as reflected in the results mentioned above (DBE, 2009, 2012). Morrow (2007) cites that teachers' core function is to provide systemic learning as goals to uplift professional development goals. Bertram (2011) draws from Morrow (2007), who states that "systemic learning" cannot be about transmission of knowledge, but it is constant development that can lead to teacher's competencies.

Hatano and Inataki (1996) claim that teachers should be adaptive experts who do not only follow routines, but have abilities for being innovative to meet new challenges. On the same note, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999, p. 249) affirm that "teachers who have more knowledge are able to teach better".

As a way of intervening, regarding the poor CK and PCK knowledge base that Foundation teachers have, the Advanced Certificate for Teaching (ACT) was introduced. This programme aimed to improve teacher knowledge and competencies in teacher education. Furthermore, ACT had a functional purpose to cater for transformative learning and critical reflection on how teachers teach in class. As ACT is one of the developmental programmes, it is assumed that its purpose is to "balance the educational activity between subject and pedagogical as well as theoretical and practical knowledge" (Adler, 2002 p. 3).

1.3. The purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to explore knowledge what Foundation Phase (FP) teachers bring into the Advanced Certificate in Teaching (ACT) programme with the focus on the teaching of both English First Additional Language (EFAL) and Home Language (HL).

The main objective of the study is to explore and understand the CK and PCK base that FP, EFAL and HL teachers bring to the ACT programme. The purpose of the study is to determine the knowledge (particularly about teaching EFAL and HL) Foundation Phase teachers bring to the ACT programme. The teachers enrolling for the programme have a National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) in FP teaching and are 'upgrading' their

qualification. Thus, the teachers in this study represent a group of FP teachers in the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) who have a diploma as a professional qualification.

As shown in the background section, it is evident how research results have not been good, with gaps aligned to language competence challenges of teachers and learners in the studies conducted. The question that arises from the above observations is; what knowledge base, in terms of subject content knowledge and teaching strategies, FP teachers have in the field of language in South African schools?

1.4. Key research questions

- (a) What EFAL and HL subject content knowledge do Foundation Phase teachers have when they enrol on the ACT programme?
- (b) What EFAL and HL Pedagogical Content Knowledge do Foundation Phase teachers have when they enrol on the ACT programme?
- (c) What are the FP teachers' personal beliefs about teaching EFAL and HL in the FP classrooms?

1.5. Research design

The research paradigm for this study is the interpretive paradigm where the knowledge that teachers bring to the ACT programme is explored. In the interpretive paradigm, approaches used are those that seek to understand how participants make sense of the world (Maree, 2011). In this study the analysis is of the language knowledge FP teachers bring to the ACT programme. It is believed that, according to the interpretive paradigm, responses are based on the participants' understanding of their experience, beliefs and practice. Its focus is on reality that is socially constructed. Truth, in the interpretive paradigm, is negotiated, seen as multi-faceted and subjective (Maree, 2011; Creswell, 2009).

The research approach that is used for this study is framed within a qualitative approach to gain insight into the knowledge teachers have in teaching EFAL and HL. Mixed methods are used in this study. A qualitative research approach focuses on a single phenomenon and provides rich descriptive data of the phenomenon studied. It can also bring personal beliefs to the study. The research focuses on participants' meanings and interpretations (Maree, 2011).

Correspondingly, Silverman (2011) and Creswell (2009) note that the qualitative research approach is subjective and focuses on social reality inquiry and is biased. Participants give their true experiences and views. This study uses tests and interviews as data collection methods to understand the knowledge base teachers bring to the ACT programme.

The population for the study consisted of 98 teachers who enrolled for ACT. They were selected, as the purpose was to explore the EFAL and HL knowledge they bring to ACT. Five interviewees who were conveniently sampled were chosen from the larger group because they were available. The research methodology was a qualitative research.

1.6. Rationale for the study

What I have experienced as the FP adviser is that there are still observable gaps in the teaching of EFAL and HL by FP teachers. In class visits I made to rural teachers, it was evident that teachers neglected EFAL, as they are not confident to teach it. I assume it may be that they lack content and strategies to teach EFAL.

Literacy levels over Foundation Phase years are improving slowly in South African schools, despite the interventions; with clear evidence in recent ANA 2012 results which are still below the 60% benchmark the DBE had set (DBE, 2012).

Adler, Slonimsky and Reed (2002) argue that most teachers in the South African context work in schools or contexts where neither teachers nor learners speak English but have to teach and learn it as a subject.

Kelly (2006) highlights that teachers have to move from being novices to experts for them to meet the challenges they will face when teaching. He asserts that being an expert does not mean that you have to apply a body of knowledge, but an iterative approach and a constant construction and reconstruction of knowledge. Knowledge base is constructed in a way that

best suits the classroom taught in consideration of the context for those particular learners. Moving to expertise is through engagement in practice as well as having a sense of accountability.

As this study is based on EFAL and HL, it is important to define the concepts of literacy in English language proficiency, comprehension and vocabulary. According to Hugo and Lenyai (2013), English is in demand as it is the predominant language of communication worldwide. Literacy includes processes UNESCO (2007) defines as the skill to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and work out, using printed and written materials related to varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their potential and participate fully in the community and wider community.

In the same way, Brozo and Simpson (2003) define literacy as the ability for every citizen to fully realize and participate in a democratic society. They further claim that one should be able to read, write and listen to obtain ways where meaning and communicating thoughts are communicated through printed scripts (2003).

According to the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit report (NEEDU, 2012), teacher knowledge necessary for effective teaching and learning is knowledge of subject, curriculum and knowledge of how to teach the subject. Teacher competence is observed when subject knowledge is taught well to learners, drawing from experience, reflection and peer interaction (NEEDU, 2012, p.24). This report ascertains that literacy should increase in FP in order to equip learners to be ready to learn all subjects taught at school in the Intermediate Phase.

It is evident from various research projects conducted globally that teachers usually neglect topics they do not know. Teachers find themselves not confident to teach something they do not know or have to learn. The key question to curriculum transformers is: How robust is teacher knowledge? Curriculum developers should be able to come up with programmes that will balance activities of subject, pedagogical, theoretical and practical knowledge to close the above gaps (Adler, 2002). Adler (2002) claims that the subject-pedagogy tension makes teaching and learning problematic.

Adler et al., (2002) report, that teacher subject knowledge on its own cannot guarantee better learner achievement. Teachers should also be equipped with the methods to teach the

subjects. Ma (1999 p.138), when comparing studies in Chinese and American Primary schools, affirms that “studying a particular subject does not account for quality teaching and learning but rather depth of conceptual understanding the teachers hold”.

In trying to address the challenges observed above, the DBE, together with the University of KwaZulu-Natal, offered the Advanced Certification in Education (ACE) as a way of deepening knowledge in subjects teachers already teach. However, there has been a lack of systematic research to check what teachers learnt in the developmental programmes, of which the ACE is one (see Papier, 2006). The ACE programme has now been re-named the ACT (Advanced Certificate for Teaching).

In the DBE (2011, p. 4) strategic plan, it has been identified that “factors which impact on the quality of education in South African teachers, are poor subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge”. As a way of engaging the issue, the Department of Higher Education and Training (2011), has developed a new Teacher Education policy framework for teacher development which renames the ACT as the Advanced Certificate in Teaching (ACT). The Department of Basic Education believes this certificate will be an initiative to improve competencies in language and mathematics of Foundation Phase teachers.

According to Ebrahim et al., (2012, p. 58), the question the designers of the FP ACT ask, which could enable teachers to reclaim their agency, is;

“What are the enabling roles FP teachers need to play in order to reclaim their space as agents who significantly influence their professional practice and how can they be assisted to become fully functional in their roles?”

The implication of the framework is that teachers should be part of the community of teaching. ACT is designed for FP teachers to enhance their PCK, CK and pedagogical knowledge and to develop opportunities for autonomy and transformative professionalism for teachers.

1.7. The structure of this thesis

Chapter 1

This chapter looks at the problem statement and the background for this study. The purpose for this study is outlined. The research questions, the rationale and the importance of this study are discussed. The research design and research methods are presented. In the last part the structure of the chapters are provided.

Chapter 2

The theoretical and conceptual framework for this study is outlined and discussed. Definitions and different kinds of knowledge are addressed. Models of teacher knowledge and teaching of language are highlighted. CK and PCK required for teaching and learning is highlighted. Clarification on the importance of multilingualism is discussed. Reading methods and approaches are discussed.

Chapter 3

In this chapter the paradigm used in this study and why it has been appropriate for this study is discussed. The research questions are stated. The research design, research methods, and research methodology are unpacked and discussed. How the research site is accessed and ethical considerations are discussed. Sampling methods used in the study are highlighted. Data collection methods, which are tests and semi structured interviews, are stated and interpreted. How the data will be analysed is highlighted and the limitations of the study are discussed.

Chapter 4

In this chapter the data which has been collected, coded from tests and transcribed from interviews is presented and analysed. Biographical data is summarised where the teachers experience, grades taught and Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) used are outlined. Findings, which are based on what CK and PCK teachers bring to the ACT programme and how the findings relate to literature review, are discussed and interpreted. Answers to the research questions are attempted.

Chapter 5

In this final chapter the findings drawn from data collected provide conclusions on what CK, PCK and beliefs teachers bring to ACT. Also, recommendations towards enhancing EFAL and HL are outlined.

1.8. Conclusion

This chapter has described the purpose and rationale of the study. It has shown that many FP teachers do not have a good knowledge base and that learner achievement in the FP in Numeracy and Literacy is poor. The purpose of the study is, thus, to describe the knowledge base about teaching EFAL/HL that the FP teachers who are enrolled in the ACT bring with them to the programme. The next chapter is the literature review about the knowledge base necessary for teaching and learning to take place.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The research findings regarding the South African education system produced results from several studies which have not been pleasing. Curriculum changes have been effected, but observations are that teachers lack the CK, PCK and expertise they are supposed to have to produce meaningful teaching in their classrooms. It has been argued how changes from NCS (DBE 2002) have not been implemented by teachers. With the review of NCS to Curriculum CAPS, the National Development Plan (NDP) seeks to improve Literacy and Numeracy to meet the global standards (DBE, 2011). Motshekga (2010), on her release of CAPS implementation, repackaged subject specifics to include more detailed topics to be taught.

However, according to research conducted, teachers who have to implement these changes have not been equipped enough to apply the curriculum transformation. Spaul (2013) provides empirical evidence in South African education showing that pupils cannot read, write and compute at grade appropriate levels, with the exception of learners from wealthy families who can afford better learning opportunities.

Several intervention strategies have been designed to improve teacher competency in Literacy and Numeracy, but progress is not according to the benchmark the Department of Basic Education has set that learners should be achieving at 60% by 2013 (DBE, 2012). Empirical studies have been conducted as to why Literacy and Numeracy are still poor irrespective of implemented intervention strategies.

There are two main concepts that inform this study. One is the domain of teacher knowledge, which is subject content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, context knowledge and curricular knowledge, as distinguished by Shulman (1986) and Grossman (1990). Key debates to initiate the discussion are forms of knowledge which are propositional and practical knowledge (Eraut, 2002; Grossman, 1990).

The second key concept is that of literacy and literacy models which are:

Literacy as information processing,

Literacy as access,

Literacy as social practice,

Literacy as critical thinking,

Literacy as metaphor,

Literacy and language of instruction,

Literacy methods such as alphabetic, phonic, look and say, eclectic, and approaches such as language experience approach, whole language approach and balanced approach, which are looked at to explore the knowledge base teachers have about English First Additional Language (Klaas & Trudell, 2011; Joubert, Bester & Meyer, 2008; Lenyai, 2011; DBE, 2008, 2011).

As this study is based on exploring the knowledge base about language that teachers bring to the ACT, I draw from different scholar's definitions of the concept knowledge, kinds of knowledge and forms of knowledge. Literacy models and language approaches with the focus on English First Additional Language are also analysed. The first discussion is based on how different scholars define teacher knowledge.

2.2. What is teacher knowledge?

Different scholars provide different definitions of the concept "teacher knowledge". However, all these definitions indicate that is a kind of knowledge that every teacher should possess in order to execute teaching duties. The first definition given by Morrow (2007, p. 78) states that "teacher knowledge is practical knowledge harnessed to an ethical ideal. It is a qualitatively distinct kind of knowledge, different from academic and technical knowledge, although it draws on both practical and professional knowledge". Furthermore, Morrow (2007) refers to knowledge as acquaintance with facts, information, the sum of what is known and familiarity with a subject. The second definition, as ascertained by Grossman (1990), defines teacher knowledge domains as subject matter to be taught, CK, PCK, curricular knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge. In a different way, Kennedy (2002) refers to teacher knowledge as craft knowledge which is developed through experience. According to

Darling-Hammond (2006), in a society where education matters, there is a concern with how teachers can be efficient and be skilled enough to advance the knowledge learners need.

Stanford University researchers, Shulman (1986, 1987) and Wilson (1987) acknowledge seven categories of teacher knowledge which are: knowledge of content, curriculum, pedagogy, context learning, educational philosophies and PCK. This is assumed to be the kind of knowledge base teachers are expected to have for effective teaching and learning to take place. Grossman's work synthesised these domains into four.

The framework that is used in this study is based on teacher knowledge, focusing on different kinds of knowledge (Shulman 1986, 1987; Grossman 1990).

These domains of teacher knowledge are:

CK;

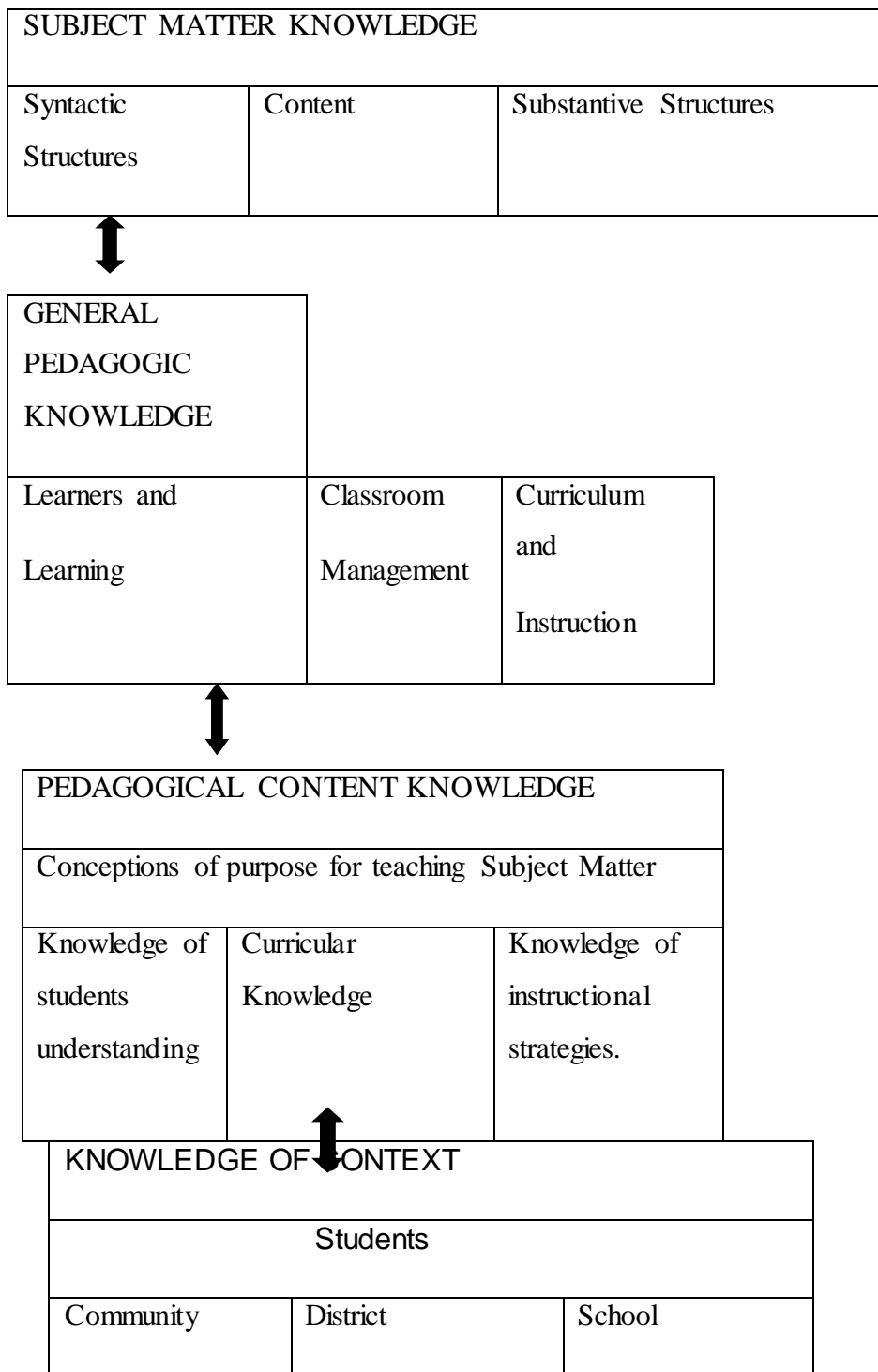
General pedagogic knowledge;

PCK and

Knowledge of context.

Grossman's model of teacher knowledge is explained below:

Figure 1. Model of teacher knowledge (Grossman, 1990, p. 5 - 9)



The section below describes the definition of these domains of knowledge.

2.2.1. What is CK?

Shulman (1986) defines CK as an organised amount of knowledge in the mind of the teacher. This is structured according to subjects which Schwab (1978) refers to as “substantive and syntactic structures” (Shulman, 1986 p, 202). Teachers have to be able to explain what is worth being known in theory and practice. On the same note, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) emphasise CK as practice in action, which is spontaneous and is constructed through everyday experiences in schools and classrooms. However, research highlights that teachers have theory which they might have learnt from colleges or institutions, but the observation of the researchers indicates levels of incompetencies in teaching strategies among teachers.

2.2.2. What is general pedagogic knowledge?

Grossman (1990) refers to this form of knowledge as the skills, beliefs, and general knowledge for teaching. This includes classroom management, general principles of instruction, purpose and aims of education. General pedagogic knowledge encompasses skills; CK and PCK including presenting of ideas, explanations and comprehending the content for learners. Consideration of knowledge should be based on context and settings and environment needs to be considered. The above model of knowledge with its sub-topics, are the essentials for teaching and learning, as nothing can be implemented without the other.

2.2.3. What is PCK?

Shulman (1986, 1987) notes that PCK is more than the knowledge of subject matter, but knowledge of teaching the subject matter, which includes topics, representations of ideas, teaching strategies including learners backgrounds, demonstrations, explanations, illustrations and many more. It means the ability to teach content or crucial knowledge that need strategies for teaching.

Shulman (1987, p. 127) describes PCK as “the blending of content and pedagogy into understanding of how particular topics, problems or issues are organised, represented and

adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction”. This is how teachers transform content so that learners can understand what they are taught. Borko (2004) agrees with Shulman, when noting that teachers should have a rich knowledge of the subjects and PCK in the subjects they teach. On the other hand, Shulman (1986) highlights some issues which have been missing in the previous research, that of distinguishing between knowledge and pedagogy. He assumes pedagogy and knowledge of content has been characterised as the same.

Grossman (1990) notes that the components of PCK are:

The ability to teach a subject at different age levels.

Consideration of prior knowledge of learners and possible difficulties they may encounter in the topic.

Knowledge of how curriculum materials can be used.

The use of instructional methods to explain a concept for better understanding, consolidation and reinforcement.

2.2.4. Curricular knowledge

Shulman (1986) refers to curricular knowledge as knowledge about the programmes to be taught from which content is extracted. Some recent avenues for curricular knowledge for teachers in South Africa are the NCS, (DoE 2002) and CAPS (DBE, 2011). It is in these statements where topics at different levels and contextual factors are taken into consideration. According to Shulman (1986), the curriculum is a tool the teacher has to draw content from and where learners’ achievements can be measured. This is the same as doctors seeking to understand different alternatives to cure a certain health disorder. Morrow (2007) states that the curriculum provides the generic skills of Literacy and Numeracy which is in the form of subjects.

2.3. Propositional and practical knowledge

A different way of thinking about teacher knowledge is to use the concepts of propositional knowledge and practical knowledge. Firstly, propositional knowledge is prescribed and explicitly embedded in facts, ideas, textual materials and books. It is acquired in formal settings. Cognitive, behavioural and abstract skills reach greater levels in this form of knowledge. It is codified and referred to as declarative and vertical knowledge (Eraut, 1994; Wilson & Demetriou, 2007; Stuart, 2009). Content, general pedagogic knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and curricular knowledge required for teaching and learning are generally understood as propositional knowledge. In this study teachers' own language competence and knowledge structure of phonemes and grammar were knowledge questions assessed in the test as facts of language.

Secondly, practical knowledge is often based on personal experience. This kind of knowledge is referred to as tacit or implicit knowledge. It occurs informally and is acquired through participating in social activities. Craft knowledge also features in practical knowledge (Kennedy, 2010). Informed judgements are evident in this kind of knowledge and knowledge is based on process rather than the product (Kelly, 2006; Wilson & Demetriou, 2007). Personal knowledge is evident in this type of knowledge, as it is about learning to do (Knight, 2002).

In a similar way, Cochran-Smythe and Lytle (1999) describe the following taxonomies of knowledge which the teacher needs to have to boost confidence to face the classroom situation, and which can either be propositional or practical.

- (a) Knowledge of practice gained from experts.
- (b) Knowledge in practice acquired through daily practice and reflection.
- (c) Knowledge for practice where both knowledge of practice and knowledge in practice are pulled together (Kelly, 2006; Wood, 2007).

These kinds of knowledge are often acquired in different ways. For example:

- a) Knowledge of practice is often acquired from outside experts in formal workshops. This kind of knowledge occurs through an agent in out of school arranged workshops. At the same time, this knowledge is propositional, as it is acquired in formally arranged settings.

b) Knowledge in practice is where knowledge is based on daily practice. Learning here may be incidental and spontaneous through trial and error. Correspondingly, knowledge in practice can be related and is linked to conceptual knowledge in practice. Procedural knowledge applies here, as it is practical and considers context. Bernstein (1999) refers to this kind of knowledge as “horizontal knowledge” and Eraut (2004) calls it “cultural knowledge”. This kind of knowledge is not explicit, as it is acquired through practical engagement and experiences which occur incidentally during teaching.

c) Knowledge for practice features when both knowledge of practice received from experts and books together with knowledge in practice are combined. Teaching in this kind of knowledge is based on content used and on incidental engagement. Kelly (2006) is also of the opinion that teachers who are referred to as ‘experts’ are those who consider knowledge in practice and knowledge of practice. Furthermore, Schon (1983) talks of cyclical engagement of knowledge reconstruction. This is the expected knowledge base teachers can use to engage in the teaching with maximum efforts.

The discussion which follows is based on what could be considered to enhance better teaching and learning as a follow up to findings in different studies conducted.

Kelly (2006) claims that the education system needs teachers who are adaptive experts. Modern learning needs teachers who are diagnosticians, knowledge organisers and skilled enough to assist learners acquire more skills and knowledge. Wood (2001, p. 281) asserts that teachers are not only “users of pedagogical knowledge but preservers, disseminators and creators of knowledge”. She notes further that it can be in the quality of teachers where the quality of learners’ educational experience could be developed.

Darling-Hammond (2006) further articulates that it can be knowledge of subject matter which can make teaching more responsive. At the same time, Kelly (2006) asserts that experts represent phenomena in a more accurate and inclusive manner. Expert teachers can solve problems in their work, as they have perceptions of classroom practice which are multi-dimensional. However, Hattie (2003) notes that expert or novice and experienced teachers may have the same CK but experience would allow for different organisational skills to organise the content knowledge.

The ACT programme is proposed as a qualification (which replaces the ACE) designed to strengthen existing skills qualified teachers possess. Its purpose is to assist teachers to

develop their potential by providing an advanced understanding of current thinking and methodology (Ebrahim et al., 2012).

In this programme, subjects teachers teach in the FP such as languages (HL and EFAL), Mathematics and Life skills are addressed in a way that different methodologies can be used for teachers to practice and reflect critically on how they teach.

Advancement about knowledge in teaching should spread good practices and teachers should be prepared well to teach effectively. CK, PCK and curricular knowledge cannot simply come from nowhere, but teachers can also learn from institutions, books, training or workshops from which strategies to teach can be initiated. Much as trial and error can be beneficial, existing knowledge from books and institutions is essential and can be used for experiential teaching and reflection practices (Kelly, 2006).

The minimum requirements for teachers, according to the Draft Policy on Minimum Requirements for Qualifications in Education, is that teachers should have the following knowledge to teach effectively, as can be seen in Table 1 below (DHET, 2011).

Table 1: Knowledge required for teaching from the Minimum Requirements for Qualifications in Education (DHET, 2011)

Disciplinary knowledge	Pedagogical knowledge	Practical knowledge	Fundamental knowledge
Subject content knowledge. - Understanding of subject discipline. - Knowledge of education as a discipline such as learning theories and curriculum studies.	Generic pedagogic skills. - Teaching, classroom management and assessment. Pedagogic content knowledge (PCK) Teaching methods, explanation.	Study of practice. - Classroom practice. - Workplace learning.	Communicative competence in second language. - Academic literacy's. Information communication technologies.

Grossman (1990, p. 4) asserts that teacher education research has not paid much attention to the “professional knowledge base and the content of professional knowledge teachers bring to the teaching profession”. She further highlights that the cornerstone for knowledge for teaching is based on CK, PCK, and curricular knowledge that teachers need to teach. As a way of engaging with the above claim, this study chose to explore teachers’ knowledge base, with the focus on the EFAL/HL proficiency level teachers have when then they enrolled for ACT.

Grossman (1990) highlights that teachers, after pre-service, would be assumed to have disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. According to Morrow (2007), teachers struggle to use resources systematically as they lacked pedagogical content knowledge to be used together with the available materials. When they have to use them they would use them unsystematically with no consideration of “cognitive skills and conceptual knowledge” (Morrow, 2007 p.58)

As a follow up on identified knowledge gaps by teachers, the Presidential Education Initiative (PEI) research project (1997-1998) researched topics such as subject teaching, teaching methods and school development. Findings in the PEI research proved that pedagogy and implementation of subjects and assessment have been a problem, as teachers lacked concepts of subject knowledge they had to teach (Morrow, 2007). Additionally, lack of teachers’ content knowledge is assumed to hinder better execution of classroom practice and required standards to teach meaningfully.

Bertram (2011) points out that teachers’ attend workshops, but little progress has been observed in learner performance. She also argues that many professional development programmes do not consider the knowledge teachers need to have and how this knowledge can be acquired. Wilson and Berne (1998) posit that if learners have to attain higher standards, then teachers who teach them should have a required amount of CK and PCK to be able to teach well. This means that if ways of learner achievement are to be enhanced in new ways, new ways of teaching need to be considered, as curriculum reform cannot automatically lead to changed practices.

Furthermore, Wilson and Berne (1998) argue how much knowledge teachers get in the curriculum changes in the American context. These curriculum changes are compared with

those of the South African education system which have been in effect since 1994, but with slow progress evident towards better teaching and learning practices (see Bertram, 2011). Curriculum changes should cater for trained personnel to effect these changes. This has been identified in SACMEQ (2002), PIRLS (2006 and 2011) and ANA results (2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014), studies conducted that show that teachers are not well equipped to implement the curriculum reforms.

In addition, Bantwini (2009, p.120) mentions that “cascading model or adult pull out programmes” in professional development programmes do not support the translation of new knowledge into classroom practice. On the same note, Morrow (2007) highlights that teaching is not the same as information circulation, which is noticed in development programmes and teachers’ classrooms. However, Moore and Hart (2007) explain that new curriculum ventures support literacy development, as per this study, but in practice implementation is poor because of a lack of support and monitoring.

Similarly, Kallaway (2007, p, 9) points out that the “top down policies do not consider problems teachers encounter in implementing the curriculum reforms”. He mentions the desired outcomes or policies bypassing teachers’ insights which may not give the required results. This top-down approach is evident in the South African system, as few or no inputs come from teachers when curriculum changes are initiated.

According to Darling-Hammond (2006), programmes that can conceptualise are those which consider what teachers need to learn as practitioners in their teaching practices. However, teachers’ voices on knowledge about the ‘what’ and ‘how’ to teach have been ignored. At the same time, Hiebert, Gallimore and Stigler (2002) assert that knowledge should enable exploration and acquisition of ideas that synthesise information. Knowing what ACT students bring to the programme will help in the ‘what’ and ‘how’ they teach, as the current view among teachers is lack of content and PCK. The ACT assumes to develop student teachers’ reflection on being change agents in their roles.

Darling-Hammond (2006) affirms that approaches where research is brought to teachers, then the knowledge base can be built and improved. These approaches could lead to a knowledge base which is trustworthy. Other researchers call this type of knowledge craft knowledge because it is based on contextual and concrete factors. Similarly, Adler et al. (2002), agree that teachers’ conceptual knowledge is a problem in South Africa, and knowledge of subject

matter for teaching is an important issue in classroom practice. Bantwini (2009) and Morrow (2007) point out why these developmental programmes are not likely to improve knowledge for teaching, stating it is because content is generalised without considering various needs of individuals. This may be one reason that CK, PCK and personal knowledge which focuses on teachers' experiences, is still low FP teaching and learning in South Africa.

This study, which looks at the knowledge base teachers have, might be useful to shape the ACT programme in addressing what teachers mostly lack in their classroom practice. The assumption is that things will be different with the ACT programme as teachers can reflect on topics taught and on how to improve when teaching the same topic.

Wilson and Berne (1998) examined the guiding principles of high quality examples of professional development, which focus on curriculum and pedagogy on what teachers learn and how they are taught. In the ACT programme a baseline test describes what knowledge teachers bring to the programme. The findings give an opportunity to understand what subject matter and pedagogy teachers have and how teachers teach in the Foundation Phase.

Morrow (2007) assumes that teachers' roles are to organize systematic learning which could then lead to teachers' professional practice, improved knowledge and improved competencies. In addition, Hiebert et al. (2002) agree with Morrow on how teachers' knowledge of teaching could be transformed into a professional knowledge base for teaching. They highlight that practitioners' knowledge needs to be transformed into knowledge suitable for the improvement of a knowledge base for teaching (Hiebert et al., 2002).

This kind of improved knowledge base of teachers was evident when Kelly (2006) analysed the beliefs of practitioners seen as good teachers of language by advisors and inspectors in the Department of Education. The findings were that these teachers used a whole language approach where reading, writing and text is taught together, as these language components cannot be taught in isolation. Feinman-Nemser (2003) states also, that teachers need to learn approaches suitable for the subject matter they teach. A language teacher cannot be given Mathematics to teach without content knowledge and the strategies to teach the subject.

Kennedy (2002) claims that craft knowledge is based on tacit knowledge, which is through interest and reflection. This kind of practice makes teachers more satisfied with the efforts and changes they make in the classroom. Kennedy (2002) contrasts craft knowledge to systematic knowledge. Craft knowledge is in favour of competencies concerning content and

acquired through experience, referred to as idiosyncratic. In contrast, systematic knowledge is prescriptive, received, abstract, codified, and tends to consider “should or ought” statements (Kennedy, 2002, p. 3).

Additionally, Shulman (1986, p. 8) attempts to understand “what are the sources of knowledge? What does a teacher know and when does he or she know it? How is new knowledge acquired, old knowledge retrieved and both combined to form a new knowledge base? How is content knowledge presented to learners in the way they would understand it?”

2.4. The language and literacy focus of the study

Howie et al. (2006, 2011), in the PIRLS report and other research conducted in South Africa by the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA), has shown that many learners achieve poor results. Similarly, Wilsenach (2013) highlights that South African learners acquire lower literacy levels in their primary school years. Recent 2013 ANA results revealed 46 % literacy scores. According to the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) (2012), the findings were that reading, comprehension and writing, some of the key elements of language acquisition, have not been well developed in learners in the Foundation Phase (FP). Foundation Phase learners read at 120 words per minute (wpm) below the average benchmark of the expected 160 (wpm).

As this study focuses on EFAL and HL, English in education has exposed qualities of unevenness, needing a lot of support in teachers and students or learners alike. Kress (2000) suggests that multiliteracies and multimodal-based pedagogies have to be increased to incorporate better acquisition of language.

Since this study is an exploration of Foundation Phase teachers’ knowledge that they bring to the ACT programme, with the focus on EFAL and HL, definitions and models of literacy are discussed in order to initiate the debates involved in teaching literacy.

The Action Plan (2014 to 2025) prioritises that language and Mathematics competencies should increase by the end of 2025. Since language results have been identified as dismal in the studies conducted, UNESCO Literacy Decade (2003-2013) and Education for All (EFA) seek to increase literacy rates by 50% at the end of 2013. The content areas learnt in HL and EFAL - listening and speaking, reading, phonics, handwriting and writing - can be achieved

when appropriate teaching models are considered (DBE, 2011). Content areas taught in EFAL are explained below.

In listening and speaking, teachers have to teach learners by giving instructions, reciting and singing songs and rhymes. Learners have to listen to short stories and non-fiction text told or read from big books or posters. When teaching phonemic awareness and phonics, learners are taught to identify letter-sound relationships. Learners are taught to build and break down letter words taught, like mat, sat etc

In reading, shared reading is demonstrated by the teacher and learners have to read with the teacher raising the voice at the beginning of a sentence and pausing when there is a full stop. Vocabulary is learnt using flash cards. Group guided reading is guided by a teacher, where the groups read the same story using the reading strategies taught in HL. During independent reading learners read picture story books individually.

Writing activities focus on learners writing lists with headings and choosing a caption to match pictures. With the help of the teacher the learner has to write a caption for the picture. All these content areas are taught aiming to enhance the literacy of learners.

Following is a definition of literacy and how it improves language acquisition.

2.5. What is literacy?

Street (2007) defines literacy as the ability to read and write and to learn sounds and read textual print. Furthermore, he describes teaching literacy as based on teaching methods, which can be phonics versus whole language or code-based versus meaning-based reading. In addition, literacy can be distinguished between autonomous and ideological models of literacy. Trudell and Klass (2011) identify success in literacy learning in association with cognitive and social benefits that sustain development in education. At the same time, the

authors state that it has been identified that learners were not able to become independent readers due to a lack of cultural, linguistic and pedagogical realities. English HL or EFAL is the language of power, and models which are beneficial for fitting into the global world are discussed in the next section.

2.6. Models of literacy

As EFAL and HL has been a subject of debate, English literacy, emergent literacy and early literacy contribute to learning a First Additional Language (FAL). As Lenyai (2013) defines Literacy as the ability to read, write and comprehend well to language acquisition, different models of literacy are discussed briefly in this study. Street (1984, 1996) and Gee (1990) identify two models, namely, the autonomous and ideological models. These models of Literacy provide guidance to the different approaches adopted in teaching literacy.

The autonomous model assumes that Literacy can be effective in other social and cognitive practices. This model is referred to as neutral and of general application and can be associated with the knowledge of practice.

In contrast, the ideological model assumes that literacy varies from one context to the other. It posits that Literacy is a social practice. The way people read depends on how much knowledge they have. This model can be associated with knowledge in practice.

Similarly, Gee (1990) and Street (1984, 1996) assert, as initiators of New literacy studies, that literacy cannot be learnt in formalised situations only, but is a social practice. This is when the effects of socialisation are constructed in literacy. Learners need to be literate to be able to fit in the world, as literacy is all around us.

Correspondingly, Barton, Hamilton and Ivanic (2000) give the following characteristics to literacy:

Social practices and events embedded in texts.

Literacy associated with life experiences.

Power relations and patterns of social practices.

Purposeful practices in literacy embedded in cultural and social goals.

Literacy acquired through informal learning and a sense of meaning to be developed in formal settings.

Schools have a role to give opportunities for learners to be acquainted with language compatible with the needs in the world; hence EFAL has to be taught well to learners.

Other literacy models include, literacy as information processing skills, literacy as access, literacy as critical thinking, literacy as metaphor and literacy as language of instruction (Klass & Trudell, 2011). Each model may either be classified as the ideological or as the autonomous model. Following is a discussion of each model.

Literacy as information processing skills

This is a view of literacy model where reading and written text is understood. Snowling and Hume (2005, p. 207) assert that it can be through writing, when communication is possible, and through reading, when text is understood. Reading skills can be word recognition from sound and giving meaning to the word. According to Byrne (2005, p. 105-106), “learning to read (especially in English) is a prolonged affair, and learners’ motivation needs to be factored in. No theory of successful reading development gets by without postulating a substantial amount of exposure to printed language”. Reading efficiently is about the ability to read independently. Reading efficiently is within the ideological model because it promotes processing information in order to understand the meaning of the texts. This view is grounded in a socio cultural paradigm.

Literacy as access

It is through language that access to economical, educational and personal opportunities is possible and is one way of boosting confidence and enhancing human capacity. Doors are opened if one is literate, as there are obviously a variety of human benefits (Sen, 1999). For instance, Sen explains how crucial language makes it possible to gain knowledge and skills as per multilingual societies. Literacy as per the needs of the society have opened the doors for participation and gaining access to societal roles. Zubair (2001), in the study conducted in a Pakistani community, highlights this Literacy as a societal need. This view of literacy may be classified within the autonomous model, where literacy is identified with being able to read and write formal expository, highly edited, content-oriented, de-contextualized and non-collaborative/individualised texts. Mbatha states, “The mastery of this form of literacy is

assumed to be necessary for economic development, the development of bureaucratic institutions and government.” (Mbatha, 2010, p. 57).

Literacy as a social practice

This kind of literacy is situated from experience and considering the social context. Phillips and Lonigan (2005) assert that socio-cultural context has a significant influence on the development of literacy. Context plays an important role in learning a language, as a strong language development depends on which language is spoken in that community. This kind of model can be linked to the ideological approach, as aspirations of reading are based on how participants in reading programmes, initiated by the DBE, for example, impact on certain individuals. Reading and writing activities in a certain context show the culture and values of that context. Furthermore, Molosiwa (2007) highlights that reading and writing also has a great link in the wider cultural context. Most communication around us is in writing, which means literacy is an important factor in the general society. For instance, programmes like AIDS awareness, amongst others, are those which need individuals to be aware of printed text as most of the communication is in writing. This shows that literacy is a means of understanding pressing issues in the daily lives of people. This model can be applied to the learning context by allowing learners reflect about their relevant daily experiences.

Literacy as critical thinking

Reflection and critical thinking are skills which are important in processing information. This may be through critical reflection when independent reading ability is achieved. Every human being needs to be able to read to fit into the world. This kind of model can be linked to an ideological approach. Learners, here, can critique a text, which can lead being an independent reader as well as a critical thinker. A socio-cultural approach is where social change is possible because this model encourages learners to read with understanding and to evaluate and give personal opinions about what they read.

Literacy as metaphor

According to Powell (1999), literacy is regarded as a human right and a moral imperative, for example, through speaking, where one voices personal feelings. Literacy can liberate the mind of a person. Powell (1999) affirms that literacy programmes can enhance an individual's desire to read. In South Africa these programmes have been introduced in many communities as awareness programmes. The autonomous model features here because vision, change, awareness and motivation to read is connected to political wisdom. This model also encourages learners to read with understanding and to evaluate and give personal opinions about what they read.

Literacy as language and instruction

The success of teaching and learning depends on the language of instruction. Snowling and Hulme (2005, p.101) assume that "reading is naturally based on oral fluency in the language of instruction". LOLT which is the mother tongue of learners has good effects in language acquisition. This means local language will be preserved if literacy programmes are offered in a language which is known to participants. To be functional in society one has to use the language known to one. However, education initiatives often recommend a multilingual society.

The DBE (2010) recommends a communicative approach and Total Physical Response (TRP) as the most suitable method to introduce additive bilingualism. The communicative approach means "aiming to get learners ready for the world out of the classroom" (Kilfoil & van der Walt, 1997, p. 21). In most schools the LOLT is not the language spoken by the learners. Although EFAL should be developed for preparation of Grade 4, this should be developed concurrently with the Home Language (HL). Trudell and Klass (2011) further claim that if a literacy programme has to be taught, it should suffice from the language which is known by learners as First Additional Language (FAL) will not be mastered. Autonomous and ideological models feature here, as both knowledge of practice and knowledge in practice are coined together.

However, Lenyai (2011) disagrees that Home Language can be transferred to the learning of the First Additional Language. She claims that the language structure for African languages is

not the same as those for English, but feels this aspect is debateable and needs to be substantiated.

Joubert et al. (2008) describe what is referred to as New Literacy Studies (NLS), where literacy has a social, cultural and political perspective and is not an individual practice. They recommend that for the development of literacy a balanced approach is when reading for meaning is considered.

Correspondingly, the New London Group (NLG) (2000) assert that literacy needs to prepare learners by taking into account the pedagogic multiliteracies of the 21st century, which are situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing and transformed practice (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). It is in the teacher knowledge test where these approaches are evident and what body of knowledge teachers have acquired in teaching language in FP.

2.7. What is the CK and PCK needed by FP teachers when teaching EFAL?

There are five areas of knowledge and skills required to teach Literacy in the FP:

Perspectives and the Processing continuum:

Teachers in classrooms should strategise so that the teaching plan encompasses skills and methods in a process that provides an opportunity for learners to achieve the required outcomes (Joubert et al., 2008). The language is acquired as a process and cannot be learnt in one method or approach.

Behaviourist perspective of teaching reading, phonological and phonic awareness and writing:

According to behaviourists, reading involves technical and mechanical skills. This approach is also known as the bottom-up approach in which reading proceeds from parts to the whole. Joubert et al. (2008, p. 227) assert that “learners who succeed best at reading and writing are phonologically aware, understand the alphabet principle, able to interact with text and have a working knowledge of phonetics”. The teacher should be able to develop these skills maximally.

Auditory processing (listening and speaking):

Joubert et al. (2008) cite listening and speaking as the first step required for the acquisition of language and gathering of information. Learners here are expected to listen to questions and respond appropriately. This can occur when learners listen to a story, rhyme, song, jokes, riddles, messages, poems and show understanding and respond appropriately.

Views of teaching reading (psycholinguistic perspective):

The psycholinguistic perspective holds the view that reading progresses from the whole to parts. It is also known as the top-down approach. In this perspective, reading is a social aspect, as around us everything is in printed text. It can be through a balanced approach where reading is developed as the learner is developed in different reading aspects. This can be achieved when the top-down approach is used because meaning is considered in this approach (Joubert et al., 2008).

Methods of teaching reading and strategies:

Methods to teach reading should be varied, as no one single method can develop learners to read as expected (Joubert et al., 2008). These approaches, which are the alphabet approach, phonic approach, eclectic approach, look and say approach, language experience approach and balanced approach, are explained at length in 2.11. Effective FP teachers should be able to choose appropriate methods for the learners in their class.

Hugo and Lenyai (2013, p. 103) describe three reading models that inform practice:

The code emphasis-transmission or bottom-up model:

In this model, alphabet and phonic approach is evident and learners have to decode words in order. Text is emphasised here with no consideration of the background to FAL. Here knowledge is transmitted. The emphasis is on mechanical skills, as single words or sentences are taught and comprehension is considered last. Reading is ordered hierarchically and systematically.

The meaning emphasis-transactional or top-down model:

Meaning is given priority in this model. The reader bases his or her reading skills on life experience where prediction, syntax and semantics assist in working out the meaning. Balanced or whole language approach is suitable here because the learner is developed holistically. It is believed that learners have accumulated some experience of printed text before they come to school. They are encouraged to read silently and independently to develop reflection and comprehension.

The interactive model:

In this model both code emphasis and meaning emphasis are combined together, as concepts and text are considered. Materials used in this model need careful selection because they can lead to poor reading. Decoding and comprehension are both emphasised. This means that different methods can be used when reading is modelled. However, meaning, interactive practices and the balanced approach are most suitable.

The main analysis tool in this study is to look at responses on what content and PCK teachers bring to the ACT programme with the focus on the language skills. These skills from the CAPS document (DBE, 2011) are listening and speaking, reading and phonics, writing and handwriting, thinking and reasoning and language structure.

Joubert et al. (2008) assert that it can be through literacy when learning is possible. Additionally, they note that teachers are expected to know what they teach in a way that will make learners understand. In addition, Cummins (1999) asserts that when literacy instruction is developed well, appropriate cognitive skills can be enhanced. Hugo (2010) notes that teachers should have significantly different strategies to encourage learners to process language acquisition and they should develop accuracy in language teaching strategies which enable the transfer of content to learners.

The expected improvement in language proficiency levels of learners as researchers say is teacher's knowledge of how to improve reading, writing, comprehension skills in their classes. Additionally, Maphumulo (2010) and Msimango (2010) have highlighted that it can be through reading that new information is attained. Similarly, CAPS (DBE, 2011) suggests that in the Foundation Phase, text with pictures can be used to develop vocabulary. On the same note, Wessels (2011) asserts that it is through a language rich environment where learners' ability to read and their comprehension of the text can be developed. De Sousa and

Broom (2011) also acknowledge that scholastic demands of the educational curriculum depend on developed language skills for learning to be successful.

Attributes of an ideal literacy teacher are:

Knowledge on how to teach language including phonemic awareness, word recognition, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension (DBE, 2008).

A love of reading.

A belief that practice can influence children's learning.

Knowledge of how to deal with common language errors.

Correspondingly, it has been highlighted in the Handbook for Teaching Reading in the Early Grades (DBE, 2008) that a teacher should plan reading in such a way that skilful readers are produced. This can be achieved by providing a varied and rich literacy environment.

2.8. Additive bilingualism in primary schools

In the CAPS document, additive bilingualism is the ability to speak fluently and understand two languages; hence, two languages are learnt: HL and FAL (DBE, 2011). However, multilingualism refers to the ability to speak, write and understand many languages. Mbatha (2011) states that multilingualism is promoted in the South African constitution (1996) for learners to be literate in their home language and in additional languages. The constitution considers the diverse backgrounds of learners in schools.

On the same note, Lenyai (2011) argues that South African schools consider the teaching of a first or second language because of the multilingual nature of the country. However, Lenyai is concerned whether teachers in poor communities are competent to teach additional languages, as they may not have resources to develop EFAL because FAL should be taught in a well-resourced classroom.

It has been researched that teachers have difficulty teaching English because they do not speak the language proficiently enough. They depend on the English they learnt at school. CAPS, which has been the revision of the NCS has the aim that by the end of Grade 3 children would have been prepared and be developed in communication skills and be able to

read. At the same time, the key to achieving the expected goals as per CAPS is dependent on what expertise teachers have (DBE, 2008).

Additive bilingualism in CAPS is encouraged, because competence in two languages, of which one of them should be HL and the other English, in preparation for Grade 4 is needed where all subjects are taught in English. The DBE (2011, p. 8) claims that “children can transfer literacy skills gained from home language to first additional language”. When home language is developed well, it becomes easy to build up FAL skills. The methods (also referred to as PCK in Shulman, 1987) that can be used to develop FAL skills are based on listening to stories, shared reading, guided reading, group reading and total physical response (TPR); (Hugo & Lenyai, 2013).

It is implied in the CAPS policy document that teachers should have content and PCK about how to develop learners to read and communicate well in the FAL. English is used in most schools as it is preferred by parents, whether as the HL or FAL (Heugh, 2002).

2.9. Improvement of EFAL with the focus on reading, writing and language structure

According to the National Reading Strategy and Reading to Learn campaign (RTL) (DBE, 2008, 2009), low language competency has been associated with low levels of language skills, where students and learners may not understand and comprehend a written text. In Australia RTL has been used to quickly improve reading and handwriting skills. These low levels of language skills have been observed in South African colleges and universities where students cannot communicate sufficiently in English. Furthermore, according to the DBE (2008) teachers’ competency levels in the teaching of literacy, reading and writing are underdeveloped. A method such as rote learning is often used, which limits the understanding and critical engaging with language. Correspondingly, it has been evident in sub-Saharan Africa that poor literacy is a result of a lack of pedagogical, cultural and linguistic realities, which has also been evident in the South African education system.

The National Reading Strategy and Reading to Learn campaign (DBE, 2008, 2009) aims at improving reading competencies of learners because reading is considered to be part of nation building. For instance, it is through reading where new information is assessed in

lifelong learning. In the same vein, Trudell and Klaas (2011, p. 22) note that, “Literacy is correlated with freedom, power, effective learning, critical thinking and self-esteem” (also see Gee, 2000 and Street, 1993). The stages of reading development are pre-reading, the emergent reader, the early reader, the developing reader and the independent reader (DBE, 2008). Following is an explanation of approaches or methods used in reading. Foundation Phase teachers should have an understanding of these approaches and be able to use them appropriately.

2.10. Reading approaches or methods

Trudell and Klass (2011, p. 28) assert that literacy programmes which become successful are those which share common aspects such as:

“Pedagogical features such as attention to the development of reading skills, ensuring that learning proceeds from known to the unknown, taking teachers experience into account in the development of materials and methods;

Linguistic features such as attention to orthography;

Features of cultural context, such as affirming the cultural environment of the community and tapping into the motivations for learning found in that environment”.

The next section describes the nine approaches used to enhance the pedagogical, linguistic and cultural features of reading.

The alphabet method

This is the method where learners read letters of the alphabet in isolation before reading text. The teacher introduces letters of the alphabet out of context, introducing learners to single letters, which encourages reading from parts to the whole, referred to as the bottom-up method. The focus is on the sounding of letters rather than the meaning. However, this method is seen as time-consuming and it delays progression to natural reading (Joubert et al., 2008, p. 89). Learners are introduced to letters before reading and assessed on reading single words. CAPS (DBE, 2011) does not encourage this kind of learning, as letters should be taught from a story or passage so that learning in context is encouraged. The behaviourist view also applies in this method, as reading is seen as a detached skill from other skills like writing, speaking and phonics. Learners are taught to identify letter sounds and letter names

and to be able to spell and identify the letters of the alphabet in words. Learners can play “I spy” games where letters can be associated with objects (Joubert et al., 2008; DBE, 2008).

The phonic method

According to (DBE, 2011, p.15) “Phonemic awareness is the first stage of learning which is to decode written text” Likewise, Joubert et al. (2008) explain that phonemic awareness is when words are formed and pronounced. Sounding of words, referred to as phonemes, is different to writing of words, or letters referred to as graphemes. Learners are taught the concept formation as well as the terminology in the classroom. Making sense of words is the great advantage in this method. Joubert et al. (2008, p. 89) further note, the “phonic method connects the visual and auditive where meaning and syntax of word” is considered. A vowel followed by a consonant to form a word is learn, for example, c + a + t. The word can be sounded as c a t = cat. A sentence can be composed: The cat sat on a mat.

Sounding of the word can be taught by associating with writing letters on air, on sand and with illustration using pictures or flash cards. The DBE (2011) concurs and describes this method as effective, where comprehension and fluency are put into practice. Different words are learnt as per the prescription for each grade. Hugo and Lenyai (2013) link this method to the code emphasis model where mechanical skills of reading are emphasised before comprehension. The behaviourist view features in this method.

The whole language approach

Language is used for more than just reading. All five skills in language learning: listening and speaking, reading and phonics, writing and language structure (DBE, 2011) are taught. Comprehension and meaning are emphasised in this method, using reading and available text. Joubert et al. (2008) explain this integration as the thematic approach. Hugo and Lenyai (2013) link the meaning emphasis model to this approach, which is concept driven. The Psycholinguistic view features in this approach. This involves the top-down approach, where the teachers introduce learners to sharing their personal news and experiences. Learners can contribute to classroom discussions, using language for different purposes, for example, apologies or invitations to certain occasions. These skills should be demonstrated by the teacher.

The balanced approach

This is a reading approach where all the aspects of reading strategies are put together for the understanding of reading. The teacher critically decides on which strategies to use for learners to read and write better. Meaning and thoughtful decisions would be taken into consideration in this approach. Reflection and modification feature in this method to cater for individual needs. Reading aloud, guided reading, independent reading and reading together are the reading steps which could enhance reading (Joubert et al., 2008).

Shared reading (Reading aloud)

Referred to as shared reading, this would be demonstrated or modelled by an adult, either a teacher or parent. A large book, enlarged print or newspaper cuttings can be used where the whole class is involved during this reading process. The emphasis here is on how learners can predict, read titles, sound and pronounce the words, raising the voice at the beginning of the sentence, pausing after a comma and after a full stop. Learners would be expected to read and demonstrate the same approach. Interesting strategies can be used during shared reading, outlined as follows:

Rhyming of words as when reading the word “mean”, learners can come up with rhyming words like “lean”, “bean” etc.

Rhythm can be done by clapping when they come to a chosen letter, e.g. “**L**”, **L**ovely **L**ulu loves her **l**ollies.

Alliteration can be used where words start with the same letter, e.g. “Lucky Lucy”.

A song or puppet can be used.

Word friezes, where actions are depicted, and language games where flash cards are used can be used to develop spelling.

Group guided reading

According to Teaching Reading in the Early Grades (DBE, 2008), learners are grouped according to how the teachers assess them, which can be for reading abilities or specific needs. The teacher directs the reading process. A small group is supported as the learners read, talk and think their way through. However, teachers may group learners in different ways, such as according to their reading levels or abilities, for instance, using graded readers. Learners use the same copies of books. The teacher may focus on one group whilst others are

engaged in other reading activities. The teacher should scaffold the meaning by doing a mind map for key words and ideas.

Independent reading

This encourages learners to read for enjoyment, where colourful books can be read with predictable illustrations and learners can page through the books. This encourages fluency, which has been identified in responses teachers gave as problematic. Hugo and Lenyai (2013) link the balanced approach to the interactive model of reading because learners can read with confidence where sounding and meaning occurs.

The eclectic method

This method is referred to as a combined approach because it combines the phonic and the look and say method. It considers the sounding of words and helps in unlocking of words. Emphasis is placed on the communicative approach and on choosing various styles and strategies. Learners are taught to identify words and sound them. Learners would be able to unlock the words. Joubert et al. (2008) link this method to the emergent approach. Learners are taught to know sounds that make letters like “b a t”. They should know that the print starts from left to right and from top to bottom.

The language experience approach

In this approach reading and writing are based on real life experience where learners tell their own news and experiences. The learner tells own news and could give a title for the news they wrote. The teacher can write what the learners’ share which can be used as a reader learners can read to a friend. This encourages a lot of conversation between the teacher and the learners. The children create text which is common to the class and can be shared in writing or in a reading chart. Charts which relate to what the theme is can be made such as weather charts with pictures. Learners are more motivated when they read what they write because they read with greater understanding.

Writing in the Foundation Phase can be done using single words, simple sentences and paragraphs. Learners can transcribe or complete words or sentences and write guided passages. This can be done through copying from the board into books or folders (Joubert et al., 2008). The DBE (2011) concurs with Joubert et al., highlighting writing steps which are done in different FP grades, where learners have to label pictures, write lists and captions, complete sentences, write paragraphs and also do grammar. In this kind of writing

punctuation is also considered. Sequence as well as meaning is important when these activities are done. Hugo and Lenyai (2013) assert that language starts from learners telling their own news and they would further suggest that learners draw from what they think. Creative writing could follow because language is learnt as a social aspect. The Psycholinguistic view features in this approach.

In addition, encoding and not decoding of words is emphasised in this approach. Cultural language and understanding of language are taught together (Joubert et al 2008). In New Literacy Studies (NLS) (Gee, 2000; Street, 2004), literacy is recognised as a social practice. Socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) features in this approach. Learners can also dramatise stories they read.

The look and say method

This method is based on the “Gestalt theory”, where the whole part is learnt first and parts of the whole follow. The sentence is formed, words broken down, mingled and are then put together to form a sentence. Sometimes sentence strips are pieced together to form a sentence (Joubert et al., 2008). Joubert et al. describe the process thus, “The words, the sentence and the story are taught with the use of flash cards, sentence strips and story cards.” (2008, p 91). The phonic method features here because different letters are distinguished, for example, “r-at, m-at”; the word can be broken down and built again as r-a-t, r-at or rat; diagraphs can be recognised, such as “oo” as in “boot”, “ee as in “feet”, and so on; suffixes like “es”, “ly” can be used; and rhyming words like “sky, fly” etc can be recognised. Meaning and understanding is observed in this method as it starts from the whole to parts of the word, sentence or paragraph with a lot of repetition.

When looking at the above approaches and their limitations, a single approach to literacy development cannot be prescribed, but rather a more balanced approach needs to be considered. If teachers acquire PCK for literacy teaching from actual experiences they can also test knowledge acquired from other sources in the classroom. A wider knowledge base is beneficial in the enhancement of literacy for teachers’ knowledge to be enhanced as per the rationale of this study.

As this study is based on the teachers’ content knowledge and pedagogic content knowledge teachers bring to the ACT programme, these are the approaches FP teachers should have because the success of facilitating reading can depend on the combination of these different approaches, as learners acquire skills differently.

2.11. Introduction of English First Additional Language

The DBE (2011) highlights how teachers can introduce English First Additional Language by using puppets to show the interaction between the home language and FAL. Learners have to be introduced to a variety of oral text in the form of stories, rhymes, and oral instruction when learning FAL.

FAL can be taught through the following ways (DBE, 2011, p.10):

- “Choose a simple story, repetitive structure, which allows for vocabulary and grammar to be recycled;
- Keep the language simple, speaking slowly but naturally;
- Use gestures, pictures and real objects to support understanding in the story;
- Tell the story several times, gradually involving the children more and more by letting them in the refrains e.g. He huffs and puffs until he blows the house down.”

The above steps are a good introduction for the teacher to teach EFAL as studies indicate teachers face problems when using English as the LOLT in Grade 4.

Correspondingly, the DBE (2011) asserts that exposing learners to an additional language could be done through shared reading, using big books with enlarged print and illustrations. Emergent reading is developed at this phase. As reading has been problematic in education, Kilfoil and van der Walt (1997, p. 12) comment that “the purpose of learning of English should not be to communicate but to learn while communicating”.

2.12. Conclusion

In this chapter the four different kinds of knowledge: content, pedagogical content, curricular and pedagogic, are the key aspects which initiated the discussion. The definitions of these kinds of knowledge clearly indicated the required body of knowledge to develop teachers to

be experts in their classrooms. Forms of knowledge which are propositional and practical knowledge have also been discussed.

The literature review of different researchers indicates that a body of knowledge is required to enhance teacher knowledge. Models of literacy and approaches to learning language are reviewed in this study. Language is seen as a social, cultural, and economic practice because it is through language where communication is possible. Reading is also emphasised, as it is through reading written text where comprehension and understanding of language is possible. The next chapter describes the methods and methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter the research methodology and methods that were used to generate data for the study are discussed. Furthermore, the justification for using the research design is explained. The research design describes the research paradigm, research methods, research questions and sampling, research instruments, access to the research site, validity, reliability and trustworthiness, ethical issues and study limitations.

Cohen, Manion and Morris (2011) make a distinction between research methodology and research method. Methodology refers to the nature of inquiry, theoretical principles and assumptions and paradigms, for example, positivist, interpretive and critical theories (Creswell, 2007). Research approaches such as quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods are features of methodology in any research. However, methods are different ways used in a study to collect information and to analyse and interpret data (Cohen et al., 2011; Creswell, 2007). These aspects are discussed at length in the chapter.

3.2. Why the study was conceptualised

In the South African education system the knowledge base teachers have is paramount for the system to develop teachers who will be able to enhance how they teach and how learner's learn. It is believed that if numeracy and literacy can improve, teaching and learning can improve also in other subjects. This research has been necessary to investigate the knowledge base teachers bring to the ACT programme.

Since 2000, the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) has been offered as a way of deepening the knowledge in subjects teachers teach. However, there has not been much research in tracking exactly what teachers learnt through the ACE formal programme. Poor

numeracy and language performance in Grade 3 and grade 6 seems to indicate that formal programmes, like ACE, do not necessarily improve learners' achievement.

As a way of improving teacher performance, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), in 2011 renamed ACE to Advanced Certificate in Teaching (ACT) to retrain Foundation Phase teachers in subject content knowledge, principles and methodology in Grade R – 3.

3.3. Research questions

As this study is an exploration of the language knowledge base teachers bring to the Advanced Certificate in Teaching (ACT) programme, the following research questions guide this study:

- (a) What subject content knowledge regarding EFAL/ HL do Foundation Phase teachers have when they enrol on the ACT programme?
- (b) What pedagogical content knowledge in EFAL/HL teaching do Foundation Phase teachers have when they enrol on the ACT programme?
- (c) What are the teachers' personal beliefs about teaching language?

As a way of exploring the above topic and research questions, methodology and methods are discussed, beginning with research methodology.

3.4. Research Methodology

Cohen et al. (2011) explain that research methodology can either be qualitative, quantitative or mixed. The choice of methodology depends on which philosophy the researcher is oriented to and the type of research questions to be answered. Type of knowledge required in any research can either be factual, personal, informational or statistical. Additionally, each approach has a certain purpose to achieve, methods of conducting the research, and of collecting and analysing of data.

A qualitative methodology usually works with textual or visual data and a quantitative approach is statistical, working with data that can be counted. These approaches are looked at

and defined separately in this study. Definitions and discussion of qualitative and quantitative approaches follow.

3.4.1. Definition of qualitative research

Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 3) define qualitative research as “a situated activity that locates the observer to the world and involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world”. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring (see also Creswell, 2009; Maree, 2011). In this study the knowledge base teachers bring to ACT is explored in tests and interviews. Meaning participants give in both methods of data collection which are tests and interviews will be interpreted.

Additionally, Maree (2012) asserts that qualitative research is concerned with understanding social and cultural contexts and processes which seek to understand the ‘why’ and ‘what’ of research questions. In this study, the research questions, as indicated above, are the ‘what’ questions.

Maree (2012) further notes, qualitative research focuses on a single phenomenon and provides rich descriptive data of the phenomenon studied. The phenomenon in this study is the knowledge base teachers bring to the ACT programme. Participants in this study were asked to demonstrate the professional knowledge they bring to the ACT programme in tests and interviews conducted.

Cohen et al. (2011) assert that many methods can be used in qualitative studies which can contribute to the richness of data collection. In this study two data collection methods are used, namely, tests and interviews. For richness of data, rigour needs to be observed in a qualitative study. Formulation of research questions is based on situations observed (see also Creswell, 2007). The research questions formulated were based on the description of the subject content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge teachers bring to the ACT programme. This study utilised qualitative methods to uncover the knowledge base teachers have in the Foundation Phase.

It was hoped that responses given to the assessment test by teachers would reveal the knowledge base they have. Additionally, the assumption was that interviews conducted

would reveal more detailed meanings regarding the knowledge base teachers bring to ACT programme.

3.4.2. Definition of quantitative research

According to Maree (2012), quantitative research bases its objectives on numerical data. In quantitative data objectivity and generalisation are some of the elements which feature in this type of research. According to Ritchie and Lewis (2009), objectivity means that data collection should be neutral. The researcher should minimise his or her influence on how participants respond. Generalisation means that concepts cannot be equally true (Ritchie & Lewis, 2009).

Quantitative studies can be experimental or descriptive. In an experimental quantitative study, probable causality is established; however, in a descriptive study association with variables is established. Trends and relationships are described within the variables. This study is descriptive and a test is used to gather information from teachers and patterns and relationships were sought in the analysis of their responses (Cohen et al., 2011).

This study used mixed research methods with a combined quantitative, numerical approach and qualitative, text descriptive approach to answer the research questions. The responses from the test were textual and open-ended and sometimes responses were not what was asked. More probing was necessary to get clarity on the responses which were not clear in the tests. Interviews were conducted to get rich information for the study. Miller and Brewer (2003) refer to the use of both quantitative and qualitative data as triangulation. Triangulation is described as the use of different methods (Ritchie & Lewis, 2009). The next section is a discussion of the research design.

3.5. Research design

Punch (2009) defines the research design as a plan of conducting a research where respondents are selected. Data gathering techniques, data analysis and interpretation are features in the research design (see also Maree, 2011).

Also, the research paradigm is one of the components in the research design. A research paradigm is a theory that guides the way the research is done. Research paradigms can either

be interpretive, positivist, critical or feminist (Neuman, 1997; Maree, 2011; Cohen et al., 2011).

The research paradigm for this study is the interpretive paradigm where the knowledge base teachers bring to the ACT programme is explored. In the interpretive paradigm, approaches used are those that seek to understand how things happen in real life situations (Creswell, 2009). On the same note, Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991) define interpretive studies as assumptions people create and how they associate meanings as they interact with the world. Similarly, Myers (2008) describes the interpretive paradigm as focusing on the meanings people assign to society. Additionally, Walsham (1993) defines it as how we position our knowledge in real life. Furthermore, he explains the interpretive paradigm as a domain of social construction by human actors (1993).

The interpretive paradigm provided the platform of understanding the knowledge base FP teachers bring to the ACT programme. This study aimed at a description and understanding of the subject content and pedagogical content knowledge Foundation Phase teachers bring to this programme regarding EFAL.

Following are the sampling methods used in this study.

3.6. Sampling methods

Maree (2012) defines sampling as a selection of the population for study from a particular group of people. The sampling method can either be probability (random sample) or non-probability (purposive sample). Sampling in this study used purposive and convenience with a specific purpose of exploring the EFAL knowledge base FP teachers bring to ACT (Maree, 2012).

3.6.1 Sampling methods for the test

In a total of 98 students who were enrolled on the FP ACT programme in 2013, 86 wrote the test. The other 12 students did not write because they were absent on the date the test was written. Students registered for the Advanced Certificate in Teaching (ACT) programme are the sample for this study.

Qualitative approach was adopted with purposive sampling. Maree (2012) explains purposive sampling as popular in qualitative research as participants are chosen because of certain characteristics with the clear purpose of getting rich data (see also Cohen et al., 2011).

Table 2: Biographical details of the sample regarding grades taught and teaching experience.

N = 86

Grades taught	Percentage	Years of teaching	Percentage
Grade R	48.2	Less than 5	10.0
Grade 1	22.4	6-10	56.3
Grade 2	9.4	11-15	27.5
Grade 3	15.3	16+	6.2
Multi-grade	4.7		
Total	100%	Total	100%

A total of 86 Foundation Phase teachers completed the test. Additionally, the table above represents the teaching experience of the teachers in the sample for this study. Most participants (56%) had teaching experience of between six and ten years. More than a quarter of the sample had eleven to fifteen years experience (27.5 %). Only 10% of the sample had less than five years experience. Experienced teachers with more than fifteen years of experience make up a small proportion of the sample (6.2%). The knowledge base the teachers brought to the ACT programme varied because of the different experiences of participants and the grades that they taught. It can be observed that the sample did not have much experience of teaching Grade 1 to 3, as a bigger percentage of participants had Grade R experience. The knowledge base for the test is mostly that of Grade 1 to 3.

The ACT programme runs tutorial sessions in a range of learning centres such as Ladysmith, Pietermaritzburg and Edgewood campus. All ACT students in different centres were sampled. They wrote the tests in the centres where ACT programmes were run during the contact sessions in the first semester. The knowledge assessment test was designed to measure the kind of professional knowledge that Foundation Phase teachers bring to the ACT programme.

The importance of tests is that respondents are not passive data providers, but subjects of research. Testing aims to measure aspects such as ability, aptitude, attitude, achievement, competence, diagnostics and personality (Cohen et al., 2011).

Before tests were written by the bigger group, a pilot study in a local school was conducted. The study was done for the purpose of checking ambiguity, redundancies, length and timing of the questions asked (Cohen et al., 2011).

On the day of writing the test, the purpose of the test was explained: that it was to check the knowledge teachers bring to the study. The students were made aware that the tests would not have an impact on their studies. They were given an opportunity to get the clarity needed on questions from the test. Teachers signed consent forms.

3.6.2. Sampling for interviews

For the interviews, five participants who taught in rural and urban schools were sampled from the bigger sample, as it would be cumbersome and costly to have many interviewees because participants were transported to the interview site which was at UKZN. Interviews were done over two days and each participant was interviewed for 30 minutes. Purposive and convenience sampling was used to select the five participants for interviews from students enrolled in the ACT programme. From the 86 participants, after data from the tests was analysed, five participants were selected. Three were rural teachers and two were urban teachers. The sample considered those participants whose test answers could not be understood to get more clarity from them. The Pietermaritzburg centre was used to select the participants for interviews, as it was the most convenient. However, this type of sampling is not representative (Maree, 2012).

Turner (2012) asserts that interviews are conducted as in-depth information received from participant's viewpoints and experiences on a particular topic (interview protocol). At the same time, information in interviews is well rounded and thick (Creswell, 2007; Daymon & Holloway, 2002). Another advantage of interviews is that nonverbal, verbal, spoken and heard multi-sensory channels are observed (Cohen et al., 2011). During the interviews for the study, it was possible to see from the body language how the participants felt about some of the questions asked.

Gall and Borg (2003) highlight three formats for interviews: Informal conversation interviews, general guide approach, and standardised open-ended interviews. Similarly, Maree (2012), in agreement with Gall and Borg (2003), refers to interviews as open-ended, semi-structured and structured. Additionally, Neuman (1997) highlights types of interviews which can be telephone interviews and face to face interviews. Correspondingly, Creswell (2007) talks of face to face interviews, one on one, in person interviews, telephone interviews, focus group interviews and email internet interviews.

Cohen et al. (2011) concurs with Maree (2012) and Gall and Borg (2003) that, in an interview the conversation cannot be like a day to day conversation, but it is structured in questions asked by the interviewer. These questions are specific to the topic studied. For the purpose of this study, questions asked from interviewees were based on content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge that teachers bring to the ACT programme.

In this study, semi-structured interview questions were designed (See Appendix 2). Cohen et al. (2011) claim that the purpose of semi-structured questions is to give an opportunity to probe more on responses given. In this study semi structured questions are used to get a better understanding of the knowledge base teachers have in teaching First Additional Language. Face to face, one on one interviews were used for the five interviewees. These interviews emanated from teachers' responses on the language test questions from the bigger test.

3.7. Accessing the research sites

The test was conducted among students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal at different learning centres, namely, Ladysmith, Edgewood and Pietermaritzburg campuses. Representatives from the UKZN administered the test from the different centres and I administered the test in Ladysmith. Test administrators were able to access the ACT students, as the test was written on the day of the contact sessions. It was written in March 2013.

For the interviews, selected participants were from the Pietermaritzburg campus. These participants were selected because they were able to come to this centre, as they were teaching in local schools. Furthermore, it was convenient to select Pietermaritzburg students as the centre was local, inexpensive and speedy. Maree (2012) refers to this type of sampling

as convenience sampling because the population is selected on the basis of ease and convenient availability.

The respondents' tests were looked at and the five participants whose responses were not clear were visited in the contact sessions and asked to participate in interviews. With much persuasion seven participants agreed to be interviewed. Only three of the seven of the identified participant were available as I was preparing for the interviews and I had to get the other two participants from the student list. Fortunately they came on the arranged Saturday. The interviews were conducted on Pietermaritzburg campus as one on one, face to face interviews.

3.8. Trustworthiness, reliability and validity

Cohen et al. (2011) assert that minimising the amount of bias can achieve better reliability and validity. Nueman (1997) defines validity as "true" or "correct". In addition, he defines reliability as something stable. During the tests and interviews questions were clarified so that they were well understood by participants. The responses given were expected to be true and correct if they understood the question well. Further probing of the questions was done during interviews to check if the exact meaning which was transcribed was understood. This technique is referred to as member-checking.

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 991) refer to "trustworthiness to include credibility, applicability, dependability and conformability in the research". Validity is essential to qualitative and quantitative research. Cohen et al. (2011) assert that, validity is when honesty, richness and scope is assumed to have been achieved. Honesty and richness was possible, as participants gave their true understanding of the subject content knowledge they have and the pedagogical content knowledge they brought to ACT. Also, to further ensure trustworthiness during transcription of interview data, repeated and careful listening to the responses given was done to ensure no information was missed. The transcribed text was read many times to make sure the meaning embedded in the text was understood.

According to Maree (2012), it is generally accepted that the use of multiple data collection methods, referred to as triangulation, will lead to trustworthiness, validity and reliability. Different methods and sources can be used to check the integrity and inferences drawn from the data (Ritchie & Lewis, 2009, p. 46).

In analysing data, Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) data analysis from the test and themes from the interviews may have contributed to the trustworthiness of data. The member check was also done, as the transcribed data was given to the participants for them to check if everything they said had been included.

Findings were triangulated from test and interviews to identify and verify the knowledge of teaching literacy that the ACT teachers have.

3.9. Ethical considerations

Participants were contacted at the first contact session of the ACT programme during the first semester. The purpose of the research was explained fully to participants. They were told that they could withdraw from the study whenever they wanted to. Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality were stressed. Pseudonyms were used for names of people and places for confidentiality reasons. Participants were made aware that responses given would only be for the purpose of this study and would be kept in a safe place for the duration of the study and would be discarded at the end. When participants were fully aware of the intentions of the study, they signed the informed consent form (Maree, 2012). Ethical clearance was also obtained from the University ethics committee in the bigger study of which this is a part.

3.10. Data collection techniques

Data collection techniques used to generate data were: The teacher knowledge test constructed for exploring knowledge FP teachers have and the semi-structured interviews for probing further knowledge of teaching in the Foundation Phase. Eighty-six educators completed the teacher knowledge test, which aimed to measure teachers' content knowledge, and pedagogic content knowledge in the learning areas of mathematics, language and life skills.

The test consisted of Section A, with seven biographical questions, and section B, comprising of 18 CK and PCK questions. This study focused on eight language questions in the teacher knowledge test of 18 questions. In research questions 1 and 2, this test aimed to diagnose and describe the knowledge base about language CK and PCK that FP teachers bring to the ACT programme. The focus was on HL and EFAL, which was part of the bigger study.

As a follow up on the generalised knowledge derived from the test, five educators were interviewed using the semi-structured interviews through face to face, one on one interviews, which was prepared by the researcher. This was a follow up on some items which needed further probing from the test questions. In addition, the interviews gave an opportunity for the participants to provide in detail their knowledge and understanding of content and teaching approaches for teaching literacy in the Foundation Phase.

Cohen et al. (2011) maintain that interviews increase the comprehensiveness of data. Data collection becomes systematic and flexible for each respondent. Many short questions can be asked within a short time. Data is simple and can easily be compared and detailed. It is during interviews where inter-subjectivity (personal feelings) is observed. Multi-sensory channels are used where body language and non-verbal data is observed. In the interviews conducted for this study it was possible to detect through nonverbal and body language the veracity of what respondents said and they were probed further if the body language did not show this in the response given.

The teacher knowledge test gave an insight into the knowledge base teachers bring to the ACT programme. The semi-structured interview questions gave more detail on some questions which needed further probing (Cohen et al., 2011). According to Arsenault and Anderson (1998), semi-structured questions enable a deeper understanding on the issue being explored. A digital voice recorder (DVR) was used to record the responses during the interviews so that responses could be transcribed after the interviews were conducted. It would not have been possible to transcribe the responses during the interview session.

3. 11. Data analysis methods

Cohen et al. (2011) define analysis as a continuous and iterative process where data is managed, making sense of the evidence through descriptive accounts. Content analysis was used on the transcripts and tests to identify similar and different data in two types of data (Maree, 2012).

The test questions were open ended and teachers' textual responses to the test needed to be coded. In preparation for SPSS analysis, the ACT coordinators and I coded the tests, giving a code to similar responses given by participants. I coded and categorised the language questions, as it is the focus area of my study. Codes were given where common ideas were

grouped. For example, in a teacher's response to Question 3, "What do you think prevents some of your learners from learning to read fluently and with understanding in their mother tongue?"; Teacher 3 said, "Sometimes I use both English and isiZulu and they end up not knowing which is which". This response showed that the teacher located the 'problem' of how they teach and it could be assumed that they still had gaps in PCK and it was coded as such.

Cohen et al. (2011) state that one of the features of quantitative data is coding of data. This refers to the naming or labelling the researcher gives to text or an idea. Kerlinger (1970) defines coding as the translation of question responses and information given by respondents to categories for the purpose of analysis. Coding enables the researcher to be able to put together similar information.

The test was quantitative in nature and SPSS software was used to analyse the teacher knowledge test to seek patterns to responses. This is one of the techniques used in analysing quantitative data. An SPSS independent coder was appointed to apply statistical formulas and computations.

The audio recordings from interviews were transcribed, organised and coded. During transcribing, the exact words of respondents were transcribed. Inductive analysis of data was done, where common themes and patterns were identified and categorised. Data which was relevant to the research topic and of general meaning was coded and redundant data was put aside. Common themes were clustered and a central theme given. Content analysis was used to summarise the message content from the interviews (Maree, 2011; Cohen et al., 2011). Responses from the tests and interviews were described and compared.

3. 12. Limitations of the study

Some limitations experienced was that reliance on written tests limits the openness of questioning and no further probing is possible, except in the case of the teachers who were interviewed. The teachers' responses to the test items did not necessarily reveal the full extent of their understanding and knowledge of a topic. In addition, my position as an advisor in the district of some participants might have had an influence, as the interviewees may not have given honest responses. Some teachers wrote the test in fear and anxiety that their responses

would have an impact on their studies. Many teachers wrote for longer than the expected time, which was set at one hour. A language barrier was noticed during the writing of the test and the interview, as most participants were isiZulu speakers. This was evident when participants would ask for clarity on several test questions. I had to simplify questions as much as I could and used follow up questions during the interviews.

At first students I approached were not willing to participate in this study because they thought the interviews would impact negatively on their studies. Other limitations I encountered were access to participants for interviews. They were busy with their studies and were about to write end of the year examinations. I had to wait until they finished their examinations and set the interviews after that. Time constraints delayed the interviews because of non-availability of participants. Furthermore, participants were using public transport and operating within a short time could have an impact on how much data participants could give. Plummer (2001) highlights the negative impact of time constraints in the quality and quantity of data gathered.

On occasion, responses given by participants would digress from my questions and they would talk about frustrations they encounter in their classrooms. I battled to gather enough data for the research questions. Bruce (2007) highlights limitations with these questions: Is data from this interview sufficient? What entails sufficient data? Was this a good test or interview? What entails a good test or interview? As I viewed the way participants felt about tests and interviews, fear of failure and lack of confidence about their teaching was observed. As Bruce suggests, tests and interviews should be good or rephrased if participants deviate from what is asked. I listened to the concerns of the participants and sometimes asked questions again.

3.13. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to discuss the research design and methodology. Methods used to generate data during the research process were discussed. The relevance of the research design and methodology for this particular study was demonstrated and justification of data gathering methods and analysis of data was provided. Ethical considerations, trustworthiness, validity and reliability were discussed and the limitations of the study were also highlighted.

The next chapter is a presentation and discussion of data.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter the research design was identified and explained. The intention of the study was to explore the knowledge base that teachers bring to the ACT programme. With the use of the interpretive paradigm, teachers' knowledge and experiences in teaching First Additional Language (FAL) in the Foundation Phase were discussed. This study used two methods of data collection which included a teacher knowledge test and interviews.

This chapter presents the findings from the test data and semi-structured interviews. The test was completed by 86 FP ACT students, out of 98 students who registered for the programme. Not all students wrote the test because on the test writing days and the contact sessions, these students did not attend.

Following up on generalised knowledge derived from the test, five educators from the 86 who wrote the test were randomly selected for interviews. Three were teachers in schools based in a rural context and two were teachers in schools based in an urban context. This was a follow up on some items which needed further probing from the test questions. Further probing was necessary and the interviews were conducted to get more clarity on responses that teachers gave in tests. In addition, the interviews gave an opportunity for the participants to provide detail of their knowledge and understanding of content and teaching approaches for teaching literacy in the Foundation Phase.

In this chapter, the findings emerging from the test and interview questions are explained, discussed and interpreted. These findings include diverse kinds of subject content knowledge, pedagogic content knowledge (PCK) and general pedagogic knowledge domains that teachers bring to the programme about language learning and teaching.

4.2. Biographical details of the sample who wrote the test

Table 3: Biographical details of the sample regarding grades taught and teaching experience

N = 86

Grades taught	Percentage	Years of teaching	Percentage
Grade R	48.2	Less than 5	10.0
Grade 1	22.4	6-10	56.3
Grade 2	9.4	11-15	27.5
Grade 3	15.3	16+	6.2
Multi-grade	4.7		
Total	100%	Total	100%

The table above indicates what grades the teachers teach. It is observed that almost half of the sample is Grade R teachers, as 48.2 % indicates. This sample is weighted heavily towards Grade R, as they are the highest number in the ACT programme. The data indicates that half of the teachers enrolled in the ACT are Grade R teachers. The least participants are multi-grade teachers, at 4.7%. This indicates that the data about the knowledge base teachers bring to the ACT programme are mostly views from Grade R teachers because they are the largest sample in this programme, followed by Grade 1, Grade 3, Grade 2 and, lastly, multi-grade teachers.

More than half the participants (56.3%) have between 6 to 10 years teaching experience. Twenty seven percent of the sample has between 11 to 15 years teaching experience. A small number of more experienced teachers are observed in this study, with only 6.2% who have more than 16 years of teaching. Of participants with less than 5 years teaching experience, there are 10%. Thus 90% of the sample is teachers who have more than five years of teaching experience. Following is biographical data of the participants who were interviewed.

Table 4: Biographical data of participants interviewed

	Years of teaching	Grades taught	Classroom LOLT
T 1	12 years	Grade R	English
T 2	10 years	Grade 1	isiZulu
T 3	9 years	Grade 2	isiZulu
T 4	6 years	Grade R	isiZulu
T 5	5 years	Grade R	English

Participants interviewed have between 6 to 12 years teaching experience. Three participants in this sample are Grade R teachers because they made up 48.2 % in the study. One participant teaches Grade 1 and one participant is teaches Grade 2. The LOLT used mostly is isiZulu, with three isiZulu speakers and two English speakers.

The Pietermaritzburg centre ACT students were used to select the participants for the interviews as it was most convenient. However, this type of sampling is not representative (Maree, 2012).

4.3. The test respondents' mother tongue and LOLT used in the classroom

Table 5 below presents the data which answers the question: *What is your own mother tongue and language of learning and teaching in your classroom?*

Table 5: Mother tongue and LOLT

N=86

Mother Tongue	Percentage	Medium of instruction	Percentage
isiZulu	89.5	isiZulu	81.2
English	5.8	English	18.8
Other	4.7		
Total	100%	Total	100%

The test responses were in English, but, isiZulu was the most used language for learning and teaching (LOLT) in the sample who wrote the test, as indicated in the above table. This came up when the respondents had to indicate the LOLT they use at school. There were 89.5% isiZulu mother tongue speakers who wrote the test in this study. Teachers in the ACT programme mostly teach in rural schools with isiZulu as the LOLT, at 81.2 %. Fewer teachers use English as the LOLT, as 18.8% indicates in the table. These teachers would be teaching another FAL, because they have to teach FAL as a subject. Similarly, in the interviews three participants were isiZulu speakers because they were the most numerous in the study and two participants were English speakers.

Most participants in this study are isiZulu speakers. English First Language is one of the prescribed subjects to be taught in the Foundation Phase language as in CAPS (DBE, 2011). As teachers do not speak English, they struggle to teach it and unless it is well developed it would be a barrier to them. At the same time parents would also struggle to help their children if they do not speak English.

CAPS indicate that FP LOLT should be mother tongue (DBE, 2011). Additionally, the DBE (2008) Language in Education Policy (LiEP) emphasises that the mother tongue is compulsory in Foundation Phase, as it is believed that skills learnt in a mother tongue can be transferred more easily to a FAL. All five responses from the interviews confirmed the statement above, as they believe that the home language can be learned better because learners use it all the time, during play and in the home. Furthermore, Alexander (2002) concurs with the participant's responses and the LiEP (1997), that if the primary language is developed well, the child is able to communicate and be fully functional. In the interviews respondents agreed and concurred with Alexander's statement, as more time in the CAPS document is given to HL teaching. Participants mentioned eight hours maximum and seven hours minimum time allocated for teaching of HL, guidelines which they would have received in workshops or supplied from CAPS to every school.

However, in an investigation conducted by Mashiya (2011), findings were that Foundation Phase teachers in rural schools did not implement the LiEP as expected. Mashiya (2011) highlighted in her findings that teachers do not teach languages as stipulated by policy because they themselves are not proficient in the mother tongue spoken in different communities. Respondents in Mashiya's study highlighted that the education system would deploy them to schools where languages they are not familiar with is used. In these cases

teachers then resorted to teach in another language familiar to them. At the same time, teachers felt that teaching in isiZulu is a waste of time because learners use it most of the time. Direct versioning from English to African languages poses a problem, as borrowed words are used, for example, “January” translated to “Januwari”.

4.4. Knowledge domains of the respondents

The first test question is concerned with teachers’ personal reading practices. The table which follows presents data about the question: *How often do you read a newspaper/magazine or books for enjoyment?*

Table 6: Reading for enjoyment

N = 86

Read magazines/newspapers for enjoyment	%	Read books for enjoyment	%
2/3 times per week	48.2	Daily	35.3
Once a week	25.9	2/3 Times a week	30.6
Daily	16.5	Once a week	27.1
Seldom	9.4	Seldom	7.1
Total	100%	Total	100%

The majority of teachers in the sample (48.2%) indicate that they read magazines or newspapers 2 or 3 times a week. Those who read newspapers daily make up 16.5% of the sample. About a quarter of the sample (25.9 %) read only once per week, which means a quarter of participants do not read regularly. Reading a book for enjoyment is done daily at 35%, with an increased frequency as compared to reading newspapers or magazines. It is better to read a book daily than 2 or 3 times a week. However, it was expected that a much bigger number would read books daily, as teachers have to acquire more information from different sources as lifelong learners.

To concur with the statement above, teachers have seven roles to fulfil and one of them is to be lifelong learners (Government Gazette, No 29832 26 April, 2007). This means teachers

should always acquire new information so that they are more knowledgeable than their learners.

The patterns in this table indicate that not much reading is done by teachers, which means that it is unlikely that they encourage their learners to be regular readers. Molosiwa (2007) indicates that reading can be enhanced when a culture of reading is inculcated, but which is not evident to teachers in this study.

When comparing the responses above, it is shown that reading a magazine is done more than reading a book. It can be assumed that if the participants could use newspapers or magazines as resources, then they can have newspapers as resources than books as many teachers read them. Furthermore, the lack of reading material which teachers usually say contributes to reading problems can be overcome by the use of newspapers and magazines if newspapers are read more than books. Newspaper supplements such as “Learn with Echo” with stories suitable for young learners can be good resources for reading at Foundation Phase level if the teachers read them.

The Department of Education (2003) notes that reading cannot only be decoding of sounds and words, but also getting messages, and being an activity to solve problems, all of which need constant practice. Similarly, Inglis, Thomson and Macdonald (2000, p. 57) highlight that “Reading is one of the powerful ways of receiving ideas, information and stories.”

Reading is important for learning to take place. If teachers do not read as expected this means their knowledge and practice will be limited to what is prescribed for them to teach. It is likely that through a culture of reading that learners are encouraged to be frequent readers. Teachers should act as change agents, being proficient in a variety of competences (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999). This could be achieved through reading regularly.

4.5. Teachers’ personal knowledge about their learners’ literacy achievement

In the next section, teachers’ personal knowledge regarding learners’ literacy achievement is discussed.

Table 7: Problems in reading with mother tongue

What do you think prevents some of your learners to read fluently and with understanding in their mother tongue language?

N= 86

Problems in reading with mother tongue	%
Systemic reasons: too many languages/ learners start school late/ not enough time	14.5
Learners do not want to read/ do not understand/ lack confidence/ do not pay attention	22.9
Lack of resources and lack of support from parents	25.3
Nature of language difficulties in pronunciation	16.9
Use of mother tongue for instruction	10.8
Incomprehensible answer/ irrelevant response	9.6
Total	100

In the table above, the problems regarding the lack of fluent reading in a mother tongue are ascribed to learners, curriculum and other issues, other than teachers' practice. The teachers' responses about learners' problems in literacy are that learners do not want to read and lack understanding and confidence. Furthermore, it has been indicated that learners do not pay attention and learn too many languages.

In the Foundation Phase only two languages are learnt: the HL and FAL (DBE, 2011). Participants might have responded in this way because they may not be sure of how many languages they ought to teach in the FP as per CAPS, or perhaps some learners come to school speaking a different African language from their mother tongue.

Other responses (25%) mentioned are that there is a lack of resources and no support from parents. Some responses given (10%) showed a lack of understanding of what the question was asking. Another response given, where there was a mention of the use of mother tongue instruction, indicates that teachers could not understand the question when responding in this way. This response is inappropriate for the question asked.

There is no mention of phonological awareness as the basis of reading fluently. Teachers did not identify their own teaching practice as an important variable that can enhance reading. Teachers did not come up with responses mentioning challenges they face when teaching

reading. Thus, it seems that the teachers see learners' problems with reading as located within the system (lack of time and resources), or within the learners (not working hard enough, not having confidence), but do not believe that their practice could have an influence in this regard.

The DBE (2008), in Teaching Reading in the early Grades Teacher's Handbook, describes five components of teaching reading: Phonemic awareness, word recognition, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency. Furthermore, it is highlighted that for these components to be acquired well, they should be taught explicitly and practised every day. It has been found that, the teachers do not seem to believe that these components could be contributing factors to the lack of fluency in the reading of their learners. Thus, the teachers did not display specific knowledge of what may contribute to learners' reading fluency.

Table 8: Reading problems in EFAL

What do you think prevents some of your learners to read fluently and with understanding in their second language?

N=86

Problems regarding reading in a second language	%
Systemic/curriculum reasons: too many languages/ learners start school late/ not enough time	5.0
Lack of support from parents and no resources	18.8
Language barriers/ fear of language/ lack of confidence/ not paying attention	25.9
Learners never use the language and only use it during school time/ teachers do not speak the language	14.3
Different question has been answered/ given a response of relevance	16.5
No answer/ nothing/ incomprehensible answer	21.2
Total	100 %

A quarter of the responses (25.9%) are that learners fear English and do not use it during school time. At the same time, teachers say there are too many languages to be learnt. As mentioned in the previous question, two languages are learnt in the Foundation Phase: HL and FAL. It is unclear what teachers mean when they talk about 'many languages'.

Teachers understood the language barriers that affect reading. Lenyai and Hugo (2013, pp.100-101) claim that “an efficient reader can make meaning drawing from three sources of information which are:

Graphophonic information which is the phonology (sound system) and graphonology (writing system) of the written language.

Semantic information, which includes the meaning of the systems within the language and background knowledge of the word in context.

Syntax information, which includes the grammar, structure and word order of language”.

On the same note, Irujo (2007, p. 4) states that fluency can be achieved only when speaking has been practised regularly. At the same time, if learners are familiar with text, language can be understood better and can lead to fluency. Fluency practices for EFAL can be developed when teachers read together with learners or learners read in groups. In reading steps this is referred to as shared reading, group guided reading and individual reading (DBE, 2011). These are the necessary skills for reading if meaning and understanding are to be achieved.

Some responses given (21.2%) were not appropriate to the question asked and some respondents (16.5%) answered another question instead, which was irrelevant. This, perhaps, indicates that some of the FP teachers who answered the test did not comprehend the questions that were asked.

All the reasons mentioned are external to the teacher. The respondents mention other attributes which contribute to reading problems other than those of teachers themselves; Barriers to language, fear of language, lack of confidence are the reasons which teachers say contribute to learners’ struggle to read in a second language. Conversely, other responses given are that parents cannot help their children, as they also do not speak the language and do not understand English.

These responses do not reveal much about knowledge and strategies teachers use to teach reading. There is no mention of phonological awareness, word recognition, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension – the five components of teaching reading – even though teachers are aware that they are battling to teach reading.

In the interviews, the above question was phrased differently and teachers were asked what knowledge they brought to the study in terms of language skills and if they think there is a

specific kind of knowledge to be taught in language. In the test, teachers did not display the knowledge necessary to enhance reading. Some responses were confusing or perhaps teachers did not understand the question. Other responses were based on what they would like to learn. Respondents sometimes gave only a one sentence response. The responses from the interview, answering the question: “Which aspects do teachers think should be taught in Foundation Phase?” were as follows:

T 1: Reading I think, it should be done more as language is taught orally in Grade R since I am a Grade R teacher. Skills can be reading and comprehension.

T 2: I have in mind to know strategies and methods how to handle my class. Reading is important in language.

T 3: Now I have a skill of working in my own chart I know how to teach reading using different strategies in different levels. Reading, phonics, writing and handwriting,

T 4: It teaches me to be honest. Last time I had a problem with phonics and now I can deal with a learner who struggle in phonic and phonemic awareness “ukushadisa imisindo”. I learnt phonemic awareness through ACT programme.

[Note: I am not sure what this teacher meant by being honest, as she further mentioned the problems she encountered when teaching reading.]

T 5: How to teach oral work, dealing with naming words, word drill and spelling. 3 Rs are important.

Looking at the responses given by teachers in both the test and interview, knowledge in teaching of language skills is seen to be lacking, as most responses were not appropriate to the question asked.

The findings in Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies (PIRLS) (Howie et al., 2011) and the literacy initiative by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) were that only 6% of South African learners could read at an advanced level, with the rest at a dismal level with poor language performance.

According to research conducted, many factors contribute to a lack of reading skills amongst South African children. Pretorius and Mampuru (2007, p. 40) cite “variables like inappropriate instructional methods, overcrowded classrooms and poorly trained teachers

which are mostly identified as most important factors to literacy accomplishment”. Graded readers, big books and phonic wall charts are important factors to enhance reading. In this respect, teachers are mainly responsible to teach required components in reading. Pretorius and Lephalala (201, p. 2) expand on this, stating that “Language is the vehicle through which and in which reading is possible, but in whatever language children do their schooling, reading needs to be a central school activity; it needs to be taught well and it needs to be meaningful. South African learners’ poor performance in reading comprehension clearly indicates that comprehension needs attention. Any approach to teaching reading comprehension should thus be informed by a theoretical model of reading.” Lessing and De Wit (2008) concur with the above findings that teacher skills and conceptual knowledge of language necessary for language acquisition are based on the use of outdated methods of teaching where rote learning is practised in class.

In addition, Hugo and Lenyai (2013) assert that the technique to teach English successfully is to have an own knowledge of English, knowledge of how to teach, available resources and appropriate planning. On the same note, these authors state (2013 p. 2), that for English literacy to succeed teachers should understand basic literacy concepts which are “emergent literacy, early literacy and literacy”. A lack of these concepts can lead to learners’ lack of understanding and being unable to read fluently. Teachers do not seem to have the knowledge and competence to believe that their practice can make a difference to learners’ reading skills.

4.6. Teachers’ Pedagogic Content Knowledge (PCK) regarding EFAL

As discussed in the literature review chapter, PCK is a kind of knowledge which Shulman (1986) refers to as going beyond subject matter knowledge. He notes that it is about representation of ideas, demonstrations, explanations and ways of making learning understandable. It means the ability to teach particular content or crucial knowledge, using effective strategies for teaching that are effective for the specialised content and for the level at which it is being taught.

In this study, methods and strategies which looked at teacher’s PCK to help learners acquire EFAL and HL were also compared. To answer the research question about the PCK teachers bring to ACT, it is important to understand teachers’ thinking about knowledge of how to teach HL and EFAL.

4.6.1. Teachers' response to reading errors

The following question was asked in the test in order to see how teachers responded to reading errors. In both the sentences, the child has made an error. The purpose was to establish whether teachers would think that an error of meaning is more problematic than an error where the meaning remains the same, but the incorrect word is used.

Two grade 3 learners are reading aloud a text that contains this sentence:

The woman screamed and drove away as fast as she could.

Child A reads: "The woman streamed and drove away as fast as she could".

Child B reads: "The woman screamed and rode away as fast as she could".

Which error (Child A or B) would you be more worried about and why?

Table 9: Identifying and correcting errors

N=86

Errors identified and how to correct them	%
No answer/ incomprehensible answer.	14.0%
Has answered the question but incorrect content knowledge/ misunderstood the question / gives another response of relevance	3.6%
Child A because the meaning changed and the child didn't see it	17.4 %
Child A but no reason given	2.3 %
Child B but reason given is incorrect	8.1%
Child B because the teacher has not seen the error in child A	36.0 %
Total	100%

Child A has changed the word 'screamed' to 'streamed' and thus the meaning of the sentence changes or rather it no longer makes sense. Ideally the teacher needs to recognise that this is a more problematic error than Child B, where, although the child has read 'rode' instead of 'drove', the meaning of the sentence is the same. From Table 5, it shows that only 17.4% of the sample understood this. Some respondents gave an incomprehensible answer and others

could not answer the question, at 14%. A large number of responses (36%) identified an error in Child B.

An efficient reader draws on three sources in order to make meaning: Graphophonic information, semantic information and syntactic information. Without the necessary information from the three sources it would be very difficult for EFAL learners to understand what they read (Hugo & Lenyai, 2013). It is evident from data presented that some teachers could not give comprehensible responses, which indicates that they lack these three sources.

If an experienced teacher is aware of a problem such as the above example, he/she should understand and be able to remedy it by drawing on his/her knowledge of the reading process. This example implies that teachers still lack strategies to address problems learners' experience.

This illustration shows, also, that the respondents who cannot see an error in child "A" lack miscue analysis, a process which can be used to analyse some errors in a text (Joubert et al., 2008). Furthermore, Joubert et al (2008 p. 114) assert that for written text to be understood and be interpreted meaningfully, "syntactical and contextual clues" are considered. Syntactical clues refer to arranging of words in grammatical order and contextual clues refer to giving meaning to the sentence. The contextual clue in the example of Child A is a concern, as meaning is lost. In the words screamed/streamed there is no relationship, as they give a different meaning.

The above question with the words screamed/streamed was further probed in interviews, as it was a question which was not understood by many participants in the test. All five teachers mentioned that both children made an error., However, four teachers were able to mention that child A was the one to be more worried about which was identified by 36% in the test. The four participants could understand that the meaning in Child B is the same except that different words with similar meaning were used, which could not be identified by many respondents in tests. However, one teacher could not observe the same meaning of the words used in sentence B. This question confused the participants in tests and was understood better during interviews as the different responses mentioned above show.

If teachers cannot identify errors in a sentence it implies that teachers are still challenged in teaching English and might face specific challenges when teaching word and sentence

recognition and correcting errors made by learners. Joubert et al (2008) state that readers should apply reading skills if they are not sure of the text by interacting with insight, understanding and meaning with the written text. These skills were not used by some participants, especially those who could not identify the error in child A.

It is imperative that teachers be able to identify errors and give reasons for such errors. If they know where the problems are, teachers are be able to come up with appropriate strategies to help learners if they struggle with any language skills.

In CAPS, the aim is to produce learners who can communicate effectively using symbolic, visual and various other modes of language skills. This means that teachers should be experts in both HL and FAL.

Reading is one of the main skills contributing to the development of language.

The two contrasting perspectives in teaching reading are the psycholinguistic and behaviourist approaches. Psycholinguistics believe that meaning is the most important feature which forms foundation in reading. In this approach the process of reading is not in fragments, but as a whole process. It considers a top-down approach (Joubert et al., 2008). Of the participants, 17.4% understood how language functions and could identify child A as incorrect. These participants made meaning of the written text and appear to understand that meaning is the key in reading.

Joubert et al. (2008) assert that behaviourists, on the other hand, view reading as a technical and mechanical process. In this approach, reading starts from letters to single words, sentences and paragraphs. The respondents who saw child B as incorrect appear to understand reading as a technical process, where meaning is not that important. This process is referred to as the bottom-up approach.

To conclude, about 75% of teachers' PCK, from the data presented and analysed indicated that some participants are not well developed in robust ways to teach language; hence they could not identify problems which contribute to lack of reading. Therefore, teachers would battle to help learners if they are unaware of the problems they face when reading. A few teachers came with appropriate responses to the question asked about giving feedback, and they would be able to give feedback and assist their learners to develop better language acquisition skills.

4.6.2. Teachers' response to an English writing task

The following question reported in Table 6 also aimed at testing PCK. In this question PCK is identifying what is correct in this sentence and discerning what kind of feedback teachers would need to give learners. These are the strategies which are essential in teaching and learning.

A grade 2 child writes this sentence in his 'news' book, "We hab a good time we wochtd a moovey".

List the things that are correct about the child's responses. What kind of feedback would you give him, if any?

Table 10: Things that are correct in this sentence.

N=85

Things that are correct about the child's responses	%
No answer/ nothing is correct/ incomprehensible answer	25.8
Has answered the question but incorrect content knowledge/ given another response of relevance	5.9
Words incorrectly spelt are listed/ indicates grammar is wrong	32.0
Child has a sense of phonetics/ letter formation is correct/ word order correct/ punctuation is correct/ meaning conveyed/ tense is correct	17.5
Spelling problematic/ letter b/d confusion	18.8
Total	100%

Some respondents (17.5%) could identify that the child has a sense of phonetics, correct letter formation, correct word order, correct punctuation, tense and meaning in the sentence, which are all the basic skills necessary in sentence construction. Most responses (49.6%) singled out letter b/d confusion, wrong spelling and grammar as a problem in this sentence, which was not the focus of the question asked. These teachers focused on errors rather than what is

correct in the sentence. Those who could not identify anything correct and who gave incomprehensible responses is a large percentage, at 25%. Other respondents seem to lack content knowledge, as their answers are irrelevant to the question asked. Various reasons might be the cause for not responding or not giving an appropriate response. Teachers may be struggling with English themselves and fail to see what is correct. Perhaps they were unable to express their thoughts because they themselves struggle with English. For those who gave incomprehensible answers, it is possible that they could not understand the question asked. The same responses were given from the interviews, as some teachers could identify the “b/d” confusion, focusing on errors rather than what was correct in the sentence.

Table 11: Ways of giving feedback

N= 86

Feedback that can be given to learners	%
Correct the spelling, punctuation/ correct the sentence and mark the errors.	38.5
Teach the sounds	11.5
Praise good work and motivate the child to do better	37.5
Show the correct answer, learners repeat it	12.5
Total	100%

Teachers came up with different strategies of giving feedback to learners. For 37.5% of the respondents, issues of feedback revolved around the technical correctness of the sentences in keeping with the views of the behaviourist approach. Responses focused on showing the correct answer for learners to repeat the sentence came to 12.5%. Correcting the sentence focused on punctuation, spelling, teaching sounds and showing learners the corrected sentence came to half (50%) of the responses. In the interviews respondents mentioned that when teaching spelling they would focus on words most often confused by learners, such as b, d, u and y, using flash cards and pictures, a strategy not mentioned in test. Teaching of phonics was mentioned by one participant in the interview, which also did not come up in the test.

Praising the learners (37.5%) who have done well was another way to give feedback to learners. Vygotsky (1978) claims this kind of motivation is intrinsic, as learners are

motivated to understand and promote their own learning. However, no participant could talk about motivation during the interviews.

Joubert et al (2008) state how teachers should give feedback to learners by encouraging learners to proofread and edit their written work. They claim that this is done for the learner to check for spelling, word order, sentence order, punctuation, legibility and comprehensibility. However, a Grade 2 child probably does not have sufficient grammar knowledge to proofread, and the focus of the news book is on communication, not “correctness”. Perhaps teachers were not familiar with the concept of a “news” book. Joubert et al (2008) further state that proofreading marks should be introduced at an early age. Peers can use proofreading marks to check each other’s work. These proofreading marks can be displayed on a poster to be visible to learners. Teachers can make learners correct their work with given suggestions. This process of doing corrections aims at acquainting learners to be more exposed to errors and be trained to be accurate in writing.

Hugo and Lenyai (2013, p. 103,118) assert that teaching reading in EFAL to learners requires teachers who can use the following models:

The code emphasis, transmission or bottom-up model where words are decoded in sequence with the focus on single sounds, phrases and sentences. Joubert et al., (2008) refer to this model as a behaviourist approach.

The meaning emphasis, transactional or top-down model where whole language approach applies. Learners have to make meaning of text. This model is referred to as the psycholinguistics approach (Joubert et al., 2008).

The interactive model where code emphasis and meaning emphasis are combined together.

The language experience approach where learners should learn using their HL as a bridge to EFAL.

The development of sight vocabulary in young EFAL readers, using a print rich environment.

Data presented in tests and interviews about the knowledge base teachers bring to ACT revealed that some responses were inappropriate to questions asked. Teachers mentioned what they needed to know rather than on how to teach reading, phonics, phonemic awareness, writing and teaching strategies. This may be because teachers are aware of the fact that they

lack these skills in teaching language, although they did not mention it in the data from the test and interviews.

4.6. 3. Teachers’ response to an isiZulu reading task

The next question also focused on PCK, but this one was in isiZulu. The scenario is the same as the English question where learners had to read a sentence but they read it incorrectly.

Two Grade 3 learners are reading aloud a text that contains this sentence:

“Kwakukhona itafulana elincane kubekwe phezu kwalo isitsha esinezimbali”.

Child A reads: “Kwakukhona itafulana elincane kubekwe phezu kwalo isitsha esinamazambane”

Child B reads: “Kwakukhona ilanga elincane kubekwe phezu kwalo isitsha esinezimbali.

Which error, Child A or B, would you be more worried about?

Table 12. The child with errors to be more worried about.

N=86

The child with errors to be more worried about	%
No answer	18.6
Child A because the meaning changed	7.4
Child A no reason given/ reason incorrect	9.4
Child B because teacher could not identify any error in child A	35.0
Both children are wrong as they both made errors	17.6
Total	100.0

Child A makes an error which does not change the meaning of the sentence to a great degree, and this was recognised by 7.4% and 9.4% of respondents. Child B makes an error which does not make sense, and this was recognised by 35 % of respondents. So, the error of Child B is greater when it comes to the issue of making meaning of the text.

Close to a quarter of participants (17.6%) could identify both child A and B having problems with meaning in this sentence. They did not see the error or changed meaning and the other error did not change meaning. Looking at the 17.6% of responses, it is a good indication that

a reasonable percentage of participants saw that both children made an error when they read the text. However, the question asked them to identify the error which the teacher should be more concerned about.

What is of interest in this question is that some teachers (16.8%) could not see an error in child B. Since it is an isiZulu sentence, with a large number of participants familiar with isiZulu, one would expect all the isiZulu speakers to recognise the error. The percentage which was expected not to see an error in the sentence would be the English and other language speakers because they may not understand isiZulu. Those who do not speak isiZulu are few in this study. Looking at (35%) responses which were correct, this is a low percentage compared to the number of isiZulu language speakers at 81% in the study.

In the interviews, three isiZulu language speakers could identify child B as the child to be more worried about, as they mentioned that the meaning of the sentence has been distorted, which these teachers could not identify from test responses. The way isiZulu language speakers responded was expected, as they know the language and would be able to identify errors. One participant further mentioned that sentence B did not make sense as “ilanga ngeke libekwe phezu kwetafula” which was not mentioned in the test. The two English language speakers might have struggled to understand the language, as they said they did not understand which learner to be worried about in the test and the interviews.

4.6.4. Teachers’ response to an isiZulu writing task

The next question aimed at eliciting teachers PCK regarding the kind of feedback they would give to learners from a writing task. The question read as follows:

List the things that are correct about the child’s response. What kind of feedback would you give him, if any?

<i>Ubani osebenzisa ezizinto ekhaya</i>	<i>Nini</i>
<i>Imina nobhunti</i>	<i>Ayizoke insuku</i>

Table 13: Identifying the correct responses in the sentence.

N=85

Responses from teachers	%
No answer/ incomprehensible answer/ nothing is correct	27.8
Has answered the question/ the meaning is conveyed/ the child knows who uses these things at home.	46.5
The child listens	3.5
Handwriting	2.3
Language structure, good reading and language usage	10.4
Spelling wrong and incorrect words listed	8.3
Total	100

Findings which emanated from the responses for the question above are that most participants were able to see meaning in the sentences and wrote that the children knew who uses these things at home at an average of 46.5%. The language structure and language use was identified as correct despite spelling errors and some words which are incorrect. Other responses were based on the child who could listen to the instructions well. The percentage of teachers who could recognise aspects that were correct for this isiZulu question in the test and the interviews was higher than the percentage of teachers who could do the same for the English question. Unsurprisingly, isiZulu teachers are more proficient in their mother tongue.

Furthermore, during interviews teachers came up with different skills to be taught in language, which they did not mention in the test. They are as follows:

T 1: The “3Rs” which are mentioned differently in CAPS.

T 2: I think its word recognition and word pronunciation.

T 3: Reading, phonics, writing and handwriting.

T 4: Reading and comprehension is most important.

T 5: Reading and spelling.

When looking at the skills the interview participants think Foundation Phase learners should learn, there seems not to be a common understanding of the content that should be taught in language. In Home Language and First Additional Language (DBE, 2011) the CAPS policy document skills taught in FP are listening, speaking, reading and phonics, writing and

handwriting. The lack of content knowledge and strategies to teach it can hamper the way the teachers teach. Darling-Hammond (2006) agrees with the above statement and from the research she conducted the findings were that effective teaching needs a fair amount of content knowledge and how to teach it. On the same note, Bertram (2011) asserts that content knowledge is not only the facts about the subject, but a deep understanding of concepts and how to explain them.

Some participants (27.8%) could not answer, gave incomprehensible answers or could not see anything correct in the example. As this is an isiZulu sentence, it was expected that many participants would see what is correct, as most of the sample are isiZulu home language speakers. In interviews, all the isiZulu language speakers could give appropriate responses and were able to identify what is correct. This differs from test, as there, a bigger number could not respond or gave inappropriate responses. This number was greater than for the English language speakers who might not have understood isiZulu. Similarly, English language speakers could not respond to this question in both the test and interview.

The DBE (2008, p. 33) Teaching Reading in the Early Grades Teachers Handbook is among the interventions that emphasize that supporting learners with reading difficulties requires a teacher to:

- Diagnose difficulties in reading early.
- Deal with reading problems in time.
- Read every single day.
- Work with the learner at least twice a week.
- Revise phonics.
- Provide a word list of sight words to be learnt.

It was assumed that some intervention strategies mentioned above would have equipped teachers well with identifying the correctness in a sentence, especially because it is an isiZulu sentence. A large number of participants are isiZulu speakers and also use isiZulu as medium of instruction in the sample, as indicated in Table 2. Many participants were expected to respond well to the question asked because of proficiency in isiZulu. Especially since, in the Foundation Phase there is time dedicated to develop these skills as indicated in the time allocation for different language concepts.

Table 14: Feedback strategies

N = 86

Ways to give feedback	%
No answer	30.2
No feedback	3.5
Another question of irrelevance/ wrong answer	8.2
Praise and encourage listening	14
Spelling, pronunciation	25.6
Correct sentence and mark errors	18.5
Total	100%

Many participants wrote that relevant feedback meant that spelling, pronunciation and sentences should be corrected (44.1%), but could not mention which strategies can be used to correct the errors. Similar responses came up in interviews, as all five participants came up with ways to give feedback such as correcting the sentence or focusing on spelling. Different responses were given in the interviews – which learners are taught to read with meaning. Furthermore, two participants gave different responses in the test, saying that they would place learners according to their ability in groups. Some respondents said in the test that learners have to be praised to encourage listening skills (14%), which was mentioned in interview responses too.

4.6.5. Teachers' response to a picture as a resource

This question wanted to ascertain teachers' PCK regarding how they would use a given picture in their classroom. Table 15 tabulates how teachers said they would use this picture in their lessons:

Below is a picture which you could use as a learning resource in your classroom.

Write down the ways that you could use the picture in a language lesson (in a grade that you teach).

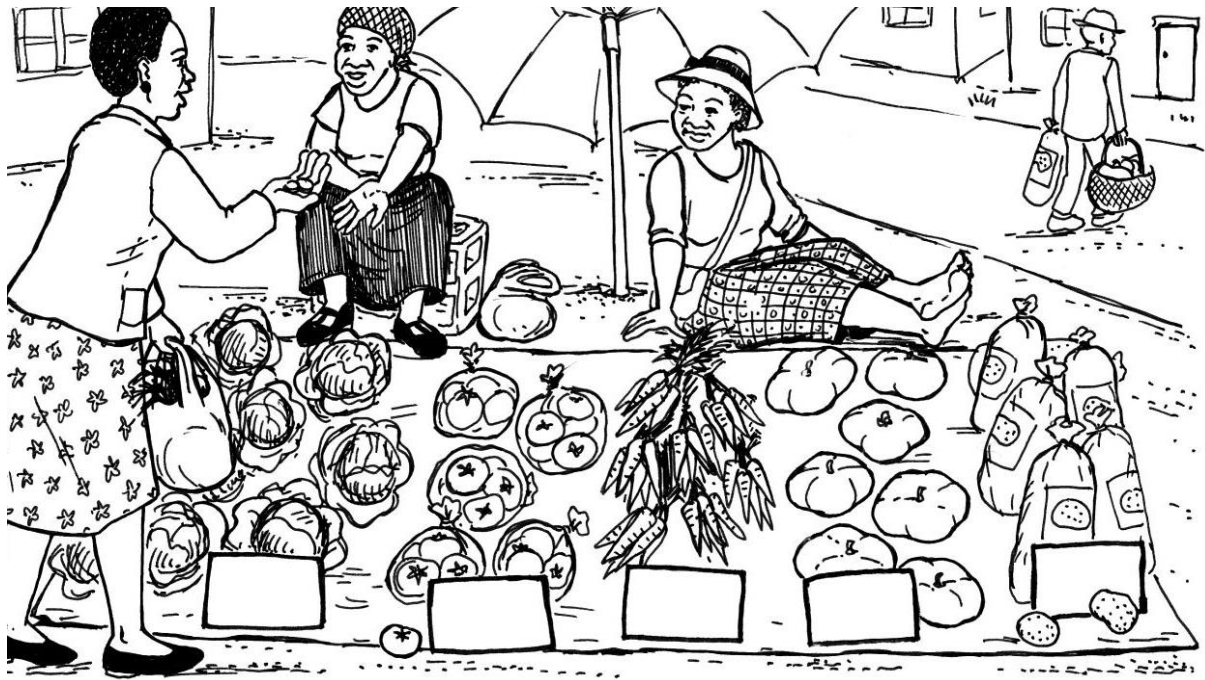


Table 15: Use of picture as a resource

N = 86

Responses	%
Teachers or learners make a story	10.1
Learners write sentences	9.3
Communication, dialogue	45.0
Vocabulary	10.0
Phonetics and phonics	2.3
Has not answered the question and incorrect content knowledge	23.3
Total	100%

Most of the responses (55%) indicated that the picture in the language lesson could be used for oral work such as a dialogue and for the enhancement of vocabulary. Some responses (19.4%) were based on the making of a story, sentence construction and writing of sentences. The expected responses were that the picture can be used for listening and speaking activities, reading and viewing and writing activities used in language teaching. Learners' prior knowledge could be activated from the picture, as it shows things they are familiar with.

Only 2.3% of the respondents noted that they could use the picture to develop phonological awareness. Most participants did not appear to understand the importance of phonological awareness in language enhancement as only a few teachers mentioned phonics.

A large number of teachers (23.3%) did not answer the question. It can be assumed they do not consider resources, like the picture above, helpful in teaching language, or they otherwise did not understand what the question was asking of them. I believe these are the teachers who do not use resources in their classrooms. Visual and symbolic material can stimulate learners' interests and assist teachers in teaching new vocabulary (Hugo & Lenyai, 2013). It is through the constant use of language that vocabulary and communication can be enhanced.

According to Joubert et al. (2008, p.117), viewing is an important aspect of visual literacy as pictures are interpreted and carry messages. They further claim that pictures give clues to learners "to comprehend, to interpret, to analyse and to evaluate" text. Pictures can provide better learning opportunities.

It is evident that many of these teachers focused on the atomistic aspects of language learning (vocabulary, phonics, fluency) rather than the importance of making meaning through developing stories or dialogues. This may be because most of the teachers are Grade R teachers.

4.7. Teachers' feelings about writing the test

Another question which was asked from interviewees was how they felt about the test that they wrote. The rationale for this question about their attitudes was to establish how comfortable teachers were with writing the test. Three teachers could not define their feelings and their responses were neutral. They did not reveal their feelings, saying they just responded to questions as they were given. Of the other two responses, one participant expressed surprise about the test and one participant indicated that the test was "okay" as it was about the knowledge they bring to the study.

Much as teachers' identity is not part of this study, there is a connection to teachers' feelings and how they teach. Teachers' confidence and self-esteem is boosted when they know that they know something. Positive feelings make one feel like a better teacher. Perception and attitude are enhanced when the feelings are considered.

4.8. Conclusion

In this chapter data from the tests and interviews were analysed. As stated earlier, test were coded and interviews transcribed from recorded text and SPSS was used to capture data from the test. Data from the two collection methods was analysed, discussed and interpreted, looking at the content knowledge and PCK the teachers brought to the ACT programme. Also, different and similar responses were compared in the test and interviews. Literature has been used to support findings mentioned.

The following findings were highlighted:

Teachers have limited content knowledge to teach language because few teachers mentioned the content knowledge required to develop EFAL and HL, which is phonological awareness, word recognition, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension:

Teachers have insufficient strategies to teach language.

Teachers do not read as expected, hence, they could not come up with other resources that could be used to help learners to read.

Teachers are not sure which subjects are taught in the Foundation Phase. They do not see themselves as the ones who hinder language learning because they ascribe children's lack of reading to outside factors.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The main focus for this study was to explore the knowledge base that Foundation Phase teachers bring to the ACT programme with a focus on the First Additional Language (FAL). In the previous chapter teachers' beliefs, teachers' content, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of teaching, knowledge that they bring to the ACT programme about literacy learning achievements were all analysed, as informed by the research questions.

This chapter summarises and discusses the findings which emerged from the tests and interviews. The findings are based on the two research questions about the knowledge base teachers bring to the ACT programme. The summary of findings focuses on the knowledge base teachers have in teaching First Additional Language (FAL). Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings are presented.

5.2. Summary of the findings

In the data presented different teacher experiences were highlighted. However, the findings were that the teaching experience of a majority of the participants was more than five years, and it was therefore expected that they would bring some experience to the programme. The participants were mostly Grade R teachers. The LOLT which 95% of teachers used in this sample was isiZulu, and they were the majority in this study. It was also expected that the majority of isiZulu questions would be answered correctly, but this was not the case.

5.3. Content knowledge teachers brought to ACT

Jansen (2008) claims that problems which occur late in high school manifest from the foundation years of schooling. It means maximum effort should be made to equip learners to

help them achieve better in their schooling years. Similarly, Hugo (2013) notes it is through language that teaching and learning is carried along through well-developed literacy and language skills.

As described in Chapter 4, it is important for teachers to have a deep content knowledge to be comfortable in the subjects they teach. This means that for teachers to be guided well in the classrooms they teach, they need the kinds of knowledge which Shulman (2007) refers to as content knowledge, curricular knowledge and context knowledge, as they have to be successful in unfolding the knowledge to learners. Schwab (1978) highlights that this knowledge is structured into subjects learnt at school. Darling-Hammond (2006) agrees with the above statement and from the research she conducted the findings were that effective teaching needs a fair amount of content knowledge and how to teach it.

The data suggests that more than 70 % of teachers who took part in this study had limited content knowledge in as far as “what” to teach language in the Foundation Phase, as they could not mention the necessary skills to teach language. At the same time, they seem not to have a common understanding of what content is taught in FP. In the interviews conducted different skills to be taught were raised by teachers and I have used pseudonyms as ‘T’s’: T 1 mentioned 3Rs’, T 2 came up with word recognition, T 3 highlighted reading, phonics handwriting and writing, T 4 mentioned reading and comprehension and T 5 said reading and spelling. This shows that they do not know all the skills taught in the Foundation Phase. The DBE (2011) lists the skills to be taught in FP as listening, speaking, reading and phonics, writing and handwriting.

CAPS provide curricular knowledge where topics at different levels are extracted as well as contextual factors (DBE, 2011). Similarly, Shulman (2007) highlights the curriculum as a tool from which content to be learnt is taken. At the same time it is in the content learnt where learner achievement is measured. All five teachers interviewed mentioned that they did not get training for Grade 1 to 3, hence, the interviewees had Grade R experience. One participant, who has been teaching Grade R, started to teach in Grade 2 in July 2014 and one started teaching Grade 1 in 2012 and has been teaching Grade R during their early years of teaching. The other three participants were, at the time of interviews, Grade R practitioners.

In data presented 14.3% highlighted mother tongue fluency and 25.3% second additional language fluency. Participants highlighted that many languages are learnt at school, hence learners are not proficient in any language. I assumed that they responded in this way because they did not have knowledge about what subjects are currently taught in the Foundation Phase (FP) and they were not trained in CAPS for Grades 1-3. In the Foundation Phase only two languages are learnt, the Home Language and First Additional Language (HL, FAL) (DBE, 2011). Nel and Stiegler (2012) highlight the importance of the Home Language which has been acquired early in life because if it is underdeveloped serious problems occur later in life. On the same note, according to LiEP (DBE, 1997, p. 6) it promoted multilingualism so that FP learners should be proficient in two languages, HL and FAL. Teachers should be developed well on which content to teach and strategies to use in both HL and EFAL.

5.3.1. Content in reading

Joubert et al. (2008, p. 82) argue that reading is “one of the most powerful ways of receiving ideas, information and stories”. As a result of this importance, teachers need to have a specific body of knowledge for facilitating this process to help learners acquire powerful ways to understand and unlock words. Researchers like Prinsloo (2006) assert that in the literature reading has been regarded as problematic in South Africa (see Spaul, 2013). Similarly, Inglis et al. (2000, p. 57) highlight, “Reading is one of the powerful ways of receiving ideas, information and stories.” Therefore, teachers should act as change agents and be proficient in a variety of language competences (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999). This could be achieved through reading regularly. Participants in the study do not read as much as expected and they do not inculcate a culture of reading. This means it is unlikely that their learners would be encouraged to read regularly. Teachers, as lifelong learners, should read in order to acquire more information and be more knowledgeable than the learners they teach. Hugo and Lenzai (2013) assert that for learners to acquire English, the teacher should be able to teach all the components of reading which are part of the development of literacy skills. Similarly, Molosiwa (2007) highlights that knowledge can be enhanced if learners read as it is a powerful way of receiving information.

5.3.2 Phonological skills

Wilsenach (2013) suggests that reading and phonological skills correlate to a great extent. Only a few of the participants (16.9% in the test and two interviewees) mentioned phonological awareness as a crucial factor for language development. Perfetti (1994) asserts that phonological skills, phonological awareness, phonological working memory and general phonological awareness are requirements for acquisition of language skills. Broom and De Sousa (2006, p. 3) posit that for phonological awareness to be developed well, “target content ranges from syllable awareness (least difficult) to onset rime awareness and phonic awareness (most difficult)” are required for language development.

In findings from data presented about wrong sentences given by learners 35.0%, teachers noted that learners read sentences wrongly which they said distorted meaning in isiZulu. However, 13.5% teachers could not respond and some gave inappropriate responses. These may be teachers who themselves struggle with grammar. About a quarter (17.4%) of teachers could identify the right or wrong sentence in English. This means three quarters of the participants could not understand synonyms in the given sentence. They seemed to struggle with English grammar.

It is evident that in the data presented, reading is not taught by teachers because they have limited knowledge of how to teach it. As this study had 89.5% isiZulu participants, 40% could identify what was correct in English sentences given and only 17% could identify errors in English sentences given. It was expected that a bigger number of isiZulu teachers would be able to give correct responses, which is not evident in the analysis.

Participants who could not give comprehensible responses or not answer the question, show that teachers' EFAL levels are underdeveloped. Those teachers who could not give correct responses are behaviourist, who see the bottom-up approach as the way to teach. Teaching reading in the early grades highlights that phonemic awareness; word recognition, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency are the components to teach reading (DBE, 2008).

5.3.3. Lack of professional development

In the interviews one of the questions was to understand if teachers received training for CAPS. From the five interviewees, three teachers alluded to the fact they did not receive Grade 1- 3 training and they based their teaching on reading through the policy documents. One teacher mentioned some added experience which made her cope with her teaching practice. This teacher used, what Kelly (2006) refers to as, knowledge in practice. The National Reading Strategy (NSR) and DBE (2008) associate low language competences with low language skills. In Australia, Indonesia, Africa (South Africa, Kenya, and Uganda), Afghanistan and Sweden, Reading to Learn (RTL) has been used to improve reading, which has been a challenge. This is the same reading programme has been used in South Africa to improve reading, but little improvement in language skills, with 46% in the Ana 2013 results, have been observed.

Teacher's knowledge to teach phonics, blends, word recognition, vocabulary and fluency was put into question with the responses given to questions 3 and 4 about the correctness and errors in sentences. Only 35% of the teachers could identify problematic errors in given sentences. More than 60% of teachers battled to identify what was correct and incorrect in sentences given. In addition, 95% teachers could not mention the components that are required to teach language in the Foundation Phase, listening and speaking, reading and phonics, writing and handwriting (DBE, 2011). The remaining 5% could not respond. They may not understand what components are learnt in the FP.

5.4. PCK teachers brought to ACT

5.4.1. Teaching strategies

As discussed in the Chapter 2, PCK is a kind of knowledge which Shulman (1986) refers to as going beyond subject matter and going beyond knowledge. Furthermore, teachers need to have teaching strategies to demonstrate, represent and explain ideas in a way that is meaningful to the learner (Shulman,1986) On the same note, Grossman (1990) posits that PCK is the ability to teach subjects effectively to a range of ages, levels, using a range of instructional methods and be able to explain concepts.

In the question which addressed why learners could not read fluently in both mother tongue and second language, teachers did not mention which approaches could assist learners to read better. These reading strategies are: shared reading, group guided and individual reading (DBE, 2011). At the same time, language is not taught as expected, so responses given about problems learners encounter in the acquisition of language are based on external factors other than what and how teachers teach. Additionally, teachers did not see their teaching approaches and strategies as important variables that can contribute to the enhancement of reading.

5.4.2. Dealing with errors as a part of PCK

One of the findings analysed from the data was with regard to correction of errors and giving feedback. In the test and during interviews many teachers mentioned that the way to give feedback to errors was to correct the sentences. Teachers did not suggest that it was important to identify why the learners made the errors in the sentences. Most of their responses focused on simply correcting the error and making learners repeat the sentence without indicating where and why there was an error. In other words, they could not diagnose the learners reading problems.

Furthermore, 50% of responses on correcting the sentences focused on punctuation, spelling, teaching sounds and showing learners the corrected sentence. This links to an understanding of literacy which behaviourists identify as a bottom-up approach, where mechanical and technical aspects of language are considered (Joubert et al., 2008). Praising the learners who have done well was another way to give feedback to learners. Vygotsky (1978) claims that this kind of motivation is intrinsic, as learners are motivated to understand and promote their own learning.

In the interviews further feedback strategies were given, which were to group learners according to their ability groups and to improve listening skills. However, teachers could not talk about how these listening skills could be improved. One sentence would be addressed to most of the responses.

5.4.3. Use of resources

A quarter of the participants articulated that there were no resources to help their learners develop reading skills. However, some participants mentioned that they read newspapers more often than books. If teachers were reading newspapers which can be at the level of Foundation Phase they can be used as resources. The following newspapers which have some teaching resources relevant to the Foundation Phase are Learn with Echo, The Teacher and the Sunday Times.

In the question where a picture was given and teachers were asked how it can be used to teach language, most teachers mentioned that it can be used for oral work, to teach vocabulary and sentence construction. Data reveals that about a quarter of the percentage of participants (23%) did not respond on how the picture could be used to develop language skills. These may be teachers who do not see the importance of resources when they present work to learners they teach, or, perhaps they did not understand the question. Hugo and Lenyai (2013) assert that visual and symbolic materials stimulate interest in learners. Similarly, Joubert et al. (2008) claim literacy skills can be enhanced through pictures. In the interviews four participants mentioned the use of flashcards, pictures and sentence strips as resources a teacher can use to assist in language learning. Furthermore, they state that pictures enable the reader to predict, get clues, interpret and understand text.

5.4.4. Code switching

Code switching is using two languages in the same conversation alternatively during a discussion (Hoffman, 1991). Ncoko (2000) regards code switching as a norm teachers use for clarifying concepts. During the interviews, isiZulu speaking participants would code switch to isiZulu because they felt more comfortable in their home language. The findings were that teachers would sometimes code switch to express their thoughts in a way they felt comfortable because they sometimes battled to express themselves adequately in English. One respondent said, concerning a sentence where interviewees had to identify a child to be more worried about, “ukuphambanisa imisindo (to confuse sounds)”. The participant wanted to stress the meaning which the child had lost in the sentence. The link with code switching is

that this teacher felt that, when needing to clarify concepts, code switching is an option if learners cannot understand in English.

5.5. Teachers personal beliefs

5.5.1. Parental support

One of the key personal beliefs that emerged is that very few teachers seemed to believe that their own pedagogic instruction could make a significant difference in their learners' achievement. Rather, they pointed to factors such as minimal parental support and lack of resources as being the barriers to the children's developing literacy. Data reveals (25.3%) that teachers said that parents struggled to help their children in EFAL, as most parents cannot understand English. Respondents frequently referred to the lack of parental support in the children's literacy development. Joubert et al. (2008) claim that parents have a special role to play in guiding their children to develop literacy. They further assert that this happens when parents read stories and model required reading habits and skills to their children.

5.6. Recommendations

5.6.1. Professional development

For teachers to be equipped with content knowledge they need to be well developed in the subjects they teach. It was highlighted by all interviewed teachers that they were not trained on CAPS, as they were teaching Grade R during CAPS FP training. These teachers did an NPDE and were interviewed after they wrote their first year ACT examinations. They do not seem to have learnt much from NPDE and from their first year of the ACT programme. Teachers should be properly developed to use relevant strategies, which may be repetition, communicative and total response method, to develop language skills. It is a possibility that ACT can be one of the programmes where teachers' instructional and technical skills are intensified to learn basic content knowledge in language, which is listening and speaking, phonics, reading and viewing, handwriting and writing (DBE, 2011).

5.6.2. Support listening, speaking, reading phonics and writing

As mentioned in the findings about reading, it has been raised that reading culture has not been inculcated in both teachers and learners. Teachers in the ACT programme should be exposed to a variety of reading materials and be given an opportunity to make their reading books which can be reading materials in class they teach. Teachers should be trained and conditions should promote appropriate use of the resources in the ACT programme. Some examples of resources are collections of pictures and posters, phonic wall charts, big books, story books, flash cards and graded readers which could be provided by the DBE or made by ACT students. As part of their assignments students could design and present lessons where the content knowledge and teaching strategies for teaching languages are assessed. Cummins (2011), an expert on teaching FAL, suggests the use of two types of language proficiency: Basic Interpersonal Communication (BICS) and Cognitive Language Proficiency (CALP), when teaching language. BICS has to do with the surface of basic skills, which have to be prioritised when listening and speaking. In this skill listening and speaking should be acquired well. Oral work needs to be developed well at this stage. In CALP learners have to understand the demands of language, which are phonics, reading and language structure. When CALP has been acquired, learners will be able to analyse, interpret and understand written text. It is often during presentations where these proficiencies are looked at.

5.6.3. Support from parents

Parents should make an effort to assist their children in developing language, even if they tell their children stories in HL, if they cannot speak English. As this study is about EFAL, socio-cultural backgrounds and the environment for learners should be considered (Hugo & Lenyai, 2013). Furthermore, Hugo and Lenyai cite that topics taught should be interesting to learners. Resources can stimulate learners' interest if used properly.

As the highlighted findings in this study show, teachers still battle to discern which components they need to learn to teach language. Teachers should be encouraged to speak the HL of the community they teach. EFAL should be taught giving clear instructions, using pictures and gestures and use code switching as minimally as possible. Opportunities for spontaneous speech should be allowed. Teachers should be equipped with knowledge of how

much code switching is expected from them in lessons they teach. This could be part of the assessment criteria. Teachers in the ACT programme should, by the time they finish, understand strategies to teach reading as a way to enhance language. These are:

- Shared reading,
- Group guided reading,
- Paired or independent reading,
- Phonemic awareness.

Hugo and Lenyai (2013) assert that a new language is learnt better if the learner listens, sees and is involved in body movement. When English First Additional Language (EFAL) is introduced, it should be more oral work, using stories, reciting poems, chanting words and reading aloud. Difficult words should be clarified and made simpler. Instruction should consider the level of the learners. Decoding and fluency should be taught before comprehension is developed (Irujo, 2007).

Concurrently, five components, which experts see as important to be developed well in reading, are:

- Phonemic awareness,
- Phonics and word recognition,
- Comprehension,
- Vocabulary,
- Fluency.

All these components have to be taught and practised daily. Different approaches and strategies should be used by teachers so they can reach out to all learners with different abilities.

Phonological awareness should be developed when learners are familiar with English sounds. Letters that are easily confused, like “b” and “d”, should be given extra practice.

EFAL learners find it difficult to differentiate between similar sounds because in English letters and sounds sometimes do not correspond. Oral work should be developed first before reading is introduced. Sounding of words (phonemic awareness) should be taught before the introduction of phonics. A print rich environment should be provided so that learners are exposed to pictures and words.

Some general recommendations are: As findings indicated that teachers do not have reading materials for learners to read, they need to consider having reading corners in their classrooms for their learners to be exposed to printed text. Another strategy to develop vocabulary is learners bringing objects to the classroom where they are assisted in naming them in English. In those areas where there are no libraries, the DBE should provide libraries so that learners can borrow books to read more regularly. Comprehension strategies should be better taught, exposing learners to summarise text, reading and responding to questions.

5.7. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the language knowledge base that teachers brought to the ACT programme, using an interpretive paradigm. Qualitative and quantitative approaches were both used to conduct this study to explore the content knowledge and PCK of teaching EFAL and HL teachers bring to the ACT programme.

Chapter one identified the problem statement and research questions which focused on subject content knowledge, PCK and the personal beliefs of teachers in the ACT programme, with the focus on EFAL and HL. The background, rationale and purpose of the study were outlined, and these were based on the disappointing performance of learners in Language and Numeracy from different studies conducted and the interventions initiated to assist in the findings identified.

In Chapter two, literature related to the topic was reviewed. The theoretical framework, based on teacher knowledge with the focus on forms of knowledge, namely, content knowledge, PCK, context knowledge, curricular knowledge and general pedagogic knowledge, was unpacked. Different types of knowledge, propositional and practical, were discussed. Taxonomies of knowledge, focusing on knowledge of practice, knowledge in practice and knowledge for practice were unpacked. This chapter also discussed models and approaches to teaching EFAL and reading and the components that are required to teach EFAL: listening and speaking, reading phonics, writing and language structure, were discussed.

In Chapter three the interpretive paradigm was explained. The study generated both qualitative and quantitative data. Research questions that were used in this study were outlined. Data generation test and interview techniques which were used and the limitations

of the study were discussed. Purposive and convenience sampling methods for the interviews were highlighted. Finally, accessing the research sites, trustworthiness, reliability and validity, ethical considerations were explained.

Chapter four presented the data from tests and interviews. Participants who wrote the tests and were interviewed were described. The test data were coded and entered into SPSS. Semi structured interviews, which were transcribed, were used to further probe responses from the tests. Data was analysed, explained and interpreted, looking for similarities, differences and what was interesting in the tests and interviews.

In Chapter five, the discussion was based on the findings of the study and the research questions about the knowledge base the participant teachers brought to ACT were addressed. Lastly, recommendations were addressed and conclusion provided.

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APPENDIX 1: Copy of Ethical Clearance letter from UKZN



26 June 2013

Ms Pindora Panoae Sibongweni Mcebe 962114629
School of Education
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Protocol reference number: 455/0511/0123M

Project Title: Exploring the knowledge base of Foundation Phase teachers regarding the teaching of language.

Dear Ms Mcebe

Expedited Approval

I wish to inform you that your application 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 school/department for a period of 5 years.

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

Yours faithfully

Professor Umtha Bob (Chair) & Dr S Singh (Deputy Chair)

/ps

cc Supervisor: Dr T Mbatia
cc Co-Supervisor: Dr A Bertram
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr MN Davids
cc Post Graduate Administrator: Ms B Bhengu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
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Funding Campus: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS



APPENDIX 2: Letter of request to UKZN

Letter to the Dean: School of Education

Dear Sir.....

Re – Request to conduct my study with UKZN students

I am a Masters student and as part of my professional development I request to conduct this study on the ACT students registered at UKZN. I have defended my proposal and I am now required to do my dissertation.

My research focus is on the EFAL knowledge base FP teachers bring to ACT programme. I will be exploring their experiences using tests and semi-structured interviews.

All information obtained will be kept strictly confidential with pseudonyms used for identity of participants. Participants can withdraw anytime they wish from this study. Ethical considerations are taken notice of during this study. Data will be handled well and I give accountability to keeping of data collected.

Thanking you in advance.

Yours faithfully

.....

P.P.S/Mcaba

APPENDIX 3. Letter of informed consent to participants

School of Education
Pietermaritzburg Campus
P Bag X01
Scottsville 3209

INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant

I wish to invite you to participate in my study, *Exploring the professional knowledge base teachers bring to the Advanced Certificate in Teaching (ACT) Foundation Phase (FP) students in language*. The project involves gathering data from ACT students, who are teachers. The project aims to describe the kinds of professional knowledge as a Foundation Phase teacher that you bring with you to the programme.

Your participation is voluntary and you are allowed to withdraw without any disadvantage to you, if it becomes impossible for you to continue to participate. Your responses will be treated with maximum confidentiality. Your answers will be for the purpose of this study only. Participants will complete a teacher knowledge assessment task.

I would like to ask some of you to also be involved in a face-to-face interview. With your consent I will audiotape your responses.

Confidentiality will be ensured as no names of persons will be revealed. The data from the assessment tasks and interviews will be securely stored in the school and will be destroyed after five years.

Your participation will be greatly appreciated.

Kindly yours

.....

P.P.S. Mcaba

CONSENT FORM

I, (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I am willing to complete the teacher knowledge task and interviews

I consent to my teacher knowledge task and interviews being analysed for research purposes.

I understand that my identity will remain anonymous and can withdraw at any time.

Signature.....

Date.....

Section B: Questions about teaching in the Foundation Phase

1. How often do you to encourage your learners to read for enjoyment? How do you do so?

2. What do you think is the greatest barrier that prevents some of your learners from learning to read fluently and with understanding in their mother tongue?

3. What do you think is the greatest barrier that prevents some of your learners from learning to read fluently and with understanding in their second language?

4. What do you think are the three most important things that a child should learn during the Foundation phase years?

5. (a) What do you think are the three most important skills that a Foundation Phase teacher needs?

- (b) Two grade 3 children are reading aloud a text that contains this sentence:

The woman screamed and drove away as fast as she could

Child A reads: “The woman streammed and drove away as fast as she could”, and continues reading;

Child B reads: “The woman screamed and rode away as fast as she could”, and continues reading.

Which error (Child A. or Child B) would you be more worried about, and why?

6. A grade 2 child writes this sentence in his ‘news’ book, where he is writing about what he did on the weekend.

“We hab a goob time we wochtd a moovey”

- a) What rules of English grammar can you see that he is using?

b) What kind of feedback would you give him, if any?

7. Two grade 3 children read aloud a text that contains this sentence:

Kwakukhona itafulana elincane kubekwe phezu kwalo isitsha esinezimbali.

Child A reads: “Kwakukhona itafulana elincane kubekwe phezu kwalo isitsha esinamazambane,” and continues reading;

Or

Child B reads: “Kwakukhona ifasitela elincane kubekwe phezu kwalo isitsha esinezimbali” and continues reading.

Which error (Child A. or Child B) would you be more worried about, and why?

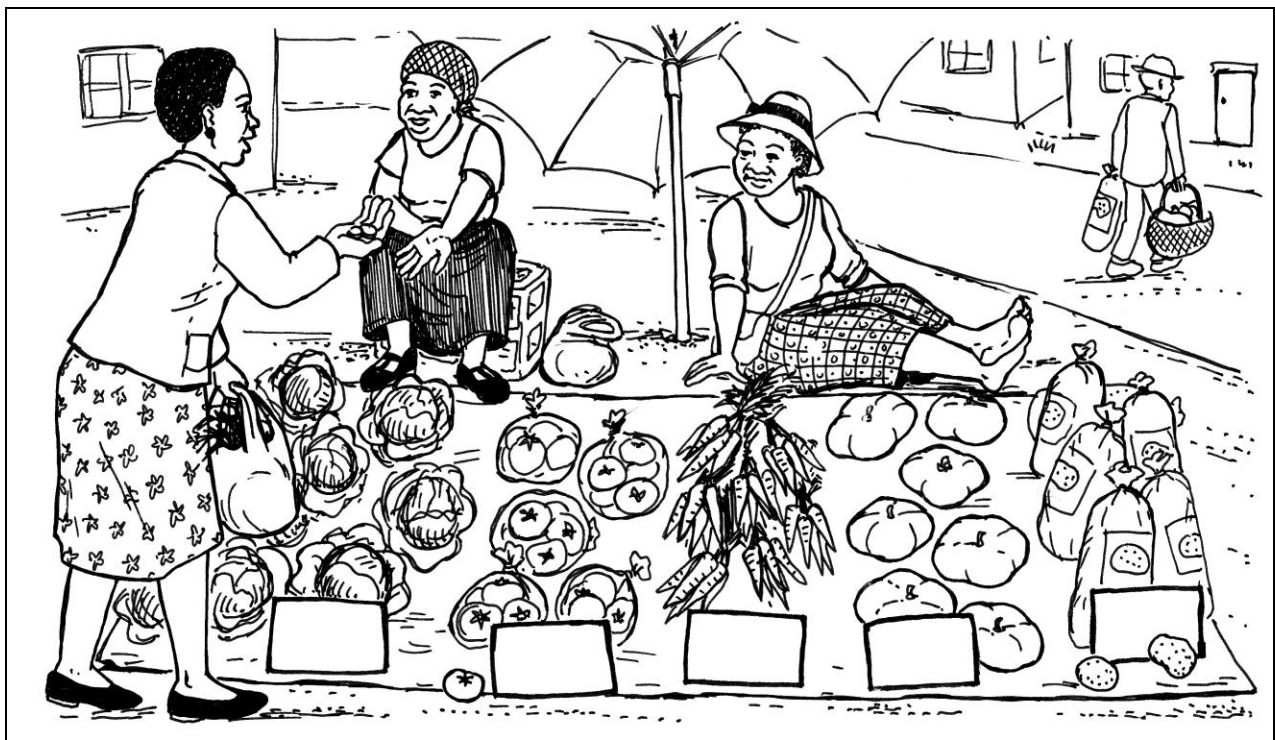
8. In a writing exercise, a grade 2 child filled in part of a table as follows:

Ubani usebenzisa lezi zinto ekhaya?	Nini?
Imina nobhunti	Ayizoke izinsuku

a) What rules of isiZulu grammar can you see that he is using?

b) What kind of feedback would you give him, if any?

9. Below is a picture which you could use as a learning resource in your classroom.



Write down two ways that you could use this picture in a language lesson (in the grade that you teach)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR RESPONSES

APPENDIX 5: Teacher interview schedule

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

SECTION A:

- (a) How long have you been teaching Foundation Phase and which grade are you teaching?
- (b) Which grade do you teach now?
- (c) Which language do you use for teaching in class?
- (d) Did you attend any language professional development workshops? If yes, how do you feel about them?
- (e) How do you teach if you didn't attend workshops?
- (e) How do you feel about classroom practice in teaching language at present?

SECTION B

1. How did you feel about the teacher knowledge test?
2. Why did you answer the knowledge test as you did?
3. (a) If you had to answer it again would you respond in the same way?
(b) What would be different?
(c) What is the content you learnt?
4. What kind of knowledge and skills do you think you brought to the ACT programme in terms language?
5. Do you think there is a specific kind of knowledge to be taught in language?
6. Which aspects do you think FP learners should learn in languages and why?
7. Which language do you think your learners can read better between home language and first additional language?

(a) Give reasons for your answer.

8. What can you do to make learners read better in the language they are struggling to read?

9. How can you enhance comprehension strategies to learners?

10. Let us look at Ques. 15 and tell what is the problem with the sentence if you could identify any?

(a) Which error between the two children would you be more worried?

11. Do you meet such problems in your class? How do you deal with them?

What feedback would you give to the learners who respond in this way?

12. Let us look at the errors in Ques. 16. Which child can you be worried about and why?

(a) List the things that are correct.

(b) What feedback could you give to this learner?

13. Which challenges do you face when teaching language in your class?

14. Is there anything you would like to say about teaching of language?

15. In the knowledge test most reasons are based on external factors, like parents not helping their children. What could be your reasons for learners having problems with EFAL?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND RESPONSES!