



**Learning to teach IsiZulu FAL: Experiences of  
student teachers in initial teacher education programme**

**WINILE PORTIA THUSI  
213570355**

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College of Humanities  
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Supervisor: Prof. Labby Ramrathan

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## **ABSTRACT**

Post-apartheid South Africa has undergone significant changes in educational policies, especially in terms of Language Educational Policy. The introduction of First and Second Additional languages in the education system requires qualified teachers to effectively teach these subjects. This effort supports the goals of the country's language policies by promoting equity in language usage. Additionally, it encourages communication and interaction among learners from different linguistic backgrounds, fostering inclusivity within the education system.

In line with this background, this study focuses on how teachers of isiZulu First Additional Language (FAL) are trained to teach isiZulu FAL in school. The study took on a qualitative approach where it used the case study of a private higher education institution, selected students in their final year of the study to understand how they learnt to become teachers of isiZulu FAL. The findings suggest that selecting isiZulu FAL is the strategy to improve employment opportunities due to the high demand for isiZulu-speaking teachers in Ex-Model C schools and it is the competitive nature of the job market. The findings also suggested that possessing content knowledge is insufficient for effective teaching. One must also integrate content knowledge with pedagogical knowledge, forming a specialised understanding tailored to teaching specific subjects to particular groups of learners in specific contexts. Without a solid grasp of pedagogical content knowledge, meaningful learning cannot occur. The study is significant to language acquisition, teachers of first additional languages, teacher education institutions, and teachers.

**DECLARATION-PLAGIARISM**

I WINILE PORTIA THUSI, declare that

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
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**STATEMENT BY SUPERVISOR**

This dissertation is submitted with / without my approval.

.....

Professor Labby Ramrathan

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ATP	Annual Teaching Plan
BEd	Bachelor of Education
BELA	Basic Education Laws Amendment
BT	Bloom's Taxonomy
C2005	Curriculum 2005
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
CK	Curriculum Knowledge
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
FAL	First Additional Language
FET	Further Education and Training
FP	Foundation Phase
HL	Home Language
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IP	Intermediate Phase
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
L1	First Language
L2	Second language
LiEP	Language in Education Policy
LL	Language learning
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
MRTEQ	Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualification
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
NQF	Nation Qualification Framework
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PK	Pedagogical Knowledge
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SADC	Southern African Development Community

SGB	School Governing Body
SP	Senior Phase
TP	Teaching Practice
TPACK	Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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# **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Bill is a significant piece of legislation aimed to improve the educational environment in South Africa. Its primary emphasis is to enhance the value of African languages within the school curriculum, which is crucial for fostering a sense of cultural identity and heritage among learners (Department of Basic Education, 2013). The bill seeks to ensure that all learners, from Grade 1 to Grade 12, have the opportunity to learn and use African languages. This is intended to help learners connect with their cultural roots and promote a sense of belonging. Currently, learners are required to learn only one First Additional Language. However, the BELA bill proposes that schools offer a multilingual language, that would allow for a more diverse linguistic experience. This change is expected to enrich the educational environment and provide learners with greater language skills. The bill emphasises the inclusion of languages such as Xitsonga, Tshivenda, and various Nguni and Sotho languages. As such, by stimulating the learning of African languages (in this study, isiZulu) the BELA bill aims to foster social cohesion among different cultural groups in South Africa. It encourages understanding and respect for diverse languages and cultures, which is essential for building a united society. By prioritising isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL), the education system attempts an alternative approach to promote multilingualism and improve the value of African languages to bridge communication gaps, enhance mutual understanding among diverse communities, and address historical inequalities in language education (Ntshangase & Bosch, 2020).

This chapter provides the background of the study with an emphasis on teaching isiZulu as a first additional language (FAL). The chapter further outlines the purpose, rationale, and motivation for the study. Furthermore, the objectives and aims that underpin this study are also discussed in this chapter. The research is clearly outlined, and the research design is presented. The chapter concludes with an overview of the thesis structure, providing a chapter-by-chapter analysis.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

When South Africa transitioned to democracy in 1994, it adopted a multilingual policy that recognised the status of all official languages as outlined in section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Ngcobo, 2014). According to Beukes (2009) and Ngcobo (2014), multilingualism serves as a tool for fostering non-discrimination based on race, language, and religion. Cenoz and Gorter (2010) along with Ngcobo (2014) argue that a multilingual education system, which values mother tongue instruction while encouraging the learning of additional languages, can help South Africa achieve a non-racial society. The Constitution of 1996 reflects the country's appreciation for linguistic diversity by granting official status to nine African languages, thereby honouring those that were previously marginalised, including isiNdebele, Sepedi, Sesotho, siSwati, xiTsonga, Setswana, tshiVenda, isiXhosa, and isiZulu (Webb, 2013). Thus, all nine African official languages have equal status to English and Afrikaans in the democratic period (Saliwa-Mogale, 2021). The promotion of indigenous language in learning is a well-established phenomenon with national, regional, and institutional policies in place that encourage integration into educational programmes, including school and higher education programmes.

In KwaZulu-Natal isiZulu has been recognised as one of the dominant indigenous languages (Matthews & Van Wyk, 2016), and as such, most educational institutions (schools and higher education) offer isiZulu as either a home language or first additional language as an elective or core subject/course of study. Hence, competency in teaching isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) is the key to developing communicative competence in isiZulu amongst people (including learners and students) who do not have isiZulu as a mother tongue language.

Institutions of Higher Education are seen as integral in the campaign to spread multilingualism within education. As a result of their inclusion, there have been extensive debates on language planning and language policy issues in the education domain (Hlongwa et al., 2014). In 2002 the Department of Education approved the Language Policy in Higher Education (DoE, 2002) intending to accelerate multilingualism and transformation at universities. Whereas the debate in the last decade focused on the need

to include indigenous languages in Higher Education, it has now progressed to exploring how these could be made an important part of the academic discourse (Nzimande, 2012). This would redress the previous scenario where many universities taught African languages in the medium of English. A case in point in KwaZulu-Natal universities is that isiZulu was taught through the English medium. Also, these languages were largely taught following strictly grammatically-based structures (Mgqwashu, 2014). Such tendencies have resulted in unintended detrimental consequences on the teaching of isiZulu in general. Kaschula (2013) notes that the apartheid legacy of teaching African languages as pure linguistic courses has resulted in many students losing interest in studying these languages. Like other scholars, he has called for an upgrading of the teaching of African languages in the 21st century at both the school and university levels (Alexander, 2003; Lafon & Webb, 2008). Hence, I explore how student teachers learn to teach isiZulu FAL within Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in this study.

Higher Education Institutions (HEI) are considered essential in promoting multilingualism in education. Their involvement has sparked significant discussions regarding language planning and policy within the educational sector (Hlongwa et al., 2014). In 2002, the Department of Education endorsed the Language Policy in Higher Education (DoE, 2002) to enhance multilingualism and foster transformation at universities. While recent discussions have centered on the necessity of incorporating indigenous languages into HEI, the focus has now shifted to how these languages can be integrated into academic discourse effectively (Nzimande, 2012). This shift aims to address the previous situation where many universities offered African languages primarily in English. For instance, isiZulu was taught using English as the medium of instruction in KwaZulu-Natal universities. Additionally, these languages were often taught in a manner that emphasised strict grammatical structures (Mgqwashu, 2014). Such practices have led to negative outcomes in the teaching of isiZulu overall. Kaschula (2013) points out that the legacy of apartheid, which treated African languages as purely linguistic subjects, has caused many students to lose interest in learning these languages. He, along with other scholars, advocates for an enhancement of African language education in the 21st century at both school and university levels (Alexander, 2003; Lafon & Webb, 2008). Therefore, this study investigates how student teachers learn to instruct isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) within Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

The common approach adopted in the teaching of isiZulu as FAL was that isiZulu Home Language teachers were likely responsible for teaching non-isiZulu learners the isiZulu language. However, literature on FAL teaching (Soni, 2012; Mavhiza, 2019) suggests enormous challenges exist in teaching an indigenous language in a FAL mode. For example, Nkosi (2020) found that the majority of non-isiZulu student teachers are reluctant to learn the isiZulu language, and as such a different pedagogical approach to learning is needed.

To address the issue that Nkosi (2020) raises, this study focuses on how student teachers are trained to teach isiZulu as a FAL in schools. IsiZulu has been recognised as one of the dominant indigenous languages in KwaZulu-Natal (Matthews, & Van Wyk, 2016). The promotion of indigenous languages in learning is well well-established phenomenon. Some policies have been placed such as language policy which talks about isiZulu as a Mother Tongue instruction in the foundation phase. Thereafter it is English in the Intermediate phase.

While indigenous language has been privileged as a transformative engagement in the school education system, issues of conversation across language diversity have been privileged. The school curriculum has set indigenous language as a requirement for schooling. At school, learners have to take Home Language and First Additional Language in KwaZulu-Natal where isiZulu has been regarded as a dominant language. Most school curricula insist on learners developing communicative or conversational skills in isiZulu as the First Additional Language.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The approach in teaching isiZulu as FAL was that isiZulu teachers were likely responsible for teaching non-isiZulu learners the isiZulu language. However, literature on FAL has come to show that there are challenges in teaching home language in a second language model as FAL of which raise discussions on how we prepare teachers to teach isiZulu as FAL rather than having an isiZulu person to teach isiZulu to FAL learners but not having the knowledge and skills of the language. This study therefore focuses on how pre-service teachers are being prepared to teach isiZulu FAL. This study seeks to investigate the experiences of student teachers in learning to teach isiZulu FAL. By student teachers'

experiences, this study refers to their senses, actions, practices or insights relating to the theory, practice, and curriculum transition. Exploring student teachers' experiences involves the proposed changes, the types of meanings they grasp as they learn to teach, and the personal ways in which they comprehend the worlds in which they live (Jin, 2023). The study also seeks to understand how student teachers in Initial Teacher Education programmes navigate curriculum transitions within isiZulu First Additional Language (FAL) classrooms. This lack of comprehensive knowledge highlighted the necessity to explore the specific challenges encountered by student teachers as they adapt to changes in the curriculum, handle classroom dynamics, and deliver effective isiZulu FAL instruction. By addressing this knowledge gap, the study aimed to shed light on the experiences of student teachers, ultimately providing valuable insights for enhancing teacher preparation programmes and elevating the quality of isiZulu FAL education in schools. Through this research, the aim was to contribute to the improvement of teacher training practices. It also aims to better understand the effectiveness of isiZulu FAL teaching methodologies, which will benefit both student teachers and learners in the educational system.

#### **1.4 PURPOSE OF STUDY**

The study aims to explore and understand the experiences of student teachers who are learning to teach isiZulu First Additional Language (FAL) in Initial Teacher Education (ITE). The purpose of the study is to explore the valuable insights that inform the enhancement of teacher preparation programmes such as managing classroom dynamics, and effectively teaching isiZulu FAL as well as to investigate the challenges faced by student teachers in adapting to curriculum changes. Ultimately, the aim is to enhance isiZulu FAL in multilingual classrooms by bridging the gaps identified in both theory and practice. Additionally, through this research, the aim is to support the development of more effective teaching methodologies and strategies that can benefit both student teachers and learners in the educational system.

#### **1.5 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

I have been a professional teacher for over 19 years. During this time, various curricula have been implemented in South African schools, starting from the outcomes-based education of the Curriculum 2005 policy (C2005) and progressing through the Revised

National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), and CAPS. My interest in the topic arises from my experience in teaching and supervising isiZulu FAL student teachers in a private Higher Education institution. Lecturing IsiZulu FAL to non-isiZulu speakers who struggled with basic communication in the language presented a significant challenge. Thus, I had to contend with getting the student teachers to accumulate a vocabulary of isiZulu words and concepts, enabling them to interact with both IsiZulu Home Language (HL) speakers and those who do not speak the language. IsiZulu FAL has become a substantive teaching subject in most schools in KwaZulu-Natal, suggesting that there is a need for teachers who are specialists in teaching isiZulu FAL. Being a lecturer in a teacher education institution with isiZulu as my teaching specialisation, this study will provide valuable insights drawn from student teachers who have taken isiZulu FAL as a teaching specialisation, to inform my teacher education professional development, so that I can offer specialist training and development to my pre-service teachers.

All teacher education institutions offering initial teacher education programmes are regulated by national policy. The minimum requirement for Teacher Education Qualification (MRTEQ) is the policy that governs the programme for teachers in South Africa (Department of Higher Education, 2015). One of the key learnings (knowledge/graduate attribute) of the initial teacher education programme is to become a specialist in teaching a school subject. Aligned with the focus of this study, the teaching specialisation is isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL). While particular learnings are required within a teaching specialisation and these are usually captured in course outlines of modules taken, how one acquires the required learnings from a student's perspective is relatively unknown. Hence, this study will offer some insights from a student experience perspective on learning to teach isiZulu FAL.

## **1.6 OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTION**

### **1.6.1 Objectives**

The objectives of this study are:

1. To analyse the content that is taught to initial teacher education students for teaching isiZulu FAL.

2. To determine the isiZulu FAL student's experiences of learning to teach isiZulu FAL
3. To develop an understanding of the rationale informing the learning of isiZulu FAL within an initial teacher education programme.

### **1.6.2 Research questions**

The research questions for this study are informed by the purpose of the study which is: to explore the experiences of student teachers in the Initial Teacher Education Programme for Teaching IsiZulu as a First Additional Language.

1. What knowledge and skills are taught to student teachers specialising in isiZulu FAL within the initial teacher education programme?
2. How do student teachers specialising in isiZulu FAL learn the required knowledge and skills in teaching FAL within the intermediate Phase of schooling?
3. Why are student teachers of isiZulu FAL learning to teach in the way they are within the initial teacher education programme?

### **1.7 LOCATION OF THE STUDY**

The study was carried out in a teacher education institution located in KwaZulu-Natal. One institution was located at Durban and the other one in Pietermaritzburg. These two campuses were selected as the primary site for the research. This private University is an urban-located university with students from diverse racial groups. Students studying for the Initial Teacher Education qualification were from across South Africa. Further information about sampling can be found in Chapter 4.

### **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

IsiZulu language is predominant in KwaZulu-Natal and as such it is considered indigenous to this Province. IsiZulu language learning is important specifically in KwaZulu-Natal as one needs to be able to communicate with the language. According to DBE (2011) to communicate at a basic level in the target language, one must possess First Additional Language (FAL) skills. Additionally, it assists learners in learning more about the world, its cultures, and themselves. People gain insight into their own culture more deeply when they interact with people from different cultural backgrounds. Moreover,

the isiZulu language is vital in learning culture as well as understanding attitudes, values, and beliefs. To be able to teach isiZulu FAL well, one needs as much exposure to it as possible to build linguistic competence and basic discourse competence (Soni, 2012). In terms of the national language policy and that of regional schools' policies, isiZulu is considered as the First Additional Language for citizens of KwaZulu-Natal who do not speak isiZulu as their mother tongue language (Department of Basic Education, 2006). Hence, in most schools within KwaZulu-Natal, isiZulu FAL is a core subject. Thus, acquiring the FAL skills is necessary to communicate appropriately in the target language at a basic level (Department of Basic Education, 2011, p. 13).

Noting the pervasiveness of teaching isiZulu FAL in KwaZulu-Natal schools, one begs to ask the question of who are these teachers that teach isiZulu FAL and what training do they receive? It is this central question that this study hopes to explore with a focus on Initial Teacher Education (ITE). Hence, this study is significant to the school education system, more specifically in schools where isiZulu FAL is being taught.

Ndimande (2004) is of the view that IsiZulu as a lingua franca in South Africa, it should be preserved. She further argues that to preserve the isiZulu language and to promote intercultural communication, isiZulu FAL should be introduced as a conduit into the isiZulu language. Therefore, there is a need to develop isiZulu FAL. Soni (2012) argues that communication across linguistic groups is possible and involves the integration of different language skills through the acquisition of FAL skills. Such linguistic skills include listening, speaking, reading, and writing in a FAL mode. Noting the significance of FAL in both the preservation of languages and the need to communicate across linguistic differences, this study explores how isiZulu FAL is learnt in the ITE programme and taught across a multicultural and diverse society. This grand scale of intervention, therefore, needs a medium and a mechanism for influence and sustainability. The school of education system is therefore the most appropriate medium through which FAL can be grown and the teaching capabilities of the schooling system would be the most appropriate mechanism to promote sustainability. As this study is delimited to the focus on isiZulu FAL, a more nuanced engagement on isiZulu FAL will be taken into consideration. The value of learning FAL goes beyond intercultural communication, as Grenfell (2000) argues that through learning (isiZulu) FAL, learners acquire sociocultural

behaviours and cognitive skills necessary for living within a particular language community. This viewpoint of language learning supports a strategic and communicative approach to teaching and learning (Amjadi, 2024). Additionally, Soni (2012, p. 109) adds to this view by saying that teaching the FAL to learn an additional language well, “one needs as much exposure to it as possible to build linguistic competence and basic discourse competence.” Hence, this study is also significant to language learning and linguists.

This study is also significant to teacher education institutions as it has the potential to influence the curriculum that is taught within its programme design. In line with this focus, teachers of isiZulu FAL will benefit from this study as it will provide insights into how student teachers learn to teach isiZulu FAL. Furthermore, students taking isiZulu FAL will benefit from this study as it would provide experiential learning perspectives on becoming a teaching specialist for this school subject.

## **1.9 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

Since the purpose of the study is to explore the development of teachers for teaching isiZulu FAL within the ITE programmes, the researcher drew on the interpretive research paradigm as the epistemological stance taken in this research. Using interviews, an interpretive paradigm was adopted to gain an insight into how participants viewed their experiences of learning to teach isiZulu as a First Additional Language. According to Tracy (2019), the interpretive paradigm offers a viewpoint on how facts and understanding are created and shared through practice, engagement, and communication. Similarly, interpretive scholars argue that people's subjective perceptions of the outside world make up reality. As a result, they may embrace an ontological theory that views reality as socially produced as well as an inter-subjective epistemology (Bhattacharya, 2017; Thanh & Thanh, 2015). It is therefore a study of the social sciences in which a researcher conducts research to understand and characterise social behaviours or experiences related to a topic of interest (Thomas, 2010).

The study used qualitative research which informs the fundamental characteristics of subjective perceptions and the interpretations given to phenomena (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014). Through the use of qualitative data-collecting techniques, as a

researcher, I was able to gather rich and in-depth data from a variety of occurrences in a particular social setting, I utilised a qualitative case study methodology (Creswell, 2007; Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990) to explore the experiences of student teachers learning to teach isiZulu First Additional Language within the Initial Teacher Education programmes. Additionally, a qualitative approach was employed to gather detailed, contextual data about the student teachers' daily lives and to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives (Yin, 2016, 2018).

Maree et al. (2012) describe qualitative research as using a naturalistic approach to understand phenomena within their real-world contexts. Further, the researcher does not try to control the phenomena but instead conducts research in real-life settings to gather rich, contextual data about daily experiences, as opposed to controlled experimental environments (Yin, 2018).

A case study methodology was considered the most suitable for this study. According to Cohen et al. (2002), a case study explores a phenomenon within the naturalistic boundaries of the case site, event or individual. Fusch and Ness (2015) assert that ensuring the accuracy of data collection is crucial for real-life situations or projects. Salling and Leleur (2015) further argue that a case study aims to detail the process, and behaviour of individuals or groups within their full setting, or the series of events in which the behaviour takes place. In this study, the Initial Teacher Education programme of a teacher education institution was the case and the phenomenon of learning what and how to teach isiZulu FAL. It was explored within the boundedness of the private institution offering the programme, the programme design and the experiences of the participants learning to isiZulu FAL within the teacher education programme.

A purposive sampling strategy was adopted by the researcher. The researcher uses his or her discretion when selecting the participants from the population to participate in the study (Black, 2011). Thus, the basic principle of purposive sampling is to get the best information, one needs to focus on a relatively small number of hand-picked participants based on relevance to the issue being investigated (Denscombe, 2010). Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method, and it occurs when elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher. This sampling technique is

suitable for accessing in-depth data from individuals with specific experiences or knowledge (Neuman, 2014). Twelve students who were willing to share their experiences and who were registered at the university for BEd qualification were recruited. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted. Conversations were guided by a set of open-ended questions about the research topic, while exploring the participants' responses in greater depth (Roulston & Choi, 2018). Permission to conduct the study was sought from the Department of Higher Education, even though the interview took place outside of the campuses due to Covid-19. The semi-structured interviews allowed the student teachers to respond openly and share their perspectives on learning to teach isiZulu FAL. Every interview lasted between thirty and forty-five minutes, spread across two days in different weeks. These interviews were conducted per participant to obtain rich, thick descriptions and insights into their experiences of learning to teach isiZulu FAL. An anonymity vignette, which is a non-threatening story about a hypothetical person that participants can identify with (Gourlay et al., 2014), was provided to serve as a basis from which they could share their experiences.

The recorded data were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis and following an abductive approach (Terry et al., 2017). Ethical clearance was obtained from the General/Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The participants' personal identification information and research data were treated as confidential. To adhere to the principle, participation in this study was acquired through participants' documented informed consent, which detailed the study's information, purpose, and intention autonomy (Allan, 2015). The interviewees obtained informed consent in writing. According to Cohen et al. (2018), ethics are defined as principled sensitivity to others' rights. All participants were assured confidentiality and anonymity. They were informed that it is within their rights to withdraw at any stage should they feel discomfited.

Trustworthiness was achieved through respondent verification, by providing a clear description of the methodology, and lastly, by providing rich, thick descriptions of the participants' experiences. Clear descriptions of how the concepts used in the current study are understood, conceptualised, and applied are included in the following section.

Two campuses under one private Higher Education Institution were selected. For ethical considerations, the names of the participants and the private higher education institutions have been made anonymous. Sharing participants' personal information is unethical, according to Kumar (2018). After the information was generated, I had to make sure that its source could not be identified. Despite its small size, the sample was adequate and specifically designed to address the issue at hand.

## **1.10 KEY CONCEPTS/CLARIFICATION OF TERMS**

To prevent misunderstandings, this study often refers to the phrases that followed to provide clarification.

### **1.10.1 First Additional Language**

The term "First Additional Language" (FAL) refers to a language that a learner studies after acquiring their native language, either formally or informally (Monyai, 2010). Mastery of the mother tongue is essential before learning a second language (Nel & Theron, 2008). According to the Department of Education (2002), the curriculum supports learners using FAL as their medium of instruction to enhance their language proficiency. In this study, FAL and second language are used interchangeably.

### **1.10.2 Language policy**

Language policy refers to government decisions regarding the use of languages in education and society (Erling et al., 2021). The policies supporting the learning of isiZulu FAL are established by South Africa's democratic government (Msila, 2009). In this study's context, it pertains to a policy that a multiracial school may implement to adhere to the national language policy.

### **1.10.3 Language in Education Policy (LiEP)**

According to Erling et al. (2021), the LiEP of 1997 governs the application of language policy decisions pertaining to home, foreign, and second languages in particular educational contexts, such as schools and universities. Erling et al. (2017) emphasise that educational stakeholders must develop LiEP to foster multilingualism both nationally and

in schools. The aim of LiEP is to celebrate diversity and promote multilingualism within society (DoE, 1997). In this study, LiEP encourages schools to support language equality.

#### **1.10.4 Students' experiences**

Ning and Downing (2011) define student experiences as their interactions with the learning and teaching environment. Dörnyei (2020) adds that the learning experience in acquiring a second language encompasses the learner's perceived value of their engagement with various aspects of language learning. In this study, learning experiences refer to the strategies used by student teachers to learn and how these strategies affect their acquisition of isiZulu FAL.

### **1.11 THE CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVES INFORMING MY STUDY**

Since the study intended to explore the curriculum planned for Initial Teacher Educators as well as their knowledge of the curriculum they experience during their training period, I therefore framed my study with Shulman's (1986) conception of content knowledge (CK) to identify and understand teaching moments that could influence my teaching practices. I thus based my study on Shulman's (1986) concept of content knowledge (CK) to recognise and comprehend teaching moments that could impact my teaching methods. Schulman's theory of teaching knowledge "looks at what to be learned and the knowledge about the topic that needs to be taught" (Vijayan & Joshith, 2018, p. 327).

Subsequently, I utilised Aoki's (1999) concepts of curriculum as planned and curriculum as experienced to understand students' experiences of learning to teach isiZulu FAL. This framework aided me in exploring what happened in the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme to train teachers to teach isiZulu in terms of the planned curriculum and how student's experiences are important in planning how to teach the content. I also intended to validate both curricula as planned, and curriculum as lived to recognise the living experiences of teachers in the ITE programme. These multi-frameworks will assist me in exploring activities planned by higher education and whether they are important and good intentions for First Additional Language learners. The problem arises when what is "planned becomes valued to the detriment of the unplanned, unplannable and the lived experiences of the teachers" (Aoki, 1999, p.180).

## **1.12 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This concept relates to the challenges that negatively impact the research study. The major restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the research design in this study, particularly the process of gathering data from the identified participants.

The participants were struggling with time management. As a researcher, I also had challenges as I was required to finish the module pacer as prescribed by the Department of Higher Education and other students were attending during afternoons. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the shutdown of the institutions. This also served as a challenge to the time frame set. The interviews were not normal as the country was on level 3 lockdown measures where people were not allowed to meet often or go back to schools under normal conditions. Participants were not used to speak under their masks for more than 15 minutes which then necessitated me to change my interviews from 30 minutes to 15 minutes so that they would be comfortable. In addition, I had to resort to methods that were advocated by my institution in conducting field work. In this respect, some of the interviews were through digital platforms like TEAMS meeting and WHATSAPP communication.

## **1.13 SEQUENCING AND DELINEATION OF CHAPTERS**

### **Chapter One: Overview of the study**

This chapter presented the orientation and background of the study. It further provided the motivation and rationale, the problem statement, the research objectives, and the critical questions of this research. Additionally, it focused on the significance of the study, delimitation, and clarification of concepts used for this study.

### **Chapter Two: The History of Educational and Language Policy in South Africa**

The literature review of this study consists of two parts. Chapter Two discusses the history of education and language policy in South Africa. Chapter Three, the second part discusses the learning to teach of isiZulu FAL. This chapter offered an in-depth discussion of the literature reviewed to identify potential gaps in the research on learners' experiences of learning FAL. It included information from both developed (international) and developing (local) countries. Additionally, the chapter examined the Constitution as a set of government-established rules and laws. The literature review also explored

language policies, drawing on the work of both local and international scholars. Furthermore, Chapter Two highlighted the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for FAL and discussed the two theoretical frameworks that formed the basis of this study.

### **Chapter Three: Learning to teach Isizulu FAL**

This chapter investigates the complexities of teaching isiZulu within South Africa's teacher education framework. It analyses the nation's education and language to contextualise the drive that cultivates isiZulu First Additional Language (FAL) specialists. The chapter also highlights South Africa's linguistic diversity, the discourse that navigates the challenges and prospects of Home Language (HL) and FAL in the educational domain, particularly underlining the dominance of English. The narrative progresses to the role of multilingualism in South Africa, looking at the Department of Education's commitment to additive bilingualism for enhancing linguistic and cultural inclusivity. The chapter further examines language learning as a perpetual, context-driven process, exploring the factors that motivate students' engagement with isiZulu modules and the wider socio-linguistic and cultural implications. The chapter concludes by emphasising the need for thorough teacher training in the multilingual South African context, underlining isiZulu's critical role in the nation's educational and cultural spheres, and the imperative to equip educators for the multifaceted challenges of teaching in such an environment.

### **Chapter Four: Conceptual framework**

The theoretical exploration within this chapter lays the groundwork for a nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in educating isiZulu FAL teachers. Shulman's PCK provides a robust framework for analysing how content knowledge and pedagogical skill intersect to enhance teaching efficacy, particularly in the multicultural and multilingual South African educational context. It highlights the necessity for teachers to be well-versed in the isiZulu language and culture and skilled in pedagogical strategies that cater effectively to a diverse learner base. On the other hand, Aoki's curriculum theory complements and challenges traditional curriculum planning by advocating for a recognition of the 'curriculum as lived'. This theory invites educators to consider the spontaneous and responsive aspects of teaching that arise from the actual interactions

within the classroom, thus promoting a more adaptive and reflective teaching practice. These practical implications of the theoretical frameworks are invaluable in the context of teacher education and curriculum design.

These theories illuminate the critical areas of teacher education and curriculum design that must be addressed to prepare competent isiZulu FAL teachers. They highlight the importance of a balanced integration of rigorous content knowledge, effective pedagogical strategies, and adaptive curriculum execution that resonates with the lived experiences of both teachers and students. By weaving together the insights from both Shulman and Aoki, this conceptual framework not only guides the current study but also contributes to broader educational discourse on teacher preparation in linguistically and culturally complex settings. Through this lens, the study aims to offer substantive recommendations for enhancing teacher education programmes, ultimately improving the educational outcomes for students learning isiZulu as a First Additional Language.

#### **Chapter Five: Research design and methodology**

The research paradigm, research strategy, and research design are outlined in Chapter Five. It also shows how the data for this study was gathered using the sampling strategy and data collection techniques. The study was a case study that investigated the experiences of student teachers, particularly at private higher education institution in KwaZulu-Natal as they learnt to teach isiZulu FAL. I also looked at the methods used for data collection and analysis, including the steps taken to ensure proper documentation. The chapter further discusses the procedures used for data collection and analysis. It concludes by addressing the concepts of trustworthiness, validity, reliability, and the ethical considerations involved in conducting the study, along with a discussion on the limitations of the research.

#### **Chapter Six: Data analysis, interpretation, and findings**

This chapter provides data, explores key themes, and discusses the findings from the participants. The themes that emerged during data collection will be thoroughly analysed and transcribed. The data contributes to understanding the experiences of student teachers in learning to teach isiZulu FAL and the strategies they employ during their learning, including Teaching Practice (TP). The conceptual framework was also applied to clarify

the findings and interrogating assumptions that underpin the teachers' experiences. I discussed five themes that emerged from the data in connection with the above focus area.

The themes are: Learning the content; Learning how to teach isiZulu; Learning about managing an isiZulu classroom for teaching; Learning how to assess isiZulu learning among learners; and Learning about resources and their integration into teaching. The data obtained from these five themes is presented and findings that emerged from such process are discussed. The recommendations are summarised to suggest further research in Chapter Seven.

### **Chapter Seven: Presentation of key findings, recommendations, and conclusion**

Chapter Seven provides a comprehensive overview of key findings from a study on how student teachers learnt to teach isiZulu FAL within an ITE programme. The chapter discusses research questions related to the knowledge and skills imparted to student teachers, their learning methods for teaching isiZulu FAL, and the underlying reasons for their learning approaches. The chapter also highlights the importance of the study, offering recommendations and insights based on the research findings, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of preparing teachers for isiZulu FAL instruction.

### **1.14 CONCLUSION**

This chapter provided an overview of the study, detailing its rationale, context, and background related to the historical reform of the isiZulu curriculum as an African language within the South African education system. It outlines the study's focus, purpose, objectives, and relevant research questions. Additionally, a brief description of the research methodology and methods was included, along with the study's scope and limitations. The chapter also presents an outline of the subsequent chapters. The next chapter is set to discuss relevant literature on the policies that guide the teaching and learning of isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL).

# **CHAPTER TWO: TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN SOUTH AFRICA**

## **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In South Africa, the complex interaction between history, politics, and language in education has significantly shaped the learning experiences of both teachers and students. Following the end of apartheid in 1994 and the election of President Nelson Mandela, there was a paradigm shift in the country's educational language policies, particularly emphasising the importance of indigenous languages, as highlighted by Shawe (2015). This change has notably affected the teaching and learning of isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) across various educational phases (Tshatshelo, 2021). This study focuses on the experiences and the specific challenges encountered by student teachers during their learning to teach isiZulu FAL as well as their teaching practice, particularly in the context of isiZulu FAL. Mashiya (2011) highlights the concerns of these student teachers about the language of pedagogy, emphasising their role as custodians of isiZulu FAL in the Bachelor of Education (BED) programme at a South African university. This unique programme, offered in isiZulu - a rarity in higher education - was introduced to support the country's transformation and aligns with the 1997 Language in Education Policy and the university's language policy. The policy requires mother tongue instruction during the Foundation Phase, with isiZulu FAL introduced as a medium of instruction starting from Grade 4.

Despite the policy, student teachers specialising in isiZulu need help in practical implementation. During teaching practicums in non-isiZulu medium schools, they often find limited opportunities to teach in isiZulu. They commonly use a mix of mother tongue and English, especially in the lower grades, and predominantly English in Grades 2 and 3 (Arasomwan and Mashiya, 2021). This reality reflects a deviation from the additive multilingual approach advocated by the Language in Education Policy. The study aims to explore these student teachers' experiences in teaching isiZulu FAL within the initial teacher education programme. It explores various aspects such as language learning, the role of a First Additional Language, Home language, Initial Teacher Education, and learning to teach. This chapter also covers critical areas like pedagogical content

knowledge, using ICT in teaching, assessment and evaluation, learner engagement, teacher education in South Africa, educational policies, teaching methods, and the challenges faced by student teachers. This comprehensive approach aims to understand and address the underlying issues these student teachers face in isiZulu classrooms today.

## **2.2 TERMS AND CONCEPTS ON LEARNING TO TEACH IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Regarding understanding learning to teach in South Africa, various terminologies and concepts are fundamental and critical to understanding. The exploration of language learning and its various dimensions within the context of isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) in South African education forms the core of this study. This section investigates the historical, conceptual, and practical aspects of language learning, as well as the pedagogical approaches employed in Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

### **2.2.1 Language learning**

García (2009, p. 65) describes language learning as a continuous developmental process that occurs throughout a lifetime and as a recursive and circular nature. In that sense, we are all language learners at certain times, under certain conditions, with certain people.” Kim (2020) asserts that we gain a different understanding of language by recognising that language learning is part of the same process whereby humans learn socio-cultural behaviours and cognitive skills for living in a specific language community. As Phungula (2019) asserts, language is considered primary if no other language was learned beforehand; otherwise, it is classified as secondary. This means that a child's first language is the one they acquire initially, or when their language abilities are still undeveloped, making it the First Language (L1). Any language learned in addition to the L1 is referred to as a Second Language (L2). In the context of this research, the term "second language" refers to any language beyond the first.

### **2.2.2 First Additional Language (FAL)**

According to the Department of Basic Education (2011), First Additional Language is a language learnt in addition to one's home language that can be used for the basic intercultural and interpersonal communication skills needed in social situations. However, Thuzini (2011) argues that any language acquired after the L1 is considered a

(FAL). In South African schools, learners learn FAL in addition to their home language (HL) during their Foundation Phase period.

It can also be used to develop the cognitive academic skills essential for learning across the curriculum (Mgqwashu, 2011). A person can learn this language from their innate language (American Heritage Dictionary, 2011). In other words, this refers to any language that one learns or acquires after first-language acquisition. Thus, teachers are acquired to use different methods of teaching. FAL considers a variety of benefit to all the learners in the classroom who are learning FAL (Tshatshelo, 2021). For this study, “Any reference to Home, First Additional and Second Additional Languages should be understood to refer to the level of proficiency and not the language as a mother tongue or non-mother tongue” (DBE, 2011, p.19). In this study, the term "First Additional Language" is employed to describe the proficiency level of isiZulu-speaking learners in isiZulu.

### **2.2.3 Home language (HL)**

Home language (HL) often synonymous with mother tongue, plays a crucial role in the educational and cognitive development of children. Contemporary scholars emphasise its importance, echoing the definitions suggested by Calvert (1987) and Phillipson (2011), who identify HL as the language spoken by a child’s biological parents or the vernacular language of their community. This definition is aligned with Alexander (2009), who describes the mother tongue as the language a child is most familiar with upon their initial school contact. Recent research in linguistics and education accentuates the impact of HL on cognitive development and academic achievement. Scholars like Cummins (2021) argue that proficiency in HL is closely tied to cognitive flexibility and the development of metalinguistic skills. These skills are foundational for academic success, as they enable students to understand and manipulate linguistic structures, enhancing their ability to learn additional languages and grasp complex concepts (Zerva, 2023).

The socio-cultural importance of HL is also highlighted in current studies. García (2022) discusses how HL connects individuals to their cultural heritage and identity, fostering a sense of belonging and self-esteem. Lange et al. (2023) see HL as a crucial connection in a multicultural society, where it maintains one's cultural identity. HL acts as a bridge

between the individual and their cultural roots, contributing to a more inclusive and diverse educational environment. Boruchowski (2023) reveals that children who receive early education in their HL achieve better educational outcomes. They advocate for bilingual or multilingual education models that incorporate HL, emphasising that such models not only improve educational achievements but also promote linguistic diversity and tolerance.

The role of HL in literacy development is another area of focus in recent research. Neokleous et al. (2020) indicate that literacy skills developed in HL transfer to other languages, facilitating overall literacy development. This transfer is vital in contexts where students are required to switch to a second or additional language for academic purposes. Hence, HL is not just a means of communication; it is a crucial component of cognitive, sociocultural, and academic development.

#### **2.2.4 Initial Teacher Education (ITE)**

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is a fundamental phase in the preparation of aspiring educators, serving as their gateway into the teaching profession. The structure and content of ITE programmes are essential in shaping both the quality and quantity of future teachers, as highlighted by Musset (2010). These programmes are comprehensive, encompassing various aspects of education to equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge. A key component of ITE is the focus on subject matter or content knowledge, ensuring that prospective teachers possess a deep understanding of the subjects they will teach. This mastery is crucial for effective instruction and student learning. Sanusi et al.(2022) argue that the development of pedagogical knowledge, which involves teaching techniques and strategies that facilitate learning is equally important. Therefore, the aspect of ITE addresses how student teachers can best convey subject matter to learners, taking into account diverse learning styles and educational needs.

Additionally, practical school experience forms a core part of ITE. This hands-on training, often conducted through student teaching placements, enables teacher candidates to apply their theoretical knowledge in real classroom settings (Nel & Marais 2023). Such experiences are invaluable in preparing them for the complexities of actual teaching environments. Moreover, some ITE programmes extend beyond these

traditional areas to include developing research skills and foundational knowledge in cognitive, behavioural, and social sciences, as well as child development. This broader educational perspective equips teachers with a more holistic understanding of their students and the learning process. Overall, ITE is crucial in preparing future educators not just with knowledge and skills, but also with the ability to adapt to the dynamic nature of classrooms and the evolving needs of students. Its comprehensive approach ensures that teachers are well-equipped to embark on their professional journey, fostering effective teaching and positive educational outcomes (Meskhi, 2023).

### **2.2.5 Learning to teach**

Learning to teach is multifaceted. Adel and Noughabi (2023) state different kinds of knowledge such as content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), curriculum knowledge, student teachers' educational contexts, and the drive of education can develop the teaching base for the teaching profession. Hence, teacher education programmes around the globe are prepared to build and develop professional and quality teachers to encounter teaching challenges by enquiring about different types of knowledge in the classrooms (Darling-Hammond, 2021). Mainly, teacher education programmes are intended to develop student teachers' knowledge, skills, and characters to prepare them to educate students effectively and professionally at schools (Sulistiyo et al., 2017). To accomplish the objectives of teacher education programmes, the inclusion of school-based practicum experiences in teacher education academic programs is crucial. This could contribute to student teachers experiencing what it means to be a teacher within an academic context under the guidance of school teachers and teacher educators from the university. This is affirmed by Beshir et al. (2023) who suggest that the teaching practicum is one of the most critical components of teacher education that affects the quality of teachers.

### **2.2.6 Pre-service teachers**

Pre-service teachers, often referred to as student teachers, are individuals enrolled in teacher education programs, working towards their teaching certification (Puustinen et al., 2018). This crucial stage in their professional journey involves both academic coursework and practical, field-based experiences. Under the guidance and mentorship of university faculty, these aspiring students engage in supervised teaching in real

classroom settings. This hands-on approach is essential for bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical teaching skills (Khasawneh, 2023). Pre-service teachers, thus, represent a transitional phase where individuals from higher education institutions evolve into professional teachers, gaining the necessary experience and skills for their future roles in education.

### **2.2.7 Pedagogical Content Knowledge**

The concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) plays a pivotal role in the effectiveness of language teaching. Initially proposed by Shulman in 1986, PCK has become a fundamental framework in understanding the competencies required for effective teaching, especially from the context of teaching isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) in Initial Teacher Education programs. Van Driel (2021) describes PCK as the blend of pedagogy and content that makes teaching effective. It is distinct from the knowledge of a subject (content knowledge) and the general art of teaching (pedagogical knowledge). In the context of language teaching, PCK involves understanding how to convey isiZulu's linguistic complexities in an accessible and engaging manner. Considering the relevance to language teaching, effective PCK in language education implies not only a deep understanding of the language but also the pedagogical strategies that cater to varied language proficiencies, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles (Ntshangase, 2023; Lyu et al., 2021). This is particularly crucial in isiZulu FAL, where teachers must navigate the intricacies of teaching a language that may be culturally and linguistically distant from the learners.

Globally, studies from various contexts show that teachers with strong PCK can more effectively engage students, anticipate misunderstandings, and provide clearer explanations (Akinyemi, 2020). This is supported by research in diverse language settings, indicating a universal trend. In South Africa, the effectiveness of isiZulu FAL teaching hinges on PCK, given the language's unique grammatical, syntactic, and phonetic features. Ntshangase (2023) suggests that student teachers who develop robust PCK in isiZulu are better equipped to handle classroom challenges and facilitate more effective language acquisition. Common challenges in developing PCK across various contexts include a lack of content knowledge, limited exposure to effective teaching models, and difficulties in translating theoretical knowledge into practice (Simelane et

al.,2024). Specific challenges in the South African context include the limited availability of resources for isiZulu FAL, varying levels of language proficiency among learners, and the need to navigate cultural nuances.

### **2.2.8 Inclusive classroom practices**

Graham (2020) argues that inclusive education, a pedagogical approach that emphasises the importance of accommodating all learners regardless of their backgrounds or abilities, is increasingly recognised as essential in modern education systems. This review examines the role of inclusive classroom practices from the context of teaching isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) in Initial Teacher Education programmes, particularly in South Africa. Inclusive education is defined as a process that aims to meet the diverse needs of all learners by enhancing their participation in learning and minimising exclusion within and from educational settings (UNESCO, 2005). It entails changes in content, methods, structures, and strategies, being motivated by the belief that the right to education is universal (Graham, 2020; Sanger, 2020). Since apartheid ended, there has been a significant shift in South Africa's educational system towards inclusivity. This is crucial in a country marked by a history of educational segregation and inequality. The policy of inclusive education is particularly pertinent in the context of language education, given the country's linguistic diversity and the legacy of language-based discrimination.

Studies across various countries highlight the importance of recognising and acknowledging the diversity of languages and cultures in language learning environments. Inclusive practices include adapting teaching approaches to accommodate various learning styles, backgrounds, and language proficiencies (Alshuraiaan, 2023). Twala (2021) argues that in South Africa, where many learners come from diverse linguistic backgrounds, teaching isiZulu FAL requires a deep understanding of these diverse linguistic and cultural dynamics. Literature suggests that successful isiZulu FAL classrooms are those where diversity is seen as a resource rather than a barrier (Ngubane et al., 2020). However, misconceptions and overcoming language barriers, addressing cultural misconceptions, and managing varied proficiency levels are challenges that present opportunities for enriching the learning experience through exposure to diverse perspectives (Bagea, 2023).

There are various strategies for creating inclusive learning environments. Some differentiations involve tailoring teaching to meet individual needs. In isiZulu FAL classrooms, differentiation might mean providing varied linguistic support depending on the learners' proficiency levels or background languages (Twala, 2021). More so, there is culturally responsive teaching which emphasises the significance of incorporating students' cultural references in every facet of learning. Mavuru and Ramnarain (2020) argue that in the context of isiZulu FAL, this could involve integrating various cultural narratives and practices of the Zulu culture and other South African cultures to develop a more significant and relevant learning experience. In addition, there are collaborative learning approaches that emphasise encouraging group work and peer learning to foster an inclusive environment allowing students to learn from and support each other (Twala 2021). Utilising various resources (visual, auditory, kinesthetics) can also be another strategy that can cater to diverse learning preferences and needs, aiding in the effective teaching of isiZulu FAL. Regarding professional development for teachers, it is essential to provide student teachers with ongoing training and support in inclusive education strategies. This means understanding the legal and ethical responsibilities in creating inclusive classrooms.

### **2.2.9 Tools in language teaching**

Regarding ICT tools, there are learning apps that are effective tools for language learning. They offer interactive and user-friendly interfaces, making them suitable for learners at different proficiency levels (Nami, 2020). For isiZulu FAL, apps can provide exercises in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and cultural nuances (Mtshali & Mashiya, 2022). The use of digital textbooks, online dictionaries, and language learning websites offers a rich resource base for both teachers and students. They provide up-to-date content and can often be customised to meet individual learning needs (Nami, 2020). Platforms such as discussion forums, blogs, and video conferencing facilitate collaborative learning. They allow for interaction with native speakers and peers, which is beneficial for practicing isiZulu in real-life contexts. The benefits of integrating ICT involve enhanced engagement and motivation. This implies that ICT tools can make learning isiZulu more engaging and interactive, thus increasing student motivation (Ntshangase, 2022). In addition to that, ICT provides the availability of a diverse selection of materials and experiences, that can be particularly beneficial for less commonly taught languages like

isiZulu. Digital tools also allow for individualised learning paths, enabling students to learn at their own pace and according to what they want to learn. While there are benefits of integrating ICT, there are also several challenges such as inequality in access. There is a significant digital divide in South Africa, with many students lacking access to reliable internet and digital devices (Chisango & Marongwe, 2021). Effective integration of ICT requires teachers to be adequately trained and supported, which is not always the case. Keeping ICT resources up-to-date and functioning can be challenging, especially in under-resourced schools. To address the challenges, the literature suggests that to maximise the benefits of using ICT in isiZulu FAL education, it is imperative to address these challenges through government policies, school-level initiatives, and community support (Ntshangase, 2022). Investment in infrastructure, teacher training, and sustainable ICT resources is critical.

#### **2.2.10 Assessment and evaluation**

Sanusi et al. (2022) argue that assessment and evaluation are critical parts of the learning process, offering valuable insights into student progress and guiding teaching practices. Assessment in language learning serves to measure students' language proficiency, progress, and comprehension. Evaluation, on the other hand, is a broader term that encompasses the interpretation of assessment data to inform educational decisions (Khasawneh, 2023). This includes evaluating the effectiveness of teaching methods, materials, and curricula in language education, assessment and evaluation are essential for understanding how well students are acquiring the target language (in this case, isiZulu FAL), identifying areas where they might struggle, and adapting teaching methods to meet their needs (Govender & Hugo, 2020). There are assessment approaches in Language Education which include formative assessment, summative assessment, and comparative analysis. Formative assessment is ongoing and provides continuous feedback to both teachers and students. It includes methods such as quizzes, class discussions, and in-class activities. In isiZulu FAL, formative assessments can help in tracking the progress of language skills development, such as speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension.

Summative assessments are conducted after an instructional period to assess the overall learning outcomes. Examples of summative assessments include final exams, term

papers, or projects. For isiZulu FAL, summative assessments might assess a comprehensive understanding of the language and its use (Cingo, 2022). Literature indicates that a combination of both formative and summative assessments offers a more complete picture of student learning and is more effective in improving educational outcomes than either approach alone (Irons & Elkington, 2021). The impact of assessment and evaluation on Teaching Practices and Student Outcomes shows that effective assessment and evaluation practices provide critical feedback that can inform teaching strategies, leading to improved student outcomes. In isiZulu FAL education, this means adapting teaching methods to address areas of difficulty identified through assessments, as well as recognising and building on students' strengths (Govender & Hugo, 2020). Challenges on assessment and evaluation include ensuring assessment equity for students of different language backgrounds and proficiency levels. The literature recommends ongoing professional development for teachers in assessment literacy and the use of assessment data to inform instructional practices.

#### **2.2.11 Classroom management in teaching**

A key component of successful teaching and learning, especially in language education, is efficient classroom management. It is also crucial for creating an environment conducive to language learning (Eslit, 2023). It involves organising the classroom, establishing routines, maintaining a positive atmosphere, and handling disciplinary issues effectively. In language classrooms, where engagement and interaction are key to learning, effective management ensures that students can participate actively and confidently. This is especially crucial in isiZulu FAL classrooms because learners may be adjusting to a new language environment. Richards (2022) argues that there are also classroom management strategies in language education which include global strategies, positive reinforcement and feedback and cultural sensitivity. Regarding global strategies, research from various educational contexts emphasises strategies such as establishing clear rules and expectations, fostering mutual respect, and creating engaging and interactive learning activities (Rose et al., 2021). Encouraging positive behaviour through reinforcement and constructive feedback has been effective in language classrooms, enhancing student motivation and participation while recognising and respecting cultural differences in the classroom (Richards, 2022). This includes being aware of different

communication styles, cultural norms, and learning preferences, which is particularly relevant in diverse and multicultural settings.

There are challenges and strategies in isiZulu FAL Classroom Management. One of the unique challenges in South Africa is managing classrooms where students have different mother tongues (Tshatshelo, 2021). In isiZulu FAL classrooms, this requires strategies as a way to make sure that every student is engaged and able to access the material, regardless of their linguistic background. Additionally, teachers often face the challenge of instructing students who may have limited proficiency in isiZulu. Thus, strategies such as using scaffolding techniques, incorporating visual aids, and facilitating peer support can be effective. However, including cultural elements relevant to isiZulu-speaking communities can enhance engagement and provide a richer learning experience (Ntshangase & Bosch, 2020). This also involves being mindful of the diverse cultural backgrounds of all students in the classroom. It is pertinent to note that continuous professional development for teachers in managing diverse and multilingual classrooms is crucial. This includes training in intercultural communication, conflict resolution, and inclusive teaching practices. More so, equitable distribution and effective use of resources, including teaching aids and technology, are essential in facilitating an effective isiZulu FAL learning environment.

#### **2.2.12 Learner engagement in teaching**

Scholars such as Tshatshelo (2021) and Twala (2021) argue that in the context of teaching isiZulu as a FAL, learner engagement is crucial to the success of language acquisition. Thus, engagement is crucial in language learning as it directly influences how well students can acquire new linguistic skills. Learners who are actively engaged are more likely to feel motivated, participate actively, and take ownership of their learning process (Tshatshelo, 2021). For isiZulu FAL, engagement is particularly important due to the unique challenges learners face, such as grappling with a new phonetic system, syntax, and vocabulary. Engaged learners are better equipped to overcome these challenges. Twala (2021) argues that studies show that interactive activities like games, role-playing, and simulations can significantly boost engagement in language learning. These activities make learning isiZulu FAL more enjoyable and relatable to real-life situations. In addition, collaborative learning techniques, including group discussions and peer

teaching, encourage active participation and deeper understanding. They can be especially effective in isiZulu FAL classrooms, where learners can benefit from diverse perspectives and peer support.

Barkley and Major (2020) argue that motivational strategies such as setting clear goals, providing positive feedback and connecting learning to students' interests and cultural backgrounds have been found to enhance engagement. Twala (2021) argues that in isiZulu FAL, aligning lessons with learners' personal and cultural experiences can increase relevance and motivation. More so, incorporating technology, such as language learning apps or online resources, can also enhance engagement. It offers learners of isiZulu FAL an interactive and flexible way to practice their skills. Globally, considering the impact of learner engagement on language acquisition and proficiency, research indicates a strong correlation between learner engagement and language proficiency (Zhang, 2022). Engaged learners are more likely to develop better communication skills, higher linguistic competence, and greater cultural awareness. In the context of isiZulu FAL, engagement is key to mastering the language's nuances and cultural aspects. Higher engagement levels lead to better pronunciation, understanding of idiomatic expressions, and overall fluency. While the positive impact of engagement is well-documented, challenges remain in effectively measuring engagement levels and directly linking them to proficiency outcomes, especially in diverse classrooms like those in South Africa.

### **2.3 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHING MODELS OF CURRICULUM DESIGN IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The curriculum includes all aspects of what is planned, implemented, taught, learned, evaluated, and researched across all educational levels (McKernan, 2007, p. 4). It represents a comprehensive framework that includes not only the content but also the educational goals, structure, teaching methods, assessment strategies, and the various factors that characterise the educational experience. Curricula represent the different programmes and learning opportunities or teaching programmes that can provide for the education needs of the target group (Steyn et al., 2001, p. 97). The curriculum serves as the foundation for teaching and learning, and curriculum development involves the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes that lead to a structured curriculum plan (Lunenburg, 2011).

Curriculum models assist planners in systematically and transparently outlining the rationale behind specific teaching, learning, and assessment strategies (O’Neil, 2010). In South Africa, three primary curriculum models were introduced in 1996: Outcomes-based Education, the Revised National Curriculum Statement, and the National Curriculum Statement, which has evolved into the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement.

### **2.3.1 Outcomes-based Education (OBE)**

Outcomes-based Education (OBE), as defined by Botha, 2002, focuses on organising the educational system around essential outcomes for all learners to achieve by the end of their learning experiences. This approach begins with a clear vision of the desired learner capabilities and organises the curriculum, instruction, and assessment to facilitate this learning. A set of defined learning outcomes is established, creating conditions that support all learners in reaching these goals (Botha, 2002). South Africa developed its OBE model, known as Curriculum 2005 (C2005), in 1996, transforming the entire education system to align with this outcomes-based approach. In the study of Spady (2007) with the OBE, South Africa developed the Curriculum 2005 (C2005) OBE model. The entire education system in the nation was converted to an outcomes-based one by the government in 1996. By providing learners and educators with crucial skills, C2005 was supposed to alleviate the inequality brought about by the previous apartheid education system and support economic growth (Steyn et al., 2001). This model was chosen in response to global developments in educational growth as well as to free educators and students from a content-based mode of operation (Botha, 2002, p. 362).

A comprehensive assessment of the curriculum was given in the report of the Ministerial Committee tasked with reviewing C2005 (Chisholm, 2005). The argument put forward was that a distorted curriculum structure and design, a lack of correlation between curriculum and assessment policy, inadequate teacher training, a lack of or high quality of learning support materials, excessive policies, and limited learning programmes in classrooms all compromised the implementation of OBE. Lack of staff and resources to support and implement C2005 was one of the other obstacles (Chisholm, 2005, pp. 3–4). The OBE model was criticised and responded to, which led to its premature end.

### **2.3.2 The revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS)**

In an attempt to overcome one of the fundamental design shortcomings of C2005 by better explaining the knowledge content, the Review Committee proposed the introduction of a revised curriculum structure, the RNCS, to address the numerous OBE issues raised (Jansen & Taylor, 2003). The RNCS improved and simplified C2005 rather than creating a newly created curriculum (Department of Education, 2002, p. 6). It reaffirmed the commitment to OBE while upholding the goals, principles, and fundamentals of C2005. Its goal was to help every learner reach their greatest potential as a citizen of a South African democracy (Department of Education, 2002, p.8) and to develop a lifelong learner who is self-assured and self-sufficient, literate, numerate, multiskilled, environmentally conscious and empathetic, and capable of engaging critically and actively in society. The original review of the OBE philosophy, which was first outlined through the RNCS, was subsequently revised to NCS. The limitations encountered during the RNCS implementation were a key factor in its reassessment (Department of Education, 2009, p.13). Initially, a clear and detailed plan for implementing RNCS was lacking. The importance of RNCS was not highlighted, and the implementation message conveyed that it was merely a familiar curriculum. This led to the integration of RNCS into C2005 by teachers and officials at the district, provincial, and national levels of the Department of Education. Various stakeholders created their interpretations of RNCS, causing significant confusion about the official policy. Additionally, assessment support and guidance were insufficient, and no assessment policy was created by the curriculum developers. Teacher training also lacked depth, failing to clarify the foundational changes and new aspects of RNCS. Moreover, the language policy outlined in RNCS needed to be communicated and enforced. The task team's review report emphasised the need to resolve the confusion and uncertainty surrounding the curriculum (Department of Education, 2009, p. 49).

With this adjustment, NCS aimed to simplify both language and design elements. The design features included the use of subjects in the curriculum. When detailing the subject content for various learning areas, the working groups were not to recreate the dense, prescriptive syllabuses of the past. Instead, they were to outline only the essential standards for each grade, allowing educators flexibility in their teaching methods while

ensuring that all students meet the same minimum standards. These minimum standards served as clear guides of the required what learners had to accomplish (Hoadley, 2009).

### **2.3.3 Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement**

In 2011, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) introduced the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) along with the National Protocol for Assessment Grades R–12. This initiative was aimed at improving students' performance on international benchmarking tests, such as the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (Howie et al., 2017; Spaul, 2017). The implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in South Africa in 2012 represented a major change in the nation's education system. CAPS, viewed as more prescriptive than its predecessor, Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), aimed to provide a more precise and detailed framework for what should be taught and assessed across different grades and subjects. This change, while ensuring consistency in education across regions and provinces, raised concerns about its potentially restrictive nature, particularly for skilled educators accustomed to the flexibility of OBE. CAPS brought comprehensive and concise policy documents for each subject and grade, detailing the learning content and assessment requirements. These documents specified the variety of assessment tasks as well as the particular topics for each subject. Home language, Mathematics, and Life skills were guided by CAPS during the Foundation Phase. The English Home Language document contained instructions for particular teaching and assessment activities for listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. However, the CAPS document did not address the challenges of non-English speaking learners in English-medium schools, an issue that Govender and Hugo (2020) identified as a major barrier for learners whose mother tongue is not the language used in the classroom.

To support the implementation of CAPS, the Department of Basic Education offered learners with workbooks, distributing two per subject each year. These workbooks, especially in the Foundation Phase for subjects like the English Home Language, included various activities and were richly illustrated. Notwithstanding these initiatives, in 2012 the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) identified problems like inadequate workbook distribution. CAPS focused on different language levels: first language (FAL), second language (SAL), and home language (HL) and

elaborated on the skills each level emphasised. For English FAL, the assumption was that learners might not have prior language knowledge. Initially, the focus was on developing basic interpersonal communication skills, progressing to strengthen listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in the intermediate and senior phases. Here, learners start learning other subjects through the medium of their FAL, developing cognitive academic language proficiency alongside interpersonal skills. However, challenges persisted, particularly at the FAL level, where many learners struggled to communicate effectively in their additional language, indicating a need for a curriculum that supports learners to meet the required standards by Grade 12.

This study, focusing on isiZulu as a First Additional Language, aims to explore the objectives and challenges of student teachers learning to teach isiZulu FAL. It will discuss the conceptions and significance of isiZulu and isiZulu FAL, examining the concerns raised about its teaching and learning. The ultimate goal of CAPS and the broader South African educational policy, post-democracy, has been to promote multilingualism and intercultural communication, aiming to develop attainable levels of knowledge and abilities in learners and set achievable standards in all subjects and help students reach high levels of knowledge and proficiency.

#### **2.3.4 Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement - IsiZulu as a First Additional Language**

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) of 2012 in South Africa delineates specific objectives for teaching and learning Additional Languages, which are crucial for educational development. Acquiring isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) under CAPS aims to enable learners to effectively communicate in isiZulu, considering various factors such as audience and context. This includes utilising isiZulu FAL for academic purposes across different subjects and developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, fostering confidence, enjoyment, and a foundation for lifelong learning.

The CAPS curriculum policy, which was introduced in 2012, sought to remedy deficiencies in earlier systems and resolve various issues (Maharaj, Nkosi, & Mkhize, 2016). This involved developing new language policies and implementing Outcomes-

Based Education (OBE) as the basis for curriculum development and instructional methods (Vandeyar & Killen, 2007). Assessment methods were revised, new teaching strategies were implemented, and the time learners spent in Grades R-12 was modified (Maharaj, Nkosi, & Mkhize, 2016). CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2010) indicates that learning areas were restructured into subjects, reducing the total number of subjects from eight to six. Every subject has its policy document that outlines exact requirements and comprehensive information about what should be taught and assessed in each grade level at what time (Moodley, 2018; Du Plessis & Marais, 2015).

Teachers use CAPS curriculum as their guideline when teaching isiZulu FAL. It includes the objectives and purposes learners must fulfill to fully understand the purpose of learning FAL. The DBE (2011) stipulates the aims that they should understand beforehand. According to DBE (2011, p.5), learning FAL enables learners to:

- Develop the skills necessary to effectively communicate with your audience and adapt to different contexts.
- Use their Additional Language for academic learning across the curriculum.
- Listen, speak, read and write the language with confidence and delight.
- Express and substantiate orally and with writing using their ideas and thoughts positively to become self-determined and critical thinkers.
- Practice their Additional Language and their thoughts to understand themselves and the environment around them.
- Utilise their Additional Language to expand their knowledge in a wide range of other contexts.

According to CAPS for isiZulu FAL, learners in Grade 4 should master all language competencies (DBE, 2011). Language proficiency is essential for any language learning process, following several language skills, including Zano and Phatudi (2019), Fairjones (2018), and Darancik (2018). Listening, speaking, reading, and writing form the language skills. Maja (2019) recommends that learners in grades four to six should utilise listening and speaking abilities to engage in meaningful interactions and conduct oral presentations. Feng and Webb's (2020) research indicate that reading is a valuable approach for FAL learners to develop proficiency in language skills. Additionally, the DBE (2011) in CAPS describes writing as an essential communication tool that enables

learners to express and organise their thoughts. Language structures and conventions provide the rules for using punctuation, capitalisation, letters, sounds, words, sentences, paragraphs, and written work (DBE, 2011).

## **2.4 TEACHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The National Qualifications Framework Act (No. 67 of 2008) and the Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications regulate teacher preparation in South Africa. The knowledge combines, level descriptors, competencies, and credit values that needs to be incorporated into the structure of a Bachelor of Education degree are provided by the policy. The following teachers are trained by South African ITE institutions: Foundation Phase (FP), Intermediate Phase (IP), Senior Phase (SP), Further Education and Training (FET). The Foundation Phase takes four years (Grade R -3). The learners continue to the Intermediate educational phase for three years (Grade 4-6) and the Senior Phase which takes three years (Grade 7-9). The learners progress to Further Education and Training (FET) from Grade 10-12 and beyond. The Department of Education (DoE, 1998) states that children in South Africa start school at Grade R when they are four years old and turn five by June 30 of the year they are admitted.

In any of the aforementioned phases, subject knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, understanding of educational contexts, understanding of learners, understanding of educational values, understanding of assessment, as well as understanding of reflective practice are the fundamental competencies for a novice teacher. The DBE (2014) highlights the need for novice teachers to understand how to meet learners' language demands and provide support across the curriculum, which corresponds with Ntombela's (2019) emphasis on the significance of language in teaching and learning.

## **2.5 STUDENT TEACHERS CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ISIZULU FAL**

Teaching African languages to non-African speakers is challenging. In the study of Mashiyah (2011), concerns have been raised by teachers regarding the way student teachers teach isiZulu during their practicum. After the TP period is over, the teachers will go back and reteach those sections as they think the isiZulu FAL learners might not

understand the content. Several small-scale studies have been conducted on the inclusion of African languages as First Additional Languages (FALs), particularly focusing on the attitudes of learners, parents, and teachers towards offering an African language, mainly isiZulu, in independent schools. These studies provide important insights into the challenges related to teaching and learning African languages at the school level, revealing a complex interplay of issues surrounding language and power, the perceived status of African languages compared to English, teaching methods, and course content. Bhengu's (2015) study analysed Grade 10 learners' perceptions regarding isiZulu as FAL. Though views were generally positive, Bhengu highlighted that teaching isiZulu as FAL is not just about language acquisition but also involves cultural understanding. The learners' attitudes are influenced by their perceptions of the cultural significance of isiZulu compared to English. This intersectionality suggests that language learning is deeply tied to cultural identity, which can affect students' motivation and engagement (Qin & Li, 2020).

Further research by Makhanya and Zibane (2020) and Venketsamy and Sibanda (2021) highlights that there is a pressing need for greater support from education departments at both the national and provincial levels. While principals, parents, teachers, and learners expressed positive attitudes toward offering isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL), they were worried about the lack of professionally trained teachers and adequate teaching resources, such as textbooks and other materials, in African languages (Govindsamy, 2008). Govindsamy's (2008) student highlighted the supporting issues of learning and teaching an additional language rather than on learning and using a different language to their home language. In an attempt to promote official languages, Mthembu's (2009) study examined whether public primary schools were offering isiZulu as a subject following the LiEP (1997) and if they were receiving any support from the government. Through Mthembu's (2008) study, similar concerns of resource issues were illuminated, and the study reaffirmed the need for African language teachers to become professionals for them to implement teaching strategies that will improve their learners' language proficiency in communication. In all of these studies, while isiZulu FAL was being taught in schools, teaching and learning resources were noted as constraining factors. Issues or challenges in the teaching of and acquisition of language learning did not feature.

## **2.6 LACK OF TEACHING RESOURCES IN THE CLASSROOM**

For isiZulu FAL teachers, creating appropriate resources such as study guides, textbooks, and readers is a major challenge. The majority of teachers choose chapters that are appropriate for isiZulu FAL using isiZulu home language books (Mthembu, 2009). In a study, Street (2005) also found that IsiNdebele teachers were dealing with the same issue of inadequate teaching resources, which prevents curriculum implementation. Materials for African languages such as isiZulu FAL are limited and need more scientific and technical terminology and vocabulary required by modern society (Street, 2005). This will also cover the usage of technology in the classroom, which presents difficulties for teachers as well. More research is required to understand how teachers use technology in the classroom. Researchers are concentrating more on the relationships between technology and learners and between technology and content. (Desai, Hart, & Richards, 2008). Teachers are the "gatekeepers" of technology, with the authority to decide whether or not it enters the classroom and to have an impact on how it is used there (Zhao et al., 2012).

## **2.7 LANGUAGE BARRIER**

The language barrier can affect both learner's and student teacher's performance in education programmes (Mhlongo, 2019). Most Initial Teacher Education (ITE) institutions offer isiZulu as a FAL that is not the mother tongue of most student teachers. This creates challenges for student teachers who do not speak isiZulu as their home language when learning to teach it. These students face difficulties in understanding the content, which encompasses both the practical and theoretical elements of the language, as they struggle with the First Additional Language (FAL) (Jääskelä et al., 2017). Therefore, learning FAL in ITE is imperative for understanding language terms in Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Ramnarain & Hlatswayo, 2018). Additionally, learners who receive education in their mother tongue language have an advantage compared to those who are taught in a language that is not their mother tongue. Students who do not speak isiZulu will be able to acquire content knowledge in teaching the isiZulu FAL and enhance their understanding if they have access to the appropriate resources acquired during their teaching experience (Dhurumraj, 2013).

The study by Tiba (2012) conducted in Nigeria on the challenges faced by English as a First Additional Language (FAL) teachers shows that both teachers and learners encounter similar difficulties, including language barriers and communication challenges, across different countries. The research also points out that teachers sometimes rely on learners who are fluent in English to interpret or translate during lessons, suggesting that some English FAL teachers may not be fully proficient in using English for communication (Tiba, 2012). The majority of FAL scholars also identify communication challenges as one of the main problems faced by FAL teachers for example, Ntshangase (2022) contends that to ensure effective classroom instruction, teachers occasionally teach IsiZulu FAL in English (code-switching). They also use a few learners who are good in IsiZulu to interpret or translate things like literature (short story/ novel/ poem) to other learners in groups because they need a larger vocabulary as teachers to do it successfully. Most isiZulu teachers are not familiar with multicultural setting or accents during their schooling years and the teachers themselves must receive better training to qualified to better teach isiZulu (Bangeni & Kapp, 2007).

Turner (2012) noted that there appears to be a widespread belief that teachers who speak isiZulu or who have received training in isiZulu teaching are qualified to teach isiZulu FAL. According to Turner (2012), the majority of isiZulu teachers in multicultural schools require sufficient or comprehensive training to teach IsiZulu as a second language, particularly in a class where there are simultaneous speakers of IsiZulu and non-IsiZulu first language learners. Linguists and the general public seem to have different views on code-switching. Therefore, this research is worth studying to gain insight into solutions regarding learning to teach isiZulu FAL.

## **2.8 LEARNERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ISIZULU**

The affective component incorporates an individual's positive or negative feelings or emotions towards an object, a situation, or a person. These feelings may cause like or dislike of a language, language variety, or anxiety about learning another language (Ngcobo, 2014). For example, the different student teachers might express positive or negative feelings towards learning isiZulu as FAL based on their expression of positive or negative feelings towards using isiZulu as a language of learning to teach FAL.

The effective part includes a person's sentiments, whether favourable or unfavourable, towards a situation, an object, or a person. These emotions can result in a preference for one language over another, a fear of learning a new language, or both (Ngcobo, 2013). Based on their expression of positive or negative feelings towards using isiZulu as a language of learning to teach FAL, for instance, the various student teachers may express positive or negative feelings towards learning isiZulu as FAL. Such attitudes could, however, be caused by African parents who felt that the early exposure to English for the child (student teacher) would determine educational success.

One factor that may add to the challenges faced by teachers and the effective implementation of isiZulu is the attitude of isiZulu learners (Mestry et al., 2012). Some learners who speak African languages view these languages as less important, particularly in the broader international context where languages like English hold more dominance (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). Ngcobo (2014) examined the attitudes of isiZulu learners in his study on the state of isiZulu in Phoenix (in Durban, SA) high schools. His research at the time indicated that although both Zulu and non-Zulu learners were eager to take isiZulu, the schools were not prepared to do so because they lacked Zulu teachers with the necessary qualifications. However, Alborough's (2004) study in the Durban area's former Model C schools shows that IsiZulu is not treated equally with other languages, which adds to the learners' unfavourable attitudes towards the language. There is little evidence of code-switching and IsiZulu is not implemented by the language policy (Alborough, 2004). Additionally, they mentioned that in certain former Model C schools, isiZulu is discouraged in the classroom. According to Ngcobo's (2014) findings, people are more drawn to the language that is prevalent in the larger political and economic environment. If the school and its teachers have similar attitudes, Ngcobo (2014) highlights that learners will have a positive attitude towards learning in isiZulu.

In seeking a deeper understanding of the experiences of student teachers and learners in the wider socio-political context of education, it is not enough to rely on explanations alone to account for why some students succeed while others do not, as schools encompass a range of personal, cultural, familial, interactive, political, rational, and societal factors (Nieto, 2007).

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the journey of teacher education in South Africa, especially in the context of isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL), presents both challenges and opportunities. This chapter has highlighted the significant shifts in educational language policies post-apartheid and the unique position of isiZulu in the educational landscape. Despite policy advancements, the practical implementation of isiZulu FAL teaching, as evidenced by the experiences of student teachers, indicates a gap between policy and practice. The study has brought to light the challenges associated with language pedagogy, the critical part that student teachers play in preserving indigenous languages, and the problems that these students encounter in real classroom environments. A thorough picture of the current status of teacher education in South Africa is painted by exploring different facets of the field, such as learner engagement, assessment, and evaluation, as well as pedagogical content knowledge and ICT use. These insights not only shed light on the specific hurdles faced by student teachers in isiZulu FAL classrooms, but also offer a reflection of the broader educational context in South Africa. As the country continues to navigate its unique historical and linguistic landscape, the function of teacher training programme in empowering teachers to effectively bridge policy and practice becomes increasingly paramount. This chapter thus contributes to the ongoing discourse on optimising teacher education to better serve both educators and learners in South Africa's diverse and evolving educational environment.

## **CHAPTER THREE: LEARNING TO TEACH ISIZULU FAL**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter focused on contextualising the teaching of isiZulu FAL paying attention to South Africa's historical context, and its educational and language development within the multilingual teaching context. This chapter presents the complexities of teaching and learning to teach isiZulu within South Africa's teacher education framework, addressing the pedagogical, linguistic, and cultural facets impacting its instruction. It commences with an analysis of the nation's educational and linguistic landscape to contextualise the drive for cultivating isiZulu First Additional Language (FAL) specialists. Highlighting South Africa's linguistic diversity, the discourse navigates the challenges and prospects of Home Language (HL) and FAL in the educational domain, particularly underlining the dominance of English and the resultant policy-practice discord. The narrative progresses to the role of multilingualism in South Africa, showcasing the Department of Basic Education's commitment to additive bilingualism for enhancing linguistic and cultural inclusivity. Discussions on FAL acquisition focus on the pedagogical strategies and considerations necessary for effective isiZulu teaching, reflecting a policy shift that acknowledges the significance of indigenous language in education. The chapter further examines language learning as a perpetual, context-driven process, exploring the factors that motivate students' engagement with isiZulu modules and the wider socio-linguistic and cultural implications. In conclusion, the chapter emphasises the need for thorough teacher training in the multilingual South African context, underlining isiZulu's critical role in the nation's educational and cultural spheres, and the imperative to equip educators for the multifaceted challenges of teaching in such an environment.

### **3.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF CONCEPTS**

This section investigates the nuanced realm of language acquisition within South Africa's education system, focusing on Home Language (HL) and its effects on teaching and learning. It navigates the dynamics of multilingualism and the structural intricacies of First Additional Language (FAL) education. By dissecting the layered process of language learning, the narrative unearths the motivations, challenges, and socio-linguistic undercurrents influencing language education in a multilingual society, emphasising the

pivotal role of isiZulu in this linguistic mosaic. The discourse extends to global perspectives, comparing local experiences with international language learning trends and their broader cultural and employment implications.

### **3.2.1 Home language (HL)**

South Africa's education system is marked by a complex web of linguistic diversity, highlighting the nation's rich cultural blend. Central to this complexity is the concept of Home Language (HL), which, as articulated by Childs (2016), is not merely the mother tongue or primary language of learners but rather a "proficiency level" that educational institutions must cater to within their curriculum. This nuanced understanding of HL necessitates a flexible and inclusive educational approach to accommodate the linguistic plurality among student populace. In South African schools, the curriculum is structured to accommodate at least two language levels: Home Language (HL) and First Additional Language (FAL), with the potential inclusion of a Second Additional Language (SAL). However, the reality, as noted by the Department of Basic Education (2011), is that many schools fall short of offering the home language of all learners, primarily due to the logistical and resource constraints inherent in such a diverse linguistic environment. This situation underlines a significant gap in language education between policy goals and actual implementation.

- The dominance of English in many South African schools as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT), regardless of the linguistic composition of the student body, presents another layer of complexity (Landsberg et., 2011). This prevalence of English, often at the expense of indigenous languages, raises critical questions about linguistic equity and educational effectiveness. Consequently, the dissonance among a learner's home language and the LoLT has profound implications for teaching and learning, potentially hindering cognitive and academic development (De Klerk, 2002; Landsberg et al., 20011). Historically, the South African education policy advocated for foundation phase learning to occur predominantly in the home language, facilitating a better understanding and cognitive connection for young learners (Department of Basic Education, 2010). However, this practice has not been consistently applied beyond the Foundation Phase, leading to a drastic reduction in home language instruction as students'

progress to higher grades. The Department of Basic Education (2010) data reveals that while 80% of children benefit from home language learning in the Foundation Phase, this figure diminishes to less than 30% in later phases.

The critical role of language in education, as highlighted by Mda (2004), underpins the entire learning process, with a strong correlation between language proficiency and academic achievement. More so, the constitutional and policy frameworks in South Africa, notably the Language in Education Policy (Department of Education, 1997), reflect a commitment to linguistic rights and multilingual education, advocating for an additive approach to multilingualism. This approach aims to ensure that learners achieve competence in at least one additional official language while maintaining and improving their home language (DBE, 2013). The Department of Basic Education has endorsed the additive multilingualism model aligns with broader educational objectives to cultivate multilingual competencies among South African learners, reinforcing the intrinsic value of linguistic diversity within the national educational agenda. This model necessitates that learners engage with at least two different languages at the Home or First Additional Language level, a policy facilitated by the autonomy granted to School Governing Bodies (SGBs) to tailor school language policies to their specific contexts. The implementation of these language policies, however, faces several challenges, including resource limitations, teacher proficiency, and societal attitudes toward indigenous languages (Tollefson & Tsui, 2014). Moreover, the predominance of English as LoLT, coupled with the inadequate provision of home language instruction, has implications for the linguistic identity and academic success of learners. The tension between maintaining linguistic diversity and ensuring educational efficacy is a recurring theme in South African education, necessitating ongoing dialogue and strategic planning among educators, policymakers, and communities (Luckett, 2006; Sleeter & Carmona, 2017). To navigate these complexities, education stakeholders in South Africa must advocate for and implement robust language policies that not only respect linguistic rights but also foster an environment conducive to effective multilingual education. This involves a concerted effort to enhance the position of indigenous languages in the education sector, improve the training and recruitment of language teachers, and develop comprehensive language resources and support mechanisms (Tollefson and Tsui, 2014). The discourse on Home Language in the South African educational context reveals a landscape fraught with

challenges yet rich with opportunities for fostering linguistic diversity and enhancing educational outcomes (Wolff et al., 2017). As the nation continues to grapple with the legacy of its colonial and apartheid past, the role of language in education cannot be overstated in the broader quest for social equity, cultural affirmation, and national development.

### **3.2.2 Multilingualism**

Multilingualism in South Africa represents a robust and intricate aspect of the nation's identity, reflecting its complex historical, cultural, and social landscape (Wolff et al., 2017). One of the most unique aspects of the country is its linguistic diversity, as recognised by the Pan South African Language Board (1998), which acknowledges the usage of multiple languages in a variety of societal contexts. Additionally, the multilingualism of South African society complicates the formulation and application of language policies, particularly in the field of education, where non-indigenous languages continue to be widely used. Given the interactions that can occur between languages and the processes involved in learning, it also influences how the acquisition of new languages is perceived and understood, particularly in contexts where multiple languages are spoken (Tai & Wei, 2021). This multilingual fabric not only facilitates access to information but also enhances participation in both national and international spheres. The South African Constitution stresses this linguistic diversity, advocating for the learning of both indigenous and foreign languages, thereby fostering a global outlook among its citizens. Cenoz (2013) expands on this notion, defining multilingual individuals as those who can communicate in more than one language. This broad perspective on multilingualism is instrumental in promoting educational and societal inclusivity.

The Language in Education Policy (1997) introduces the concept of 'additive bilingualism', which emphasises the maintenance of the home language while providing access to additional languages (Botha, 2002). This policy approach aims to balance linguistic preservation with the acquisition of new languages, underscoring the right of individuals to choose their language of learning and teaching within the context of a broader educational mandate to promote multilingualism (Wolff et al., 2017). Govindasamy (2008) further elaborates on multilingualism as the capacity to utilise

various languages, which in the context of South African education means having a home language, a first additional language, and a second additional language included in the curriculum. This approach aligns with UNESCO's definition of multilingual education (1999), advocating the integration of one's mother tongue with one's regional, national, and international languages within the educational framework (Hult, 2023).

South Africa's commitment to multilingual education reflects a broader recognition of the intrinsic value of linguistic diversity. The ability to navigate multiple languages not only enriches individual cognitive and cultural development but also strengthens societal cohesion and global interconnectedness. de Oliveira (2024) emphasises that societies are inherently multilingual, continually engaging with a variety of languages to navigate complex social, economic, and cultural landscapes. More so, the sociolinguistic perspective, as discussed by Hinkel (2018), often associates multilingualism with the linguistic capabilities of nations or individuals, suggesting a deep-rooted connection between language use and cultural identity. Temanie (2004) further asserts that multilingualism and multiculturalism are interdependent, with language serving as a fundamental element of cultural expression and identity.

Within the context of South Africa, the pursuit of multilingual education is both a challenge and an opportunity. The diverse linguistic repertoire of the country offers a rich resource for educational engagement and cultural exchange (Maseko & Mkhize, 2021). However, the practical application of multilingual policies in educational settings requires careful planning, resource allocation, and pedagogical strategies to ensure that all languages, particularly indigenous ones, are valued and effectively taught. Educational policies in South Africa have progressively aimed to reflect and cater to the multilingual realities of its populace (Wolff et al., 2017). The additive bilingualism approach, for instance, seeks to cultivate a learning environment where students can develop proficiency in multiple languages, thereby enhancing their cognitive abilities, cultural awareness, and social integration.

Makalela (2022) argues that the integration of multiple languages in the educational system not only equips students for a globalised world, but also acknowledges and respects the linguistic and cultural diversity inherent in South African society. It enables

learners to maintain their linguistic heritage while acquiring new languages, facilitating a more inclusive and empathetic understanding of different cultures (Maseko & Mkhize, 2021). However, the implementation of multilingual education faces numerous challenges, including teacher training, curriculum development, and the availability of resources (Nkoala, 2024). Teachers must be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively teach in multilingual classrooms, and curricula must be designed to accommodate and celebrate linguistic diversity. Moreover, the delivery of adequate resources, including textbooks and educational materials in various languages, is crucial to assist in the process of teaching and learning (Nkoala, 2024). The education system should strive to overcome these obstacles to realise the full potential of multilingual education in fostering a more inclusive, culturally rich, and globally connected society (Makalela, 2022). In summary, multilingualism in South Africa is more than a linguistic phenomenon; it is a reflection of the country's complex history and cultural diversity. The educational policies and practices surrounding multilingualism aim to harness this diversity for the betterment of learners and the community at large. By promoting linguistic inclusivity and cultural understanding, South Africa can strengthen its national identity and enhance its position on the global stage.

### **3.2.3 First Additional Language (FAL)**

In the South African educational context, the First Additional Language (FAL) plays a critical role in the linguistic and cognitive development of learners. As the second language acquired after the home language, FAL serves as a bridge between the mother tongue and the broader communicative demands of society (Botha, 2002). The introduction of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) marked a significant shift in the teaching of FAL, mandating its introduction from grade 1 in the foundation phase, aiming to enhance early language acquisition and proficiency (Department of Basic Education, 2011). The selection of FAL often reflects the linguistic dynamics of the region. For instance, in many rural South African schools, English is commonly taught as FAL, while isiZulu frequently serves this role in urban and semi-urban areas (Zama, 2014; Ntuli, 2017). This distribution highlights the diverse linguistic landscape of the country and the educational system's response to it.

Monyai (2010) provides a nuanced understanding of FAL, noting that it is not merely a second language learned formally in educational settings, but can also be acquired informally through social interactions with native speakers. This dual mode of learning highlights the fluidity and adaptability inherent in language acquisition processes. The Department of Basic Education (2011) clarifies that references to home, first additional, and second additional languages in the South African educational discourse are about proficiency levels rather than the linguistic identity of the learners. The introduction of FAL from the early years of schooling is strategic, aiming to cultivate linguistic skills that are foundational for later academic and social interactions (Botha, 2022). Learning a second language from an early age can enhance cognitive development, improve problem-solving skills, and foster an appreciation for cultural diversity (Ntshole et al., 2023). Moreover, early exposure to multiple languages prepares learners for the increasingly globalised and multilingual world they will navigate as adults.

While teaching FAL in South African schools has various challenges, educators must navigate the complexities of delivering instruction in a language that may not be the primary language of communication for most learners. This requires not only linguistic proficiency but also pedagogical agility to interact with students effectively and facilitate meaningful language learning experiences. Furthermore, the choice of FAL in schools often mirrors broader societal and linguistic trends, reflecting the historical, social, and economic factors that shape language use and preference in the wider community (Limbada, 2021). For example, the predominance of English as FAL in rural areas might be attributed to its perceived utility as a global lingua franca, offering access to broader economic and educational opportunities (Luckett, 2006). Kretzer and Kaschula (2021) argue that in urban and semi-urban settings, where linguistic diversity is more pronounced, the selection of languages like isiZulu as FAL reflects demographic realities and the need to promote indigenous languages within the educational framework. This not only contributes to the preservation and valorisation of local languages, but also aligns with broader national goals of linguistic inclusivity and cultural representation (Kretzer & Kaschula, 2021).

In conclusion, the teaching and learning of FAL in South Africa are deeply intertwined with the country's multifaceted linguistic heritage and educational objectives. As a vital

component of the educational curriculum, FAL serves both as a medium of instruction and as a means of fostering linguistic competence and intercultural understanding (Thuketana & Makgabo, 2022). Through this, learners are equipped with the skills necessary to navigate and contribute to a multilingual and culturally diverse society.

### **3.3 PROCESS OF LEARNING A LANGUAGE**

Language is a unique trait that distinguishes humans from all other species and connects people across geographical boundaries (Nath, 2010). It is a tool for great achievement in any discipline, especially in the isiZulu language as it serves as a mode of transferring and transmitting the intended message to the receiver (Baker-Bell, 2020). Thus, language is an exclusively human and non-instinctive way of conveying thoughts, emotions, and desires through the use of systems made up of voluntarily created symbols (Sapir, 2023).

Language learning (LL) is an intricate, multi-faceted process deeply embedded within the fabric of social interactions and cultural situations. Borrero and Yeh (2010) highlight that LL is intrinsically connected to social interactions and that the environments in which individuals engage with language profoundly influence their learning trajectories. Lai et al. (2018) further emphasise that LL often transcends the conventional classroom setting, leveraging various structured resources to facilitate learning in diverse contexts. This notion is supported by Benson et al. (2011), who advocate for the integration of classroom learning with out-of-class experiences to maximise language acquisition efficacy. Dörnyei (2020) offers a nuanced perspective on LL, considering it a conscious endeavour resulting from formal educational experiences or self-directed study programmes. This view aligns with Robbins (2018) who contends that LL is a unifying element of all languages, underscoring its significance as a lifelong, developmental process. García (2009) reinforces this by describing LL as a continuous, lifelong journey characterised by recursive and circular patterns, highlighting the universal nature of language acquisition.

The colonial legacy in countries like South Africa has led to the privileging of colonial languages over indigenous ones, with the former wielding significant social power and the latter remaining underdeveloped (Zulu & Ndebele, 2020). This disparity shows the socio-political dimensions of language learning, where language preferences and policies

are shaped by historical and contemporary power dynamics. Within the African higher education landscape, language learning has been scrutinised to understand student motivations and educational outcomes. Mbatha (2016) explored the reasons Black students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal opted for IsiZulu language modules, uncovering a spectrum of emotions and ideological underpinnings influencing their choices. This study revealed the complex interplay between linguistic preference, cultural identity, and educational aspirations. Matsinhe (2013) explored the challenges facing indigenous African language programmes within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), noting that low enrolment and high dropout rates were significant impediments. This situation is echoed by Batibo (2013), who observed that students often pursue language studies to meet academic requirements or enhance their professional linguistic competencies.

Gallagher-Brett (2007) analysed the diverse approaches to language learning among adolescents and young adults in the UK, aiming to illuminate the benefits and inform curricular innovations. Jordan (2015) extended this inquiry to a global scale, investigating language learning motivations in several European countries and the USA, finding that communication desires and the pursuit of multilingualism were prevalent drivers. The economic implications of language proficiency were highlighted by Glynn (2012), who noted that command of languages like isiZulu FAL could significantly enhance job prospects and earning potential. In Asia, the growing interest in languages, particularly Arabic, has been documented by Chipila (2016) and Abuhakema (2012), noted that cultural and religious factors often influence language learning decisions, highlighting the intricate connections between language, identity, and community.

The comprehensive analysis of LL across various global contexts reveals its multifaceted nature, influenced by cultural, social, economic, and political factors. Language learning is more than just cognitive work, regardless of the language being learnt as a mother tongue, second language, or additional language. but a complex interaction of individual motivations, societal needs, cultural contexts, and educational frameworks (Devaki, 2022). The insights from these studies demonstrate the importance of a holistic approach to language education that considers the diverse needs and backgrounds of learners, the

socio-cultural implications of language policies, and the broader goals of promoting multilingualism and multicultural understanding in a globalised world.

### **3.4 LEARNING TO TEACH FAL**

Teaching a First Additional Language (FAL) like isiZulu within the robust and diverse linguistic landscape of South Africa necessitates a deep engagement with both the linguistic intricacies and the cultural dimensions of language education. As highlighted by Monyai (2010), the process transcends mere language instruction, demanding a comprehensive approach that encourages learners to interact with and value the cultural and societal aspects of isiZulu. This approach aligns with the Language in Education Policy, which encourages additive bilingualism, encouraging students to develop proficiency in additional languages while retaining their native linguistic skills (Department of Basic Education, 2011). The incorporation of isiZulu as FAL in both urban and semi-urban educational settings signals a progressive move towards valuing indigenous languages, counteracting their historical sidelining in formal education (Zama, 2014; Ntuli, 2017). Effective FAL teaching hinges on educators' proficiency in the target language and their mastery of pedagogical methods that foster successful language learning. This dual expertise is crucial for instilling communicative competence and deep respect for the cultural richness of the language among students.

Educators must therefore adopt a multifaceted teaching approach, blending language skills with cultural insights to provide a holistic learning experience. Such an approach not only facilitates linguistic proficiency but also nurtures cultural empathy and understanding, aligning with the national educational objectives of promoting multilingualism and multiculturalism (Hult, 2023; Maseko & Mkhize, 2021; Sleeter & Carmon, 2017). Through the use of isiZulu FAL, the teacher's role in this context turns from that of a simple language teacher to that of a cultural ambassador, bridging language gaps and promoting a deeper understanding of South Africa's rich cultural diversity.

#### **3.4.1 Interrelation between teaching and learning**

The relationship between teaching and learning is a dynamic interaction where the methods used in teaching have a direct impact on students' ability to acquire knowledge and skills. This is particularly relevant in the context of teaching isiZulu as a First

Additional Language (FAL). Scholars like Mqgwashu (2007) emphasise the personal and transactional choices influencing language acquisition, thus highlighting the need for teaching methods that cater to diverse student motivations and interactions. In addition to that, Deng (2013) and Mitchell and Stones (2022) discuss the importance of aligning teaching content with academic disciplines, suggesting that effective teaching in isiZulu FAL requires an understanding of both linguistic structures and academic frameworks. Consequently, Effendi et al. (2017) and Octaberlina and Anggarini (2020) emphasise the necessity of structured approaches in language teaching, advocating for methods that incorporate grammar instruction with communicative practices. This is supported by Wildsmith-Cromarty (2018) and Wang (2020), who argue that understanding grammatical structures improves clarity and comprehension, thereby facilitating better learning outcomes. These insights collectively highlight the reciprocal nature of teaching and learning, where effective teaching strategies improve learning outcomes by addressing the different educational needs and contextual realities of students.

#### **3.4.2 Student teacher's experiences in learning to teach isiZulu FAL**

Learning to teach isiZulu FAL includes navigating both content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Kemmis (2011) and Fitzmaurice (2010) highlight the difficulty of teaching, which integrates disciplinary knowledge with pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), as essential for effective teaching. The concept of PCK, further discussed by Ma and Rada (2005) and Gess-Newsome et al. (2019) involves reflective practices that associate teaching strategies with learning objectives, thereby improving the pedagogical effectiveness. Student teachers' experiences are mainly shaped by their engagement with the curriculum, as noted by Maharajh et al. (2016) and DoE (2011) who emphasise the role of the CAPS curriculum in providing a structured educational framework. This is echoed in discussions on lesson planning by Sahin-Taskin (2017) and Neisari & Heidari (2014), who argue that well-planned lessons using appropriate pedagogies are important for successful knowledge transfer.

Considering the integration of technology in teaching isiZulu FAL, as explored by Tyagi (2019) and Medina and Hurtado (2017), it reflects the developing nature of educational environments where ICT tools play a significant role in improving the process of teaching and learning. This is particularly relevant in addressing the challenges and opportunities

highlighted by Bicen and Kocakoyun (2018) and Ismail and Mohammad (2017), where digital platforms like Kahoot provide interactive and engaging learning experiences. Hence, student experiences in learning to teach isiZulu FAL are significantly influenced by their interaction with both theoretical knowledge and practical applications. It also incorporates a broad range of activities from understanding curriculum requirements to effectively utilising technological tools in educational practices. These experiences are critical in shaping their future effectiveness as educators, emphasising the importance of comprehensive training programmes that not only impart knowledge but also foster adaptability and innovation in teaching methodologies.

### **3.4.3 The distinction between teaching isiZulu HL and isiZulu FAL**

It is worth noting to emphasise the distinction between teaching isiZulu HL and isiZulu FAL to understand teachers' challenges when teaching isiZulu learners. The main difference between a Home Language (HL) and a First Additional Language (FAL) is the level of proficiency required for each subject. The content of a First Additional Language (FAL) is designed for learners who do not speak the language as their mother tongue, whereas a Home Language (HL) caters to learners who grew up speaking the language as their first language ( Little,2022). Therefore, the critical differences between a FAL and HL lie in the level of difficulty, content, and assessment methods. Thus, teachers who teach learners who take HL are expected to have a deeper understanding of the language and literature, while teachers who teach FAL learners focus more on practical language skills (Njoli,2023). This is demonstrated by the fact that a HL is evaluated using stricter criteria, and learners are expected to write longer essays and evaluate materials of more complexity than learners with a FAL.

Teaching isiZulu as HL differs significantly from teaching it as FAL due to the depth of content, pedagogical approaches, and cultural integration. IsiZulu HL focuses on advanced language skills, including analyzing complex texts, understanding deeper cultural aspects, and mastering idiomatic expressions (Thusi,2017). It aims to develop linguistic precision and critical thinking, often through interactive methods like debates and essay writing. Conversely, isiZulu FAL emphasizes foundational grammar and basic communication skills, using scaffolding techniques such as visual aids and guided

exercises to build confidence in everyday usage. Non-isiZulu-speaking learners are expected to have limited to no knowledge of their FAL. Thus, teachers are expected to support these learners during the language learning process so that they can use their knowledge of their home language as a tool of transfer to acquire the isiZulu FAL( Botha, 2022). Additionally, teachers need to teach how to understand and speak the language as this will enable learners to communicate in the FAL (Chauke, & Tabane, 2021). Subsequently, while isiZulu HL learners engage deeply with Zulu heritage and traditions, FAL introduces these elements at a surface level, offering contextual language support rather than comprehensive cultural immersion (Thwala, 2021). These distinctions ensure that each curriculum is tailored to learners' backgrounds and future needs, fostering effective language acquisition across varying proficiencies.

### **3.5 LEARNING TO ASSESS FAL**

Assessing First Additional Language (FAL) proficiency, particularly in isiZulu, requires educators to navigate complex linguistic and cultural landscapes. According to Govender and Hugo (2020), assessment in FAL should go beyond merely determining linguistic competence and take into account the cultural and contextual factors of language use. These factors have significance in the South African context, where it is important to encourage indigenous languages like isiZulu. The Department of Basic Education (2011) stresses the necessity for assessments to be culturally and linguistically attuned, reflecting the diverse milieu in which learners operate. Formative assessments play a crucial role in this process, offering continuous feedback and enabling teachers to modify their teaching methods to suit their learner's needs, as Cingo (2022) highlights. These assessments help in identifying areas where students may struggle with isiZulu, allowing for targeted interventions that can enhance language acquisition. Conversely, summative assessments provide a broader view of a student's language proficiency, capturing their overall ability and understanding of isiZulu at specific learning junctures.

The creation of assessment tools for isiZulu FAL must therefore be meticulously undertaken, ensuring that they accurately represent the students' practical use of the language in real-life scenarios. Such tools need to account for the nuanced realities of isiZulu communication, embedding cultural, idiomatic, and contextual elements that

students are likely to encounter outside the classroom. Irons and Elkington (2021) advocate for a balanced assessment approach that amalgamates formative and summative methods to yield a comprehensive overview of learner's language proficiency. This approach certainly makes it easier to learn isiZulu as a FAL, but it additionally assists learners to understand how deeply the language is rooted in cultural and societal specifics. Therefore, the assessment of isiZulu FAL should be a reflective, inclusive, and powerful process that supports and mirrors the multifaceted nature of language learning, ensuring that students are adequately prepared to engage with the linguistic and cultural demands of the isiZulu-speaking community.

### **3.6 CHALLENGES OF LEARNING ISIZULU FAL**

To teach isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) in multicultural classrooms in South Africa presents unique challenges. Teachers often encounter difficulties due to insufficient training in multilingual teaching strategies, leading to obstacles in effectively imparting isiZulu to learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Alexander, 2004; Murray, 2002). Additionally, learning isiZulu FAL is complicated by factors such as language barriers, inadequate resources, and inappropriate pedagogical methods (Waters & Vilches, 2008; Webb, 2013). These challenges are further exacerbated in environments where the legacy of apartheid education still influences teaching practices, necessitating a strategic overhaul to foster an inclusive and effective language learning atmosphere (McCray & Garcia, 2002; Johnson, 2003).

#### **3.6.1 Challenges of teaching IsiZulu FAL in a multicultural classroom**

Teaching isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) in South Africa's multicultural classrooms has several challenges. Teachers often lack the necessary training to manage diverse linguistic environments, leading to difficulties in isiZulu language delivery (Alexander, 2004; Murray, 2002). Cultural and linguistic assimilation exacerbates the marginalisation of indigenous languages, with isiZulu facing stigma and undervaluation (Banda, 2000; Kamwangamalu, 2009). Additionally, existing curricula and pedagogical methods fall short of addressing the multilingual needs of students, complicating the integration and fostering of a multicultural educational dynamic (Alexander, 2012; Turner, 2012). Overcoming these challenges requires comprehensive strategies to

enhance teacher training, curriculum development, and the promotion of multicultural inclusivity.

Research done by O'Connor and Geiger (2009) shows that FAL teachers in the Western Cape feel that their preparation was not enough to teach learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Most teachers at tertiary institutions were only taught to teach isiZulu as a Home Language, not as a First Additional Language, causing them to feel uneasy when teaching isiZulu FAL. During their training, they were specifically taught to teach learners who speak isiZulu as their first language, but now they are teaching learners from various racial backgrounds. They are uncertain about whether they are effectively teaching the isiZulu FAL. These isiZulu FAL teachers are uncertain if the teaching techniques they are employing are too complex for a second language.

In 2011, when the Department of Basic Education launched the new curriculum (CAPS), workshops were introduced by the DoE for teachers, including isiZulu FAL. Although the teachers had participated in workshops about teaching isiZulu, they believed that only isiZulu HL teachers were being considered (O'Connor & Geiger, 2009). It may seem like a less complicated version to teach isiZulu FAL, but teachers need more workshops to learn how to make it more approachable and simple for learners who have never spoken isiZulu before. Didion et al. (2020) described a workshop as an educational experience designed to provide an opportunity to acquire specific knowledge and skills. They also note that the expectation is that teachers will acquire knowledge they can use in their classrooms. As a result, the workshop gives isiZulu HL teachers unique opportunities to evaluate their opinions or beliefs about teaching and learning and use it as a tool to think critically about their instructional strategies. Teachers in isiZulu FAL felt excluded from the workshops, so they gained nothing from them.

#### *3.6.1.1 Teacher training and preparation*

A significant challenge in multicultural South African schools, particularly the ex-Model C institutions, is the inadequate preparation of teachers for delivering First Additional Language (FAL) education in diverse linguistic environments. Alexander (2004) highlights the complexity of implementing FAL in such settings, where teachers often lack comprehensive training for multilingual classroom management. Vanderlinde et al.

(2021). reinforce this, pointing out the difficulties faced by educators teaching languages like isiZulu to learners who may not be fluent in these languages, especially when these educators themselves have not received adequate training in FAL pedagogy.

#### *3.6.1.2 Linguistic and cultural assimilation*

The multicultural nature of classrooms introduces the issue of assimilation, where learners from different cultural backgrounds may gravitate towards the dominant language and culture. It is often English, leading to the marginalisation of indigenous languages like isiZulu. This phenomenon, as noted by Alexander (2004), can result in learners and teachers alike devaluing the local language and culture in favour of more globally dominant ones. This assimilation can alienate learners from their own cultural identities, as observed by Moletsane (1999), and emphasises the importance of educators validating the diverse identities present in their classrooms.

#### *3.6.1.3 Stigma and language attitudes*

The historical context of South Africa has led to a hierarchy of languages, where indigenous languages, including isiZulu, often carry a stigma of inferiority compared to English and Afrikaans. Banda (2000) discusses how African languages have not achieved the same status as these colonial languages, affecting the attitudes of both teachers and learners towards isiZulu FAL. Kamwangamalu (2009) argues for the need understand the status of indigenous languages to ensure they are perceived as equally valuable in the educational system.

#### *3.6.1.4 Curriculum and pedagogical challenges*

The existing curriculum and pedagogical approaches often do not align with the multilingual and multicultural realities of South African classrooms. The CAPS framework, while aiming for learner-centeredness and critical thinking, sometimes falls short in addressing the nuanced needs of a linguistically diverse student body. Turner (2012) and Ngidi (2007) point out the gap between the curriculum's expectations and the actual preparedness of teachers to handle these diverse settings effectively.

### *3.6.1.5 Integration and multicultural dynamics*

Integration in post-apartheid South Africa has brought to light several educational challenges, particularly in former Model C schools now serving a multicultural learner population. The shift to a more integrated educational environment, as discussed by Alexander (2012), has not been without its difficulties, with educators often struggling to cater to the varied linguistic and cultural needs of their students.

### *3.6.1.6 Solutions and strategies for improvement*

Addressing these challenges necessitates a multi-faceted approach, including better teacher training in FAL pedagogy, a curriculum that truly reflects the linguistic diversity of the classroom, and pedagogical strategies that accommodate and celebrate multiculturalism. Educators must become partners in learning with their learners, fostering an environment where all languages and cultures are valued equally, and where isiZulu FAL can be taught effectively and respectfully (Twala, 2021).

## **3.7 CHALLENGES OF LEARNING ISIZULU FAL**

Learning isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) in South Africa's diverse classrooms presents multifaceted challenges. The intricacies of student backgrounds and language barriers significantly impact the learning process, often leading to behavioural issues and disengagement (Waters & Vilches, 2008). The scarcity of appropriate resources and the mismatch between available teaching materials and the needs of isiZulu FAL instruction further complicate the educational landscape (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997; Webb, 2013). Moreover, pedagogical shortcomings and the legacy of inadequate teacher training in a post-apartheid context hinder the effective teaching and assimilation of isiZulu FAL (Oosthuizen & Van Staden, 2007; McCray & Garcia, 2002). These factors necessitate a comprehensive approach to address the educational, linguistic, and cultural challenges in teaching and learning isiZulu FAL.

### **3.7.1 Language barriers and student behaviour**

In multilingual classrooms, the diverse backgrounds of students significantly affect both teaching and learning situations. Waters and Vilches (2008) identify language barriers and deficiencies as primary reasons for poor behaviour during lessons. These issues can

lead to frustration and disengagement among students, especially if instructional methods fail to address their linguistic needs.

According to Hallberg (2010), a language barrier is a type of psychological barrier where communication is impacted by language, which is a psychological tool. This indicates that when communication is severely disrupted, the transfer of information fails, and interpretation is challenging, language turns into a barrier (Harzing & Feely, 2008). The results of Kocaman's (2016) study, which investigated language barriers in the process of learning a FAL, were remarkable. Similarly, conclusions, mostly related to vocabulary problems, were found in the study conducted by Henderson and Wellington (1998), which focused on language barriers that affect students' ability to learn and teach science. It revealed that learners seemed to struggle with scientific and technical vocabulary, which created language barriers. This supports Henderson & Wellington's opinions.

### **3.7.2 Resource adequacy and appropriateness**

A major challenge in teaching isiZulu FAL is the lack of suitable resources. Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) stress the necessity of a comprehensive material policy that aligns with the language being taught. However, in many South African schools, there is a discrepancy between the resources available and those required for isiZulu FAL, leading to the use of materials intended for home language instruction, which can hinder the learning process (Webb, 2013).

Thusi's (2017) study on innovating teaching and learning of isiZulu showed that the resources utilised did not contribute to the improvement of learning. A big challenge to teach isiZulu FAL is the lack of easily accessible resources, so teachers must find ways to be creative and innovative. As Thusi stated, the HL textbook was the sole resource used for teaching isiZulu. Therefore, teachers and learners who are not fluent in isiZulu encountered a challenging situation with textbooks that were linguistically difficult and covered unfamiliar subjects or content. This resulted in gaps in vocabulary. The difference in vocabulary presented in the textbooks and what is used in everyday language stems from words that are not commonly used. No appropriate resources are designated for the isiZulu language in multilingual schools that will accommodate South Africa's cultural variety. These difficulties resulted in inadequate preparation. The

absence of planned activities can lead to ineffective teaching or a lack of creativity. Visual learners may be impacted due to absence of models and demonstrations, auditory learners through discussions, debates, and games, and kinaesthetic and tactile learners through role playing and models. In order to address these requirements, effective teaching should be diverse in its approach and incorporate multiple sensory modalities to accommodate all types of learners (Chan, 2002).

### **3.7.3 Pedagogical methods**

The effectiveness of teaching isiZulu FAL is often compromised by the absence of appropriate teaching methods. Oosthuizen and Van Staden (2007) observe that inadequate pedagogical strategies can negatively impact student engagement and learning outcomes. Fleisch (2008) argues that the concurrent use of isiZulu and English without proper integration can prevent students from acquiring necessary language skills, underlining the need for well-conceived teaching methodologies in FAL instruction.

### **3.7.4 Teacher training and educational context**

The legacy of apartheid-era educational policies continues to affect the teaching of isiZulu FAL, with many educators not fully prepared for the demands of a culturally diverse classroom (McCray & Garcia, 2002; Johnston, 2003). The gap between the training educators receive and the realities of the teaching context remains a significant challenge, necessitating comprehensive teacher development programmes to enhance the effectiveness of isiZulu FAL education.

## **3.8 CONCLUSION**

In concluding this exploration of teaching isiZulu FAL within South Africa's multifaceted educational landscape, it becomes evident that the journey to effective language instruction is intertwined with historical, cultural, and pedagogical complexities. The chapter commenced with a historical overview, situating the discussion within the broader context of South Africa's evolving educational and language policies. This backdrop is crucial for understanding the current educational drive towards enhancing isiZulu FAL instruction amidst a landscape marked by linguistic diversity and the legacy of past inequities. The discourse on Home Language (HL) and First Additional Language (FAL) elucidated the challenges of implementing a multilingual curriculum in a setting

where English dominates, often overshadowing indigenous languages like isiZulu. The tension between policy aspirations and classroom realities shows a critical gap in language education, necessitating a nuanced approach that respects linguistic diversity while striving for effective teaching and learning.

The role of multilingualism, as explored in the chapter, emphasises the Department of Education's commitment to additive bilingualism, aiming for linguistic inclusivity that fosters both cultural understanding and linguistic proficiency. Yet, the transition from policy to practice is fraught with challenges, including resource limitations, teacher readiness, and societal attitudes towards indigenous languages, all of which impact the successful implementation of isiZulu FAL programmes. The exploration of language learning processes highlighted the contextual and continuous nature of acquiring language skills, pointing to the need for educational strategies that are responsive to the socio-linguistic situations of South African learners. This entails not only a curriculum that accommodates linguistic diversity but also pedagogical practices that encourage active engagement with isiZulu, fostering both language proficiency and cultural appreciation. The challenges of teaching isiZulu FAL in multicultural classrooms, such as those in ex-Model C schools, are emblematic of the broader issues facing language education in South Africa. These challenges include inadequate teacher preparation, linguistic and cultural assimilation, stigma associated with indigenous languages, and curricular and pedagogical inadequacies. Addressing these issues requires a concerted effort to enhance teacher training, develop inclusive curricula, and implement teaching strategies that affirm the value of isiZulu and other indigenous languages.

In essence, the journey of learning to teach isiZulu FAL is not just about linguistic transmission but also about nurturing an educational ethos that values linguistic diversity as a cornerstone of South Africa's national identity. It calls for an educational paradigm that is reflective, inclusive, and clear, capable of adapting to the linguistic realities of a diverse student population while fostering an in-depth understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage embodied in languages like isiZulu. The insights into the intricacies of teaching and learning isiZulu FAL provide a foundation for ongoing discussions and initiatives aimed at enhancing language education in South Africa, with the ultimate goal

of fostering a society where multilingualism and multiculturalism are celebrated as vital components of the nation's identity and development.

## **CHAPTER 4: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on the conceptual underpinnings that guide the exploration of teacher development for teaching isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) within teacher education programmes. This section provides insights for the empirical investigation, adhering to the scholarly definitions and practical implications of theoretical frameworks as delineated by Chapman and McNeill, (2005), Finn et al. (2000) and other scholars. The chapter mainly focuses on two fundamental theories: Shulman (1986)'s Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) and Ted Aoki (1999)'s curriculum theory. In addition, the chapter will apply these theories to the study exploring their advantages and limitations. These theories, however, offer deep insights into the connection between content mastery and pedagogical efficacy and the dynamic interaction between curriculum planning and actual classroom experiences.

### **4.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SHULMAN'S (1986) CONCEPT OF PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE (PCK)**

Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) concept has emerged as a pivotal framework in educational research and teacher education, effectively bridging the gap between content knowledge and pedagogical skills. This section provides an in-depth examination of PCK's historical development, tracing its origins, evolution, and significant impact on the field of education.

#### **4.2.1 Pre-Shulman context**

Before Lee Shulman introduced the concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) in 1986, educational research and practice primarily treated content knowledge (CK) and pedagogical knowledge (PK) as distinct, non-overlapping domains. Content knowledge describes the teacher's expertise in the subject, which includes the knowledge of the facts, concepts, theories, and principles inherent to a specific discipline. On the other hand, pedagogical knowledge encompassed general principles and methods of teaching and learning, including classroom management, instructional strategies, and assessment techniques (Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987). This clear delineation between CK and PK was rooted in the historical context of teacher education,

where competency-based approaches emphasised either the deep understanding of disciplinary content or the acquisition of pedagogical skills, but rarely their integration.

In the pre-Shulman era, teacher evaluation systems predominantly assessed teachers based on their subject matter proficiency or effectiveness in general pedagogical practices. This dichotomous approach is evident in the structure of teacher education programmes, which often compartmentalise coursework into distinct categories of content-focused and pedagogy-focused courses (Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987). Consequently, this bifurcation limited a holistic understanding of effective teaching, as it failed to account for the nuanced interplay between a teacher's knowledge of the subject matter and their ability to convey this knowledge effectively to students. The separation of CK and PK had significant implications for teacher preparation and professional development. Educational programmes typically require prospective teachers to major in a content area, thereby ensuring solid disciplinary knowledge. Simultaneously, they were required to complete courses in educational psychology and instructional methods designed to equip them with pedagogical skills. However, this structure often resulted in a disjointed educational experience where the practical application of content knowledge through pedagogical methods was not sufficiently addressed (Shulman, 1987).

As educational researchers and practitioners according to Ulferts (2021) recognised the complexity of teaching, they understood that it necessitates both deep subject knowledge and the capacity to translate that knowledge into forms that are both pedagogically potent and flexible enough to accommodate a wide range of learners. Consequently, the limitations of this binary approach became more and more evident. For example, Wilson et al. (1987) highlighted the effectiveness of teaching that involves more than simply knowing the content or how to teach. Thus, effective teaching requires an understanding of how to represent and articulate content to make it understandable to learners. This realisation highlights the need for a more integrated approach to teacher knowledge that bridges the gap between CK and PK. The pre-Shulman era's emphasis on the separation of CK and PK also influenced research methodologies in education. Studies often focused on evaluating teachers' subject matter expertise or pedagogical practices but rarely examined how these domains influenced teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes (Grossman, 1990). This fragmented approach limited the development of

comprehensive theories of teaching and learning that could inform more effective teacher education practices.

Shulman's introduction of PCK as a distinct category of teacher knowledge marked a paradigm shift in educational research and practice. By proposing that effective teaching lies at the intersection of content and pedagogy, Shulman challenged the prevailing dichotomy and called for a more integrated understanding of teacher knowledge (Shulman, 1987). This integrative perspective has since become a foundational concept in education, guiding research, policy, and practice toward a more holistic view of effective teaching.

#### **4.2.2 Shulman's intervention and key concepts**

In the mid-1980s, Lee Shulman advocated for a more integrated approach, drawing on his work with the Knowledge Growth in Teaching project and the deficiencies he identified in teacher preparation. Shulman posited that effective teaching required more than just knowledge of the subject or generic teaching methods; it necessitated a deep understanding of how to teach specific content effectively. His seminal paper, "Those Who Understand: Knowledge Growth in Teaching," published in 1986 in *Educational Researcher*, introduced PCK as a unique domain of teacher knowledge. Shulman argued that effective teaching lies at the intersection of content and pedagogy, where teachers must possess a profound understanding of how to present and adapt content to cater to diverse learners.

Shulman's concept of PCK encompasses several vital components. Content Knowledge (CK) refers to the teacher's understanding of the subject matter, while Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) involves understanding the principles and approaches of teaching and learning. Shulman defined PCK as the integration of content and pedagogy, creating an awareness of the structure of particular subjects, issues, or problems, represented, and adapted to suit learners' diverse interests and abilities. PCK is further divided into sub-domains, including knowledge of representations (effective ways to present subject matter), knowledge of students' understandings (insight into students' preconceptions and misconceptions), knowledge of instructional strategies (methods specific to teaching specific content), and knowledge of curriculum (understanding the range and sequence

of topics within the subject). These fundamental concepts and aspects will be discussed further in section 4.4.

### **4.2.3 PCK Post Shulman and its impact**

Following Shulman's introduction of PCK, the concept has undergone significant refinements and expansions. Grossman (1990) built on Shulman's work by detailing the components of PCK and emphasising students' knowledge, representations, instructional strategies, and curriculum. Further refinement came from Magnusson, Krajcik, and Borko (1999), who focused on science education and highlighted the dynamic nature of PCK as it develops through teaching experience. The concept of PCK has also been integrated with other models, expanding its scope and applicability. The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, proposed by Mishra and Koehler (2006), extended PCK to incorporate with technological knowledge, addressing the integration of digital tools in teaching. Additionally, research has explored the contextual PCK, examining how cultural, institutional, and other contextual factors influence the development and application of PCK.

The impact of PCK on teacher education and research has been profound. It has significantly influenced teacher preparation, guiding curricula design that emphasises the development of integrated knowledge bases for pre-service teachers. In-service teacher training programmes have increasingly focused on enhancing teachers' PCK through reflective practices and collaborative learning communities. The development of tools and methods to assess PCK has enabled researchers and educators to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher education programs and identify areas for improvement. Studies have also examined how teachers' PCK influences instructional decisions, classroom interactions, and student outcomes. Contemporary developments in the concept of PCK highlight its dynamic and situated nature. Current research emphasises the importance of contextual sensitivity, recognising that PCK evolves with teachers' experiences and is influenced by specific teaching contexts. There is a growing focus on the need for teachers to develop adaptive expertise, enabling them to modify and apply their PCK flexibly in response to changing classroom dynamics. Furthermore, PCK frameworks are being adapted for interdisciplinary teaching, acknowledging the complexities of integrating multiple content areas. Cross-cultural studies explore how PCK is

conceptualised and developed in different educational systems, contributing to a more global understanding of effective teaching practices.

Shulman's (1986) concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) is a seminal idea in education. It emphasises the intersection of content expertise and pedagogical skills. Shulman introduced PCK to highlight the unique knowledge base required for effective teaching, arguing that mastery of subject matter alone is insufficient for quality instruction. PCK integrates content knowledge (CK) and pedagogical knowledge (PK), forming a specialised knowledge domain crucial for teaching.

### **4.3 SHULMAN'S NOTION FRAMEWORK**

Lee Shulman's 1986 framework of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) offers a profound insight into the complex interplay between teaching content and pedagogy, which is essential for effective educational practices and teacher development. This framework is particularly significant in its ability to enhance the professional growth of teachers and the quality of teaching, as well as to provide an empirical basis for assessing the effectiveness of educational reforms and pedagogical approaches.

#### **4.3.1 Content Knowledge (CK)**

Lee Shulman's framework of Content Knowledge (CK) represents a foundational aspect of effective teaching, emphasising the depth and breadth of subject matter understanding necessary for educators. In his seminal work, Shulman (1986) elucidates that CK is not merely an accumulation of facts but a deep understanding of the content, including its organising principles, underlying theories, and the interconnections among critical concepts. This comprehensive understanding is crucial for teachers to facilitate a learning environment where students can engage with and master the content meaningfully. Understanding the curricula intended for various grade levels in a given subject is part of the educational process. It also entails being aware of the teaching resources that can be utilised to support the curriculum as prescribed. Teachers should also be aware of the resources that either support or contradict the curriculum as prescribed.

The research indicates that teachers who have sufficient knowledge of the subject matter are likely to be more effective in their teaching. Grossman (1990) confirms this idea by

defining content knowledge as understanding the important facts and concepts in a field and their interconnections (p. 6). Meanwhile, Shulman (1986) describes subject matter knowledge as the quantity and arrangement of knowledge within the teacher's mind. Both academics mention the topic material that must be covered in instruction. In isiZulu FAL, the teacher must possess a thorough understanding and knowledge of different language skills: Listening and speaking, reading and viewing, writing and presenting, and language structure and conventions (DBE, 2011b).

CK is particularly crucial when teaching complex subjects, such as isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL). In this context, CK goes beyond grammar and vocabulary to encompass an understanding of the cultural, historical, and social contexts that influence the use of the language (Mngomezulu, 2014). This extensive knowledge allows teachers to provide lessons that are both linguistically accurate and culturally resonant, enhancing students' ability to use the language effectively in real-world scenarios. A thorough understanding of isiZulu FAL content guides teachers in selecting teaching methods, creating lesson plans, and delivering material to improve learner's understanding and achievement. Teachers who possess relevant content knowledge are therefore capable of making appropriate decisions about teaching and learning and can come up with more suitable solutions to problems compared to those without such knowledge (Richards, 2011, p. 3).

Moreover, Shulman (1986) highlights that effective CK involves understanding the cognitive structures through which students learn the subject matter. This point is further supported by educational theorists such as Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000), who stress the importance of aligning teaching strategies with cognitive development theories to address students' preconceptions and facilitate deep learning. For isiZulu FAL, teachers must develop strategies that help learners bridge their linguistic knowledge from their mother tongue to isiZulu, considering cognitive challenges and leveraging students' existing linguistic frameworks.

The interrelationship between CK and educational technology is another critical consideration. Harris, Mishra, and Koehler (2009) argue that integrating technology in teaching requires adaptive content knowledge that can exploit digital tools to enhance the

educational experience effectively. This integration is essential in contemporary education, where digital literacy is as crucial as textual literacy. In teaching isiZulu FAL, for instance, multimedia can help illustrate cultural nuances and contextual language usage that textbooks might need to convey more effectively. Furthermore, CK is not static; it evolves as new insights emerge and the context within which the content is taught changes (Shulman, 1987). This dynamic nature of CK necessitates ongoing professional development so that teachers stay updated with the latest educational research, pedagogical strategies, and content developments. For isiZulu FAL educators, this might involve continuous engagement with the latest linguistic research, participation in language and cultural workshops, and collaboration with peers to refine instructional practices.

The practical application of CK in the classroom involves translating this deep, theoretically grounded understanding into effective pedagogical practices. According to Grossman (1990), this translation is pivotal in curriculum design, where teachers select and organise instructional materials that align with educational standards and learning objectives. For isiZulu FAL, practical curriculum design does not only focus on linguistic accuracy but also on engaging learners with the language in ways that are culturally and contextually relevant. Additionally, the role of CK in addressing educational disparities must be considered. Educators equipped with strong CK are better prepared to tailor their teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of their students, thereby promoting equity in educational outcomes. This involves understanding not just the 'what' of teaching but also the 'who' - recognising students' diverse cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds, which is especially relevant in the multilingual and multicultural South African educational landscape.

#### **4.3.2 Pedagogical Knowledge (PK)**

Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), as conceptualised by Shulman (1986), highlights the essence of effective teaching by focusing on how knowledge about educational processes directly influences the quality of instruction in the classroom. PK encompasses a broad range of competencies, including instructional techniques, classroom management strategies, and methodologies for assessing student learning. This form of knowledge enables educators to not only deliver content, but also to ensure that it is received,

understood, and applied effectively by all students, irrespective of their individual learning needs. PK is central to any educational practice concerning the "how" of teaching - the methods and strategies teachers use to communicate and instil knowledge. Shulman (1987) posits that this knowledge base is essential for teachers to make learning experiences systematic and accessible. In the context of teaching isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL), this translates into a practical understanding of how to effectively convey the complexities of a new language to non-native speakers. This involves a variety of instructional strategies, from direct teaching of grammatical rules to more immersive methods such as communicative language teaching, which emphasises interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language.

Effective PK requires teachers to have a deep understanding of instructional methodologies. Harris, Mishra, and Koehler (2006) expand on this by incorporating the technological aspect of teaching, proposing the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework. This knowledge is essential for isiZulu FAL teachers in order to use appropriate pedagogical approaches for isiZulu content with appropriate technology (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). This model suggests that effective teaching relies on understanding content and pedagogy and how technology can be used to enhance learning. For isiZulu FAL teachers, this might involve integrating multimedia tools such as audio-visual aids that demonstrate speech nuances, provide cultural context, and engage students through interactive exercises. Moreover, classroom management is a significant aspect of PK. This involves creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning. Evertson and Weinstein (2006) describe classroom management as critical for establishing conditions that foster learning and minimise behaviours that inhibit the educational process. In the isiZulu FAL classroom, this could mean developing norms and routines that support language immersion and facilitate a supportive community where learners feel comfortable practising and making mistakes.

Assessment is another critical element of PK. It involves understanding how to evaluate student learning effectively and using this information to inform instructional decisions. Assessment in the language classroom goes beyond traditional testing to include formative approaches that provide ongoing feedback essential for language acquisition.

Shulman's view of assessment as an integral part of teaching aligns with contemporary educational theories that advocate for assessment for learning rather than an assessment of learning. This approach ensures that assessments are not merely end-point measures but integral, ongoing components of the instructional process that help students build competence and confidence in isiZulu FAL. Integrating these aspects of PK requires a nuanced approach to pedagogy sensitive to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Ladson-Billings (1995) introduces the concept of culturally relevant pedagogy, which argues for teaching practices that recognise and utilise students' cultural references. Applying this to isiZulu FAL, teachers must incorporate cultural artefacts, practices, and perspectives that resonate with the diverse backgrounds of South African students, thus making learning more relevant and engaging.

PK also emphasises the development of reflective practice, which, according to Schön (1993), involves teachers thinking critically about their instructional practices and outcomes to continually improve their effectiveness. For isiZulu FAL teachers, reflective practice might involve regular analysis of lesson successes and challenges, seeking feedback from peers and students, and adapting methods to meet learner needs better.

#### **4.3.3 Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)**

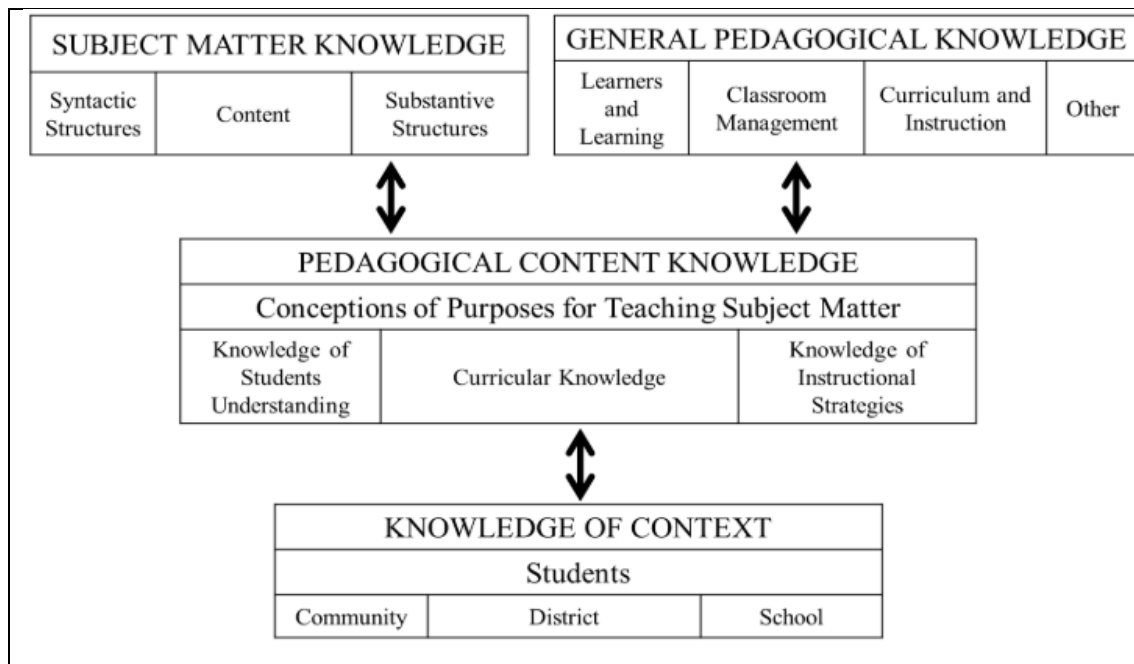
Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), as conceptualised by Lee Shulman in the mid-1980s, marks a seminal advancement in the field of education. It highlights the crucial incorporation of subject matter expertise with pedagogical effectiveness. Shulman's framework posits that effective teaching requires more than just knowledge of content or instructional methods; it necessitates a deep fusion of both, enabling educators to deliver subject matter in comprehensible and engaging ways to diverse learners (Shulman, 1986, 1987). PCK is grounded in the principle that teaching quality is significantly enhanced when educators not only master the content but also excel in pedagogical strategies that cater to the varied learning needs and abilities of their students. This dual expertise empowers teachers to effectively address and adapt to the learning challenges and misconceptions students may encounter. For instance, Shulman emphasises that a teacher's ability to apply content knowledge in teaching scenarios is as crucial as their mastery of the content itself, highlighting the inseparability of content and pedagogy (Seldura et al., 2024).

Sandra Abell (2009) further notes the practical utility of PCK in helping teachers understand and navigate the complexities of teaching, thereby enhancing their professional practice. According to Shulman (1986), traditional views on teacher knowledge often overlooked this intersection, focusing instead on separate domains of subject matter knowledge (SMK) and pedagogical knowledge (PK), which limited the scope of teacher effectiveness in addressing diverse classroom dynamics. Shulman's PCK framework consists of several key components: content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, and it synthesises these into a coherent approach to teaching. Content knowledge refers to a deep understanding of the material to be taught, encompassing facts, concepts, theories, and the structure of the discipline (Harris et al., 2009). Pedagogical knowledge, on the other hand, involves strategies for classroom management, instructional techniques, and student assessment, which are crucial for effective teaching execution.

The transformative aspect of PCK lies in its ability to merge these components into strategies that make learning accessible and meaningful. For example, effective PCK enables teachers to design instructional methods that are appropriate to the content and attuned to the learners' cultural backgrounds and cognitive capabilities. This aspect of PCK is crucial in managing the dynamic and complex environments of contemporary classrooms, where teachers must be adept at using various pedagogical tools and technologies to enhance learning outcomes (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Furthermore, PCK is dynamically enhanced through professional experience and ongoing education, which refine a teacher's ability to apply theoretical knowledge practically. This evolution is evident as teachers learn to identify effective pedagogical methods tailored to specific content areas, improving their teaching practices over time (Grossman, 1990; Fernandez, 2024).

Additionally, PCK involves understanding the specific misconceptions and learning difficulties that students might encounter with particular content areas. Teachers equipped with PCK are better prepared to develop instructional strategies that pre-emptively address these challenges, fostering a more inclusive and effective learning environment (Shulman, 1987). The significance of PCK extends beyond individual teacher competency, influencing curriculum development and teacher training programmes. It

encourages educational systems to focus not just on content or pedagogy in isolation but on integrating both, ensuring that teacher preparation programmes provide comprehensive training that covers theoretical knowledge and practical skills (Grossman, 1990) as shown in Figure 4.1.

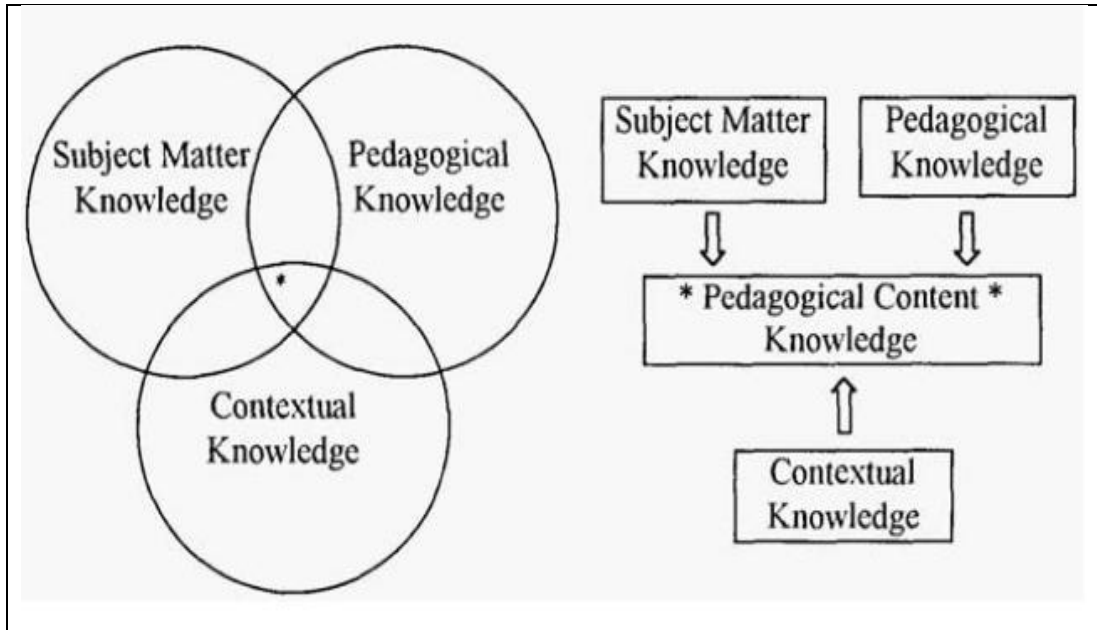


**Figure 4.1: Model of Teacher Knowledge**

In her influential work expanding on Shulman's foundational concept, Grossman (1990) outlines four key areas of teacher expertise crucial for successful teaching: general pedagogical knowledge, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), and contextual knowledge. Grossman's framework articulates that general pedagogical knowledge encompasses various educational strategies and techniques, including insights into student learning, classroom management, instructional principles, and overarching educational aims and objectives. Grossman further clarifies that subject matter knowledge involves deeply understanding a specific discipline's key facts, concepts, and interrelationships. This knowledge is critical as it forms the substance of what is taught in educational settings. In defining PCK, Grossman aligns with Shulman's initial proposition, viewing it as a synthesis of content and pedagogy uniquely tailored to facilitate effective teaching. PCK thus includes the ability to present complex subject matter in accessible ways that are pedagogically sound and adapted to diverse student needs and learning environments.

Additionally, Grossman (1990) introduced the notion of contextual knowledge, which involves understanding the specific settings in which education occurs. For isiZulu FAL teachers, it is essential to understand learner's backgrounds to extend the challenges, requirements, and limitations dictated by those settings, the "culture", departmental regulations, and other situational school factors that impact teaching practice (Arrigo et al., 2022). This includes knowledge of the school district, the local community's socio-economic and cultural makeup, and the regulatory and policy environments that shape teaching practices. Such knowledge is essential for teachers to navigate the practical and cultural nuances that influence educational delivery. The interplay among these knowledge domains is central to Grossman's expansion of Shulman's PCK. She argues that PCK is not merely an additive combination of content and pedagogy but a dynamic amalgamation that must consider the educational context. This perspective provides the complexity of teaching, which requires not just knowledge of content and pedagogy but also an understanding of the environment in which education occurs.

Grossman's characterisation of PCK emphasises its role as a critical element of teaching knowledge, positioned among other key knowledge types. She argues that PCK is pivotal in translating content knowledge into effective teaching strategies responsive to student needs and contextual demands. This formulation highlights PCK's adaptive and integrative nature, suggesting that it evolves through teachers' continuous interaction with their professional environments and experiences. In support of this complex view of PCK, Gess-Newsome (1999) proposes two developmental models of PCK - the Integrative Model and the Transformative Model - which reflect different ways teachers can develop and apply their pedagogical content knowledge. The Integrative Model suggests that PCK emerges from blending the three domains of teacher knowledge (content, pedagogy, and context), emphasising a balanced interrelation that enhances teaching effectiveness. Conversely, the Transformative Model posits that PCK transcends these domains, forming a unique and coherent knowledge base that fundamentally transforms teaching practice. These two models are shown in Figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2: Models of Teacher Knowledge** \* = knowledge needed for classroom teaching

These diagrams suggest that PCK is not recognised as a distinct domain of knowledge or teacher expertise, but rather can be understood as the intersection of three key constructs: subject matter knowledge (specific content), pedagogical knowledge, and contextual knowledge (Arrigo et al., 2022). In this integrative model, effective teaching results from the integration of these three domains, where content is presented to learners within a specific context using appropriate teaching methods. On the other hand, PCK can also be seen as the synthesis of all the knowledge required to be a teacher. In this transformative model, PCK is developed by merging the three domains into a single knowledge base essential for teaching practice. Thus, PCK is viewed as the foundational knowledge for teaching. This model emphasises not just the development of individual knowledge domains, but how they are transformed into PCK in teaching practice (Gess-Newsome, 1999). It is crucial to recognise the relationship between basic knowledge and the importance of these domains in developing PCK, along with the experiences gained through teaching practices, which involve critical reflection, decision-making, and an understanding of both students and the school context (Gess-Newsome, 1999).

#### *4.3.3.1 Application of Shulman's (1986) PCK*

Teachers teaching isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL) can improve their training and practice in several ways by employing Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) framework, which provides an effective structure. This application can be categorised into three main areas: the development of teachers within education programmes, the curriculum planning for teacher educators, and student teachers' experiences during their training period.

#### *4.3.3.2 Exploring the development of teachers for teaching isiZulu FAL within teacher education programmes*

With regard to development of teachers for isiZulu FAL, PCK emphasises the integration of content knowledge (CK) of isiZulu - its syntax, semantics, phonetics, and cultural nuances with pedagogical knowledge (PK), which includes teaching methodologies that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. Shulman's PCK will examine how educators are fluent in isiZulu and skilled in pedagogical strategies that effectively convey this language to learners who do not speak it as their first language. For example, interactive language practices involving storytelling, traditional games, and cultural rituals can make learning more interactive and contextually meaningful for students.

Shulman's concept will also be used to explore the importance of teacher education programmes that equip teachers with strategies to overcome potential learning barriers. This would include training on differentiated instruction techniques for diverse learning needs and integrating technology to support interactive and participatory learning, such as through language labs or isiZulu language apps.

#### *4.3.3.3 Exploring curriculum planned for teacher educators as well as their knowledge of the curriculum*

For teacher educators, understanding and applying PCK will involve examining and designing a curriculum that encompasses the depth and extent of the isiZulu language and culture and integrates practical pedagogical approaches tailored to the language's unique characteristics. This would involve a curriculum responsive to the linguistic aspects of isiZulu and the sociocultural contexts of its speakers, exploring how educators teach the language in a way that resonates with learners.

Using Shulman's PCK, the study will explore teacher educators' knowledge of the curriculum, which should include a vital component of reflective practice, examining whether educators continuously assess and adapt their teaching methods based on feedback and educational outcomes. This dynamic approach to curriculum planning and implementation will also be used to check if the teaching of isiZulu remains relevant and effective, accommodating changes in educational standards, technological advancements, and cultural shifts within the society.

#### *4.3.3.4 Experience of student teachers during the training period*

PCK will be used to examine how student teachers benefit from a PCK-focused approach that involves first-hand experience incorporating content expertise and pedagogical skills in teaching isiZulu. This would involve peer teaching sessions, simulated teaching environments, and practicum placements in diverse educational settings. The study will explore if these experiences help student teachers refine their teaching methods, understand their pedagogical preferences, and learn to adapt their instruction to real classroom dynamics. Furthermore, the feedback and evaluation during this training period would emphasise the adequacy of knowledge transmission and the effectiveness of pedagogical approaches, classroom management skills, and the ability to inspire and engage students. Shulman's PCK will also be used to examine the holistic approach to teacher training and how it encourages the development of well-rounded educators proficient in the academic content of isiZulu and the practical skills needed to teach it effectively.

#### **4.3.4 Advantages and limitations of Shulman's PCK**

Applying Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) framework offers significant advantages in educational settings, particularly in enhancing teaching effectiveness by melding content expertise with pedagogical proficiency. One of the key advantages of PCK is its ability to deepen teachers' understanding of subject matter in relation to teaching strategies, making instruction more adaptive and responsive to diverse learner needs (Shulman, 1986). This integration helps teachers not only to master the content but also to effectively convey it in ways that are accessible and engaging for all students, thereby improving educational outcomes (Grossman, 1990). For instance, in the context of teaching isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL), PCK enables

teachers to craft lessons that are culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate, enhancing students' engagement and retention (Harris, Mishra & Koehler, 2009).

However, the application of PCK also presents certain limitations. One significant challenge is the high demand it places on teachers to continuously update both their content knowledge and pedagogical skills. This dual demand can be overwhelming, especially in systems with limited professional development support (Fernandez, 2024). Furthermore, the context in which PCK is used has a significant impact on how effective it is, and this context can differ greatly amongst various educational settings and student populations. This variability may lead to inconsistencies in the practical application of PCK, making it difficult to standardise teaching practices across different settings (Gess-Newsome, 1999). Moreover, while PCK emphasises the integration of knowledge types, it may inadvertently lead to an underappreciation of the depth required in each individual knowledge domain. Teachers might find themselves juggling to maintain a balance between deepening their content knowledge and refining their pedagogical strategies, potentially compromising the depth of learning in either domain (Bertram, 2011).

#### **4.4 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF TED AOKI'S CONCEPT OF CURRICULUM**

Ted Aoki's conceptual framework for curriculum, a novel approach developed throughout his career and prominently discussed in his 1999 writings, has significantly influenced educational theory. His work stands out for its exploration of the nuances between "curriculum-as-planned" and "curriculum-as-lived," a perspective that was not prevalent in traditional curriculum theories that dominated the field prior to his interventions.

Historically, curriculum studies in North America and much of the Western world were heavily influenced by scholars like Tyler (1949), whose rationale approach to curriculum development emphasised systematic planning, clearly defined objectives and measurable outcomes. This approach mirrored a technical-rational perspective that viewed education mainly as efficiently achieving predetermined educational goals (Pinar, 2015). In this context, Aoki introduced a profoundly different view that challenged the prevailing norms by emphasising the lived experiences of teachers and students as central to

understanding the curriculum. Drawing from his deep engagements with phenomenology and the works of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, Aoki argued that curriculum is not merely a static, pre-designed artefact but a lived experience that unfolds uniquely in each educational encounter (Aoki, 1999). His distinction between the planned and the lived curriculum highlighted the often-overlooked complexity of classroom life, where teachers' and students' interpretations, interactions, and contextual dynamics play crucial roles.

Aoki's ideas were influenced by his dual heritage and professional journey, which bridged Eastern and Western educational philosophies and practices. Having started his career in the classroom before moving into academic roles in Canada, Aoki brought a practical sensitivity to the everyday realities of teaching that informed his theoretical contributions (Aoki, 2005). His work was also situated within a broader shift in educational research that began questioning the dominance of technical-rational paradigms and sought to bring more attention to the interpretive, subjective, and contextual aspects of education (van Manen, 1991). His conceptualisation of curriculum was further refined through his dialogues and interactions with other leading thinkers in curriculum studies, such as William Pinar and Maxine Greene, who explored similar questions about the nature and purpose of education from a phenomenological perspective. These discussions were crucial in shaping the discourse around curriculum theory, leading to a richer, more complex understanding of educational processes (Pinar, 2015).

#### **4.4.1 Aoki's key concepts and impact**

Aoki's (1999) concept of curriculum is a nuanced exploration of the nature of curriculum, particularly focusing on the distinctions and relationships between "curriculum-as-planned" and "curriculum-as-lived." Section 4.5 will examine these concepts extensively. His approach highlighted the dynamic interplay between the theoretical design of educational programmes and the actual experiences of teachers and students in classrooms. Aoki's framework is rooted deeply in phenomenological and existential philosophies, which prioritise lived experience as fundamental to understanding human activities, including education (Aoki, 1999). The influence of Aoki's work was not confined to theoretical discussions. It had a tangible impact on the practice of teacher

education and curriculum development. His emphasis on the lived experience encouraged a more reflective and responsive approach to teaching, advocating for curricular designs that are flexible and open to the emergent, unpredictable nature of classroom life. This perspective urged educators to view curriculum less as a rigid plan to be implemented and more as a dynamic space of encounter that must be negotiated and co-constructed with students (Aoki, 1999).

This study's main focus is to explore teachers' development for teaching isiZulu FAL within the ITE programmes. Multiple theoretical frameworks frame the study in which I explore the experiences of student teachers in learning to teach the isiZulu FA. I explored different knowledges within teacher education practice and curriculum planned for initial teacher educators as well as the curriculum they experience during their training period.

#### **4.5 AOKI'S CURRICULUM THEORY**

The curriculum is a key element of a broader strategy that encompasses the approaches, methods, and tools used in the teaching and learning process. Learning strategies are exemplified by the methods employed in instruction, assessment, guidance, and the organization of activities, whether general or specific (Suskie, 2018). Furthermore, the curriculum holds a vital role as it serves as a plan and structure concerning the content and teaching materials in education (Dhomiri et al., 2023). Therefore, without the curriculum as a component of educational activities, it is unlikely that learning activities will be effective, and they may lack clear direction and objectives if conducted without it.

Numerous curriculum changes in education are driven by the need to adapt to evolving circumstances across various sectors, including politics, economics, society, and technology (Hidayat et al., 2021). This is based on the principle that the curriculum is flexible and can be modified at any time to keep pace with changing times and meet emerging needs. Although the curriculum is a structured, documented plan, it becomes ineffective if not applied in practice. Therefore, it is essential to take steps to bring the curriculum into the practical sphere. These efforts can include updating learning strategies from traditional methods to those incorporating multimedia collaboration, creating a new school culture, and developing the curriculum (Sudirman, 2019).

Aoki builds his theory of curriculum on the conflicts between two opposed ideas. These ideas are known as "curriculum as lived" and "curriculum as planned." (lived experience). Aoki's approach highlights the dynamic interplay between the theoretical design of educational programmes and the actual experiences of teachers and students in classrooms. His framework is rooted deeply in phenomenological and existential philosophies, which prioritise lived experience as fundamental to understanding human activities, including education (Aoki, 1999).

#### **4.5.1 Curriculum as planned**

According to Berkvens et al. (2014) and Khoza (2018), a curriculum is a plan for teaching and learning that imparts knowledge to individuals, societies, and professions. The curriculum, as a plan, aims to meet three needs: personal (character and individual talents), societal (citizenship and socialisation), and professional (discipline mastery or subject matter advancement). "Curriculum-as-planned" refers to the formal curriculum, often meticulously documented and prescriptive, designed by educational authorities and policymakers. This aspect of curriculum is characterised by its structured content, predefined objectives, and the intended outcomes that educators are expected to achieve (Aoki, 2005). It represents the idealised, often theoretical framework that outlines what should be taught, how it should be taught, and what criteria should be used to evaluate student learning. In this context, the curriculum is seen as a static entity, something to be implemented by teachers in a straightforward, unproblematic manner (Nomlomo et al., 2018). It is not against the rules for teachers to create their own lesson plans even if they follow a set curriculum. Producing and delivering educational materials that are relevant to a specific group of learners requires preparation, budgeting, and innovative thinking. English teachers should be able to put themselves in the shoes of the learners they teach and view the lesson from their perspective in order to identify any areas in which students might be having difficulty. For instance, the lesson should incorporate vocabulary instruction by consistently enhancing different language skills if the students are low on vocabulary. A teacher must also pay close attention to the various ways that each student contributes to a lesson.

Plans often need to be modified in response to what learners provide. In such cases, instruction needs to become more flexible, taking into account continually

changing environments (Aoki, 2003). Cone (2007) suggests that “lesson plans serve as a foundation, a roadmap of the intended Moreover, this assists the teacher identify which teaching and learning approaches need to be changed and which should be dropped by means of ongoing self-reflection. Teachers are in charge of carrying out changes to the national curriculum even though they may not occur. Furthermore, they must guarantee that every student realises their full potential. Van Manen (1991) states the following:

*A teacher who is more than a mere instructor is constantly required to know instantly what is pedagogically the right thing to say or do. In other words, like a jazz-musician who knows how to improvise in playing a musical composition (and, thus, charm the audience), so the teacher knows how to improvise the curriculum pedagogically (for the good of the students) (p. 160).*

Aoki (2004) claims that curriculum as planned frequently disregards the abilities of teachers as well as the various interests and learning styles of students. Teachers who use this kind of curriculum are infused with the planners' worldview, which constantly includes their personal biases and expectations about what and how knowledge should be imparted (Aoki, 2004). Since they are trained to effectively deliver the official plan, teachers end up becoming mere doers. After that, they become mechanical tool that must produce the same kind of knowledge production. Teachers are no longer able to modify their lesson plans and instructional materials to meet the needs, backgrounds, and skill levels of their students. As a result, rote learning dominates classroom activities, which limits students' ability to be creative, original, and happy.

#### **4.5.2 Curriculum as lived (lived experience)**

In stark contrast, "curriculum-as-lived" encompasses the complex, often unpredictable realities of classroom life. It represents the curriculum as it is experienced by teachers and students, influenced by their unique interactions, backgrounds, and specific classroom contexts (Aoki, 1999). This lived curriculum emerges in the interstices between teachers' intentions and students' actual engagements with the learning material. It is fluid, continuously shaped and reshaped by the myriad spontaneous moments that occur during the educational process. These experiences are coloured by the existential realities of the participants, where personal meanings, subjective interpretations, and

emotional reactions play a significant role in shaping the educational encounter (Aoki, 2005; van Manen, 1991).

The pressures exist within what Aoki calls the “zone of between” (Aoki, 2004, p. 161). According to Aoki (2004), “this is the dynamic, living space where pedagogic touch, tact, attunement that acknowledges in some deep sense the uniqueness of every teaching situation” (p. 165). Teachers have the ability to interpret and apply the planned and lived curriculum in this area, which is the area between the planned and lived curricula.

Aoki (1993) argues that “the prosaic discourse of the external curriculum planners... and the poetic, phenomenological and hermeneutic discourse in which life is embodied” both have importance (p. 261). Teachers may find effective ways of integrating both curricula as they emerge from the gap between planned and lived curricula.

Aoki (1993) explains the significant relationships between learners and teachers, as well as lessons, classroom activities, assessments, and school system culture, using the lived experience curriculum. As previously stated by John Dewey (2011), learning is a social experience, and students will thrive in an environment where they are allowed to engage with and experience the curriculum. Aoki and Dewey both support a learning experience that focuses simultaneously on students’ current and future developmental needs. These fundamental theories of curriculum remain true to their original intent even after many years have passed. The way teachers fulfil these goals has changed. Teachers can no longer robotically carry out instructions from government plans, curriculum designers, or authors of textbooks. They need to consider what and how best to teach their learners will be most beneficial. Teachers need to stop teaching like machines and start teaching like real people who take into account the interests and individual learning experiences of each of their learners.

Aoki’s (1993) concept of a lived experience curriculum emphasises that curricula should be flexible and adapt to the unique dynamics of each classroom. Teachers face challenges in planning courses without fully understanding their classroom's evolving situation. Consequently, they need to leverage their own classroom experiences to bring the curriculum to life. Teachers operate within the constraints and supports of broader

systems like schools and districts, and broader political and societal shifts are necessary. According to Tilley and Taylor (2013), teachers and students continuously shape and redefine their interaction with curricular content based on their lived experiences. As students' backgrounds and experiences change annually, teachers must also adapt and adjust the curriculum to fit each learner, drawing on their expertise and knowledge.

#### **4.5.3 Applying Aoki Curriculum theory**

Ted Aoki's curriculum theory must be applied with an in-depth knowledge of the discussion between "curriculum-as-planned" and "curriculum-as-lived" in the context of teacher education for isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL). Aoki's framework highlights the dynamic interplay between the theoretical designs of educational programmes and the actual experiences of teachers and students within the classroom. This theoretical approach will provide insight when considering teacher development, curriculum planning for teacher educators, and student teachers' experiences during their training period.

##### *4.5.3.1 Exploring the development of teachers for teaching isiZulu FAL within teacher education programs*

In teacher education programmes, the "curriculum-as-planned" will explore the structured modules that outline key linguistic competencies, pedagogical strategies, and cultural knowledge necessary for teaching isiZulu FAL. Furthermore, Aoki's curriculum theory will be used to explore how a planned curriculum is essential for setting standards and ensuring a comprehensive educational trajectory. However, as Aoki suggests, transitioning from this structured plan to the "curriculum-as-lived" will be used to explore how teacher candidates engage with the content, interact with their peers and instructors, and begin to internalise and reinterpret the curriculum based on their personal and professional contexts.

For instance, while the planned curriculum may emphasise grammatical structures and vocabulary, the lived curriculum enables teacher candidates to explore innovative ways to integrate these elements with cultural nuances and real-life communication scenarios. This approach aligns with Aoki's view that curriculum should not be a static set of guidelines but a dynamic framework that evolves as it is enacted by teachers (Aoki,

2005). Thus, the study will examine the teacher education programmes and see if they encourage candidates to adapt and personalise their learning experiences, fostering a deeper connection with the language and its teaching methodologies.

#### *4.5.3.2 Exploring curriculum planned for teacher educators as well as their knowledge of the curriculum*

Using Aoki's curriculum theory, the study will examine how teacher educators are pivotal in bridging the planned and lived curriculum gap. Their deep understanding of the curriculum content, combined with their pedagogical expertise, will be examined, and their pedagogical expertise will be evaluated to determine how positioned and uniquely guided student teachers are in navigating the complexities of educational theories and practices. Applying Aoki's curriculum theory implies that I will explore the curriculum for teacher educators and how the curriculum emphasises mastery of isiZulu language content and an in-depth understanding of pedagogical theories and practical teaching strategies adaptable to diverse classroom settings.

This dual focus will also be used to examine if it helps educators to model teaching practices that are both theoretically sound and adaptable to the lived experiences of their students. For example, engaging teacher educators in ongoing professional development can help them stay abreast of new linguistic research, technological advancements in education, and evolving cultural trends within the Zulu-speaking communities. Such knowledge is crucial for updating the "curriculum-as-planned" and for enriching the "curriculum-as-lived," ensuring that it remains relevant and effective (Grossman, 1990).

#### *4.5.3.4 Experience of student teachers during training period*

The training period for student teachers is where the theoretical aspects of the curriculum are tested against the realities of classroom life. According to Aoki (2004), the lived experience of the curriculum emerges from the interaction between the students' and teachers' lived experiences. During this phase, student teachers learn to adapt the planned curriculum's structured content to meet their learners' diverse needs. For example, student teachers may find that specific prescribed teaching methods are less effective with their learners due to varying levels of language proficiency or different cultural backgrounds. This study will examine this aspect. This realisation necessitates adapting strategies,

possibly incorporating more culturally relevant materials or employing alternative assessment methods more aligned with the learners' real-world experiences. Furthermore, Aoki's curriculum theory will be used to examine how the lived curriculum facilitates a reflective practice where student teachers evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies, learn from the feedback of their mentors and peers, and continuously refine their approaches. This dynamic process would highlight the importance of flexibility and responsiveness in teaching, echoing Aoki's assertion that effective teaching requires constant negotiation between the planned and the lived (Aoki, 1993).

#### **4.5.4 Advantages and limitations of Aoki's Curriculum Theory**

Aoki's curriculum theory, which distinguishes between "curriculum as planned" and "curriculum as lived," offers a nuanced understanding of the educational process that is both philosophical and practical. The primary advantage of Aoki's approach is its emphasis on the lived experiences of teachers and students within the classroom, acknowledging that these experiences often diverge from formal curriculum plans (Aoki, 2004). This perspective allows for a more dynamic interaction between teaching and learning, where teachers are encouraged to adapt their strategies to meet the unique needs and backgrounds of their learners, engaging more inclusive and responsive educational environment (van Manen, 1991). Such adaptability is especially beneficial in diverse classrooms where standardised approaches may fail to address individual differences effectively.

However, the application of Aoki's theory also presents certain limitations. One significant challenge is the potential for inconsistency in educational quality, as the "curriculum as lived" can vary greatly between educators depending on their personal experiences, skills, and understanding of the student population (Cone, 2009). This variability could lead to a lack of uniformity in student outcomes across different classrooms and schools. Furthermore, Aoki's emphasis on the individual teacher's autonomy and the unique classroom dynamics might complicate efforts to implement broad educational reforms or policies intended to standardise educational practices across a larger system (Aoki, 2004). Additionally, while Aoki's theory valuably highlights the complexity of the teaching and learning process, it may also place an overwhelming burden on teachers to constantly innovate and adapt without sufficient structural support.

This could lead to burnout and inconsistency if educators are not provided with adequate resources and professional development to support their adaptive strategies (Tilley & Taylor, 2013).

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

The theoretical exploration within this chapter lays the groundwork for a nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in educating isiZulu FAL teachers. Shulman's PCK provides a robust framework for analysing how content knowledge and pedagogical skill intersect to enhance teaching efficacy, particularly in the multicultural and multilingual South African educational context. It highlights the necessity for teachers to not only be well-versed in the isiZulu language and culture but also skilled in pedagogical strategies that cater effectively to a diverse learner base. On the other hand, Aoki's curriculum theory complements and challenges traditional curriculum planning by advocating for a recognition of the 'curriculum as lived'. This theory invites educators to consider the spontaneous and responsive aspects of teaching that arise from the actual interactions within the classroom, thus promoting a more adaptive and reflective teaching practice. These practical implications of the theoretical framework are invaluable in the context of teacher education and curriculum design.

These theories illuminate the critical areas of teacher education and curriculum design that must be addressed to prepare competent isiZulu FAL teachers. They highlight the importance of a balanced integration of content knowledge, effective pedagogical strategies, and adaptive curriculum execution that aligns with the lived experiences of both teachers and learners. By integrating the insights from both Shulman and Aoki, this theoretical framework not only guides the current study but also contributes to broader educational discourse on teacher preparation in linguistically and culturally complex settings. Through this lens, the study aims to offer substantive recommendations for enhancing teacher education programmes, ultimately improving the educational outcomes for students learning isiZulu as a First Additional Language.

## **CHAPTER 5 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter presented the literature review from international to local scholars on the lived experiences of student teachers in teaching and learning isiZulu First Additional Language (FAL) and further presented the conceptual framework that informed the study. This chapter presents and argues for the methodological decisions taken in this study and as such presents the research design which includes the epistemological stance taken in the study, the research methodology; sampling strategy; data collection technique; methods of data analysis; ethical considerations; and limitations of the study.

### **5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A research design is a structured plan or framework outlining how the research will be conducted to address the research problem and contribute to the expansion of knowledge and understanding (Babbie & Mouton, 2010; Wiersma & Juirs, 2005, p. 416). It also outlines the rationale for collecting data from participants and how this data collection is linked to the study's purpose and objectives (Afzal, Yunfei, Sajid & Afzal, 2018). The research design includes a focus on the appropriate selection of the epistemological stance taken in the research, the research approach adopted for the study, the research methodology considered most suitable for fulfilling the study's objectives including the design for data collection, with a focus on selecting participants, the tools used in the data collection process, and ensuring the credibility and trustworthiness of the data obtained.

#### **5.2.1 Qualitative research design**

This study used a qualitative research design which informs the inherent characteristics of subjective experiences, and the meanings linked to various phenomena (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014). In this study, subjective experiences refer to the individual participant's perceptions and understandings of isiZulu modules, thoughts, and emotions through their senses of learning isiZulu within the Initial Teacher Education programme. According to Marée et al. (2012), qualitative research relies on a naturalistic approach that aims to understand the phenomena being studied (world settings). Furthermore, the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomena of interest. In other words,

research was conducted in real-life settings rather than experimental ones (test-retest). The research was carried out with real situations not experimental situations. It allowed participants to express their emotions and experiences, such as how they learned to teach isiZulu using English textbooks as a guide as the participants were, for example, revealing their emotions on how they have learned to teach isiZulu using English textbooks as a guide. This study used a qualitative research design (Creswell, 2007; Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990) to explore the experiences of student teachers learning to teach isiZulu First Additional Language within the ITE programmes.

Qualitative research, according to Ponelis (2015, p. 538) illuminates the holistic considerations of, “contextual, unstructured and non-numeric data by engaging the researchers and participants in a natural setting of research regime”. In this study, the participants’ views and experiences within an identified teacher education programme was explored holistically within its natural setting to obtain rich and contextualised information. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018), a qualitative approach is suitable when an explanation and description is required and when it is not possible or feasible to manipulate the potential causes of behaviour. It primarily draws from naturalistic phenomenological philosophy, which maintains that different realities are socially formed by both individual and group interpretations of the circumstances (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Based on the above explanation, qualitative research methodology was utilised in order to gather enough information by reviewing issues that display behaviour and actions which provide a thick or detailed explanation of the student teachers in the Initial Teacher Education programme who are learning to teach isiZulu. Cohen et al. (2011, p. 219) declare that “qualitative research gives voices to participants, and probes issues that lie beneath the surface of presenting behaviours and actions.” Furthermore, Merriam (2002) views the task of qualitative research as describing, understanding, and interpreting how different participants in a social environment construct their surrounding world. This reflects that qualitative research methods embrace the notion that everyone has a unique voice. By focusing on descriptive methods, qualitative discussions empowered participants, shifting the typical dynamic between the researcher and participants. Questions were lighthearted, and the participants were able to bring a sense of humor to their answers.

The qualitative research approach produced a rich and detailed account of participants' emotions, views, and experiences, while also interpreting the significance of their actions (Rahman, 2020). This was an advantageous experience because it allowed me to engage with participants face-to-face and be able to understand their feelings and expressions about the topic. They were the primary source. I did not search for information from secondary sources about their lived experiences as student teachers of isiZulu. This also enabled me to observe their feelings against their interpretation of their worldview and the meaning of the issue.

Some limitations became apparent despite the benefits outlined earlier. For instance, Silverman (2013) argues that qualitative research methods might neglect contextual sensitivity in favour of focusing on interpretations and experiences. A phenomenological approach is used to explore, interpret, and understand participants' experiences (Wilson, 2014; Tuohy et al., 2013, cited in Rahman, 2020, p. 104). Likewise, Cumming (2001) concentrated on the participants' experiences instead of other critical issues in the context. In relation to my experience, it has limitations particularly when participants tend to focus more on the questions that I would ask them, they do not go deeper in the meaning of the subject they tend to personalise it more instead of focusing on the broader matter. For example, they would lightly share their learning experience of isiZulu and not go deeper into the content of the subject until I probed deeper into the subject. They would become more subjective and biased in their response because we have created some rapport with them. They will tend to share what I wanted to hear, which St. Pierre (2019) refers to as imagined responses given by participants, meaning that participants would imagine what I wanted to know and provide their responses to the questions that I asked of them. When I noticed these kinds of responses from my participants, I would intervene by probing deeper questions that would allow the participants to share in an objective manner without being biased.

Berg and Lune (2012, p. 4) noted that "Qualitative research is a challenging journey, with elusive data on one side and rigorous requirements for analysis on the other." In addition to the challenges with data interpretation and analysis, Darlington and Scott (2003) argued that transforming an underdeveloped question into a researchable format is more difficult. Qualitative research involves collecting extensive personal opinions,

perspectives, and experiences from numerous individuals. This process can be time-consuming, and organising the data is not as straightforward as charting it. Because qualitative data is inherently complex, researchers must analyse each response to gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' reactions to a product. Thus, the qualitative approach enabled me to gain a deeper insight into the issues being examined (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013). As an approach, qualitative research has helped answer the research questions by offering a detailed view of the real conditions affecting the experiences of student teachers in teaching and learning isiZulu First Additional Language (FAL) within the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme (2013).

In this qualitative framework, an interpretive approach was the most suitable for the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that the ontological assumption of interpretive researchers is that social reality is created in specific, local ways by individuals through their actions and interactions. In light of this, as a researcher, I strived to understand the lived experiences of student teachers who learn to teach IsiZulu through them sharing their teaching practices and skills they utilise to develop teaching styles to teach isiZulu. Secondly, this approach focuses on the researcher as the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis. Thirdly, this study is richly descriptive and is in the form of quotes from participant`s interviews rather than numbers. In the next section, I discussed the research paradigm.

Lastly, this approach emphasises the researcher as the key tool for both collecting and analysing data. Lastly, the study is characterised by its rich descriptive nature, relying on quotes from participant interviews rather than quantitative data. The following section will discuss the research paradigm.

### **5.2.2 Research paradigm**

A research paradigm is described as various perspectives on the world that typically underpin research activities (Davies & Fisher, 2018). It consists of a collection of assumptions regarding the nature of reality, the process of knowledge creation, and what is valuable to learn. It is therefore a researcher's action plan that guides and provides trends throughout the research, demonstrating who or what is engaged, and where and when the study occurs (du Plooy, 2009). Thus, a researcher's action plan outlines and

tracks trends during the research process, showing the participants involved, as well as the locations and timing of the study (du Plooy, 2009). Research paradigm enabled me to understand its impact upon the research process to understand the nature of research questions, why particular methodologies are used to answer those questions and how data collected is analysed and interpreted (Weaver & Olson, 2006). Consequently, this assisted me in developing a clearer understanding of how to critique research, and how research results can be translated to educational practice (Scotland, 2012). The participants in my study were different in terms of language, beliefs, backgrounds, experiences as well as understandings. Therefore, in order to interpret and understand how they learn to teach isiZulu FAL, it was important to have a thorough understanding of interpretive theorists. In the following section I discuss the reasons for opting the interpretivist paradigm to guide my study.

The participants in my study were significantly varied in terms of language, beliefs, backgrounds, experiences, and understandings. Consequently, to accurately interpret and grasp their perspectives on learning to teach isiZulu as a FAL, it was essential for me, as a researcher, to be well-versed in interpretive theories. In the next section, I will explain why I chose the interpretivist paradigm to guide my research.

### **5.2.3 Interpretivist paradigm**

Since the purpose of the study is to explore the development of student teachers for learning to teaching isiZulu First Additional Language within the initial teacher education programmes, I drew on the interpretive research paradigm as the epistemological stance taken in this research.

Since the study aims to explore how student teachers develop their skills in teaching isiZulu as a First Additional Language within initial teacher education programmes, I adopted an interpretive research paradigm as the epistemological approach for this research. Tracy (2019) sees the interpretive paradigm as a perspective where both reality and knowledge are seen as constructed and maintained through communication, interaction, and practice. Similarly, interpretive researchers believe that reality is made up of individuals' personal experiences of the external world. Consequently, they might embrace an inter-subjective approach to knowledge and the view that reality is

constructed through social processes. Tracy (2019) sees the interpretive paradigm as a perspective where both reality and knowledge are seen as created and maintained through communication, interaction, and practice. In the same vein, interpretive researchers maintain that reality is made up of individuals' personal experiences of the external world (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). I therefore used the interpretivist paradigm to gain a deeper understanding and description of the social actions or experiences of my participants as a point of interest (Thomas, 2010). In light of the aforementioned, I adopt an interpretive paradigm in this study to present an untainted interpretation on student teachers in ITE programme who are learning to teach isiZulu as a First Additional Language. As Creswell and Zhang (2009) put it, the interpretive researcher strives to understand reality from the participants' perspectives using a dialogic exploratory approach, which enables participants to narrate their own stories. In terms of ontology, qualitative interpretive studies typically seek to understand phenomena by examining the meaning that people attribute to them. They encourage researchers to delve deeply, reconsider, and reflect (Niewenhuis, 2010; Higgs & Smith, 2009). As an interpretive researcher, I contemplated the question: "How do student teachers specialising in isiZulu FAL learn the required knowledge and skills in teaching FAL within the initial teacher education programme". I therefore utilised different views from my participants' personal experiences to gain a clearer understanding of how student teachers develop their skills in teaching isiZulu as a First Additional Language within the Initial Teacher Education programme. An interpretive paradigm was appropriate for my study since it enabled me to better understand and apprehend the lived experiences of the student teachers I interviewed by investigating the social world of their learning and teaching isiZulu FAL. Additionally, an interpretive study allows the researcher to explore deeply into the data, allowing them to gain profound insights into participants' views on their beliefs about learning to teach isiZulu. This approach also enables an exploration of how participants use their knowledge and environment to make sense of what they consider the factors that influence their learning.

#### **5.2.4 Adopting a case study as a research methodology**

The study takes on a naturalistic inquiry perspective, understanding the experiences of participants in the teaching and learning of how to teach isiZulu FAL within an identified teacher education programme. Research methodology is the steps where the researcher

collects data and how data collected will be analysed (Du Plooy-Cellier et al., 2014). Ellis and Levy (2010) describe research methodology as the academic framework used to systematically gather and assess existing knowledge, to generate or confirm new insights. Wellington (2015) views research methodology as a means of procedural rules for the evaluation of research and the validation of the knowledge gathered. Therefore, the importance of research methodology of this research study in this section shall outline and justify the selected methodological design. In this section, the significance of the research methodology for this study will be discussed and justified. Creswell (2013) emphasises that selecting the appropriate research methodology is a crucial decision. This choice not only guides the researcher on how to conduct the study but also encourages a critical evaluation of how different approaches may either enhance or limit the research. The chosen methodology enables the researcher to meet the specified objectives and develop a strategy that best addresses the study's requirements (Creswell, 2013).

The case study methodology was carefully selected for this study because it permitted me to receive rich and detailed data from ITE teachers who are learning to teach isiZulu FAL. The case study according to Meeran, (2017) permits the investigator to access in-depth comprehensibility of the case without generalising findings. The boundedness of the case study approach helped me to understand student teachers experiences on learning to teach isiZulu. Rule and John (2011, p. 7) confirm that case studies "...assist in generating an understanding of and insight into a particular instance by providing a thick, rich description of the case and illuminating its relations to its broader context. Rule and John (2011, p. 8) state that an exploratory case study "...often examines a phenomenon that has not been investigated before; [it can then] lay the basis for further studies as it attempts to explain what happens in a particular case or why it happens". This was an exploratory case study because it involved grounded theory of initial teacher knowledge. Therefore, in this study exploration of different trends was done in relation to teachers' pedagogical content knowledge for learning to teaching IsiZulu FAL. Moreover, by using the exploratory case study approach I gained insights about the challenges that these initial teacher educators face. Following this principle, I intend to explore the experiences of student teachers in an initial teacher education programme through a qualitative case study. The case study was pertinent as it gave me a clearer understanding of the conditions and events as they occurred, thoroughly examining the experiences of initial teacher

educators who were learning to teach isiZulu, hence the private higher education institution was the case study. The case study was valuable as it provided a clearer understanding of the conditions and events as they occurred.

### **5.3 DATA GENERATION**

#### **5.3.1 Sampling and sampling methods**

The sample is a group of units of analysis in the study about what or whom data are provided (Casteel & Bridier, 2021). An explicit element was sampled based on its geographical context and the temporal boundaries of the population (Preethlall, 2015). Therefore, the population selected for this study consisted of student teachers who were being trained to teach isiZulu in primary schools.

The sample comprised twelve fourth-year student teachers studying toward a Bachelor of Education (BEd). Unfortunately, two students were unable to participate due to unforeseen circumstances. As such, ten students were enough to give sufficient information about their experiences of learning to teach isiZulu. Marshall et al. (2013) maintains that six to ten participants are recommended as an appropriate size when using interpretive qualitative studies. In this study, the ten participants were considered sufficient to obtain in-depth information about their learning experiences within the teacher education programme offered at the case study private higher education institution. The participants were selected from the Bachelor of Education programme through a purposive sampling process. Individual semi-structured interviews were held with a purposive sampling of ten students learning to teach isiZulu FAL in the intermediate phase. These students were selected according to the following criteria: (i) students who have isiZulu as their mother tongue, (ii) students who did not have isiZulu as their mother tongue and were unable to speak isiZulu, (iii) students who were multilingual, and (iv) have done teaching practice in a school under supervision of a mentor teacher at the respective school and in their second year of study. See the table below:

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Mother Tongue</b>
Male	African	isiZulu
Male	African	isiZulu
Male	Indian	English
Female	Indian	English
Female	Coloured	English
Female	African	IsiZulu
Female	African	IsiZulu
Female	African	IsiZulu
Female	African	isiXhosa
Female	African	isiXhosa

Table 5.3.1 Selection criteria

For this study, a purposive sampling strategy was employed. Purposive sampling, sometimes referred to as judgment, selective, or subjective sampling, is a sampling approach where the researcher selects participants from the community using just his or her own judgment (Madondo, 2021). The basic principle of purposive sampling is to get the best information. One needs to focus on a relatively small number of participants who are hand-picked based on relevance to the issue being investigated. One needs to focus on a small group of carefully chosen individuals who are relevant to the topic under investigation (Denscombe, 2010).

Probability sampling technique called "purposeful sampling" is used when "elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher" (Thoti, 2023, p. 41). Researchers often believe that they can obtain a representative sample by using a sound judgment, which will result in saving time and money" (Black, 2011, p. 1).

Purposive sampling was employed due to the small number of participants (twelve) available for my research study (Black, 2011). This sampling method included strategies to facilitate implementation. In line with the qualitative approach, the participants were chosen because they had meaningful stories to share about their lived experiences (Ramrathan, 2017). I intentionally selected individuals and sites to ensure that participants could contribute valuable insights into the research problem and the central phenomenon.

The criteria for inclusion were (i) being in the fourth year of study in the BEd degree programme; and (ii) had taken isiZulu FAL as a teaching specialisation. These selection criteria afforded me to select information-rich participants that contributed to the research

objectives. The recruitment of these participants was through volunteerism. Information about the research was provided to all potential participants who met the selection criteria. Twelve of the potential participants volunteered to be in the research project, but two subsequently dropped out.

### **5.3.2 Site of research**

The essential information regarding the role played by student teachers who were learning to teach isiZulu, the available resources (such as transport) the proximity, and the relationship involved, all influenced the selection of the most effective strategies for choosing the site of my research. I therefore identified and purposefully selected two campuses under one private higher education institution which is known as KwaZulu-Natal Private Higher Education Institution (pseudonym). For ethical considerations, the private higher education institution and the participants' names have been kept anonymous as sharing a participant's personal information is unethical (Kumar, 2018). After the information was generated, I had to make sure that its source could not be identified. Despite its small size, the sample was adequate and specifically designed to address the issue at hand.

According to Creswell's (2015) analysis of sampled participants and their site, sampling had to take into account the following four factors: The research will focus on four key areas: i) the location (where it will be conducted); ii) the participants (who will be questioned); iii) the events (what the participants and interviewees will be seen doing); iv) and the process (how the events will be observed as they happen).

As previously stated, my research site was at one private higher education institution, a well-resourced institution, with two campuses in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. One is located in Durban and the other in Pietermaritzburg. The institution has a student population that is multi-racial and multi-lingual. The medium of instruction at this selected case study institution is English. The students attending this institution are considered to be coming from middle-income families as the fees are paid by the students.

The study setting refers to the location where the research took place (Maharajh, 2012). In this instance, the researcher carried out the study at a private higher education

institution which has two campuses as mentioned earlier, one in Durban and the other in Pietermaritzburg. These private campuses are located in the KwaZulu-Natal province. The Durban private higher education institution campus is located just outside of Durban Central. It is ideally situated close to amenities and situated among the suburban green hills of Westville. These consist of Durban's well-known golden beaches, malls, and shopping complexes, and sports grounds, and leisure facilities. Although the campus has a friendly atmosphere, everything is business in the lecture halls. Another campus is located an hour from Durban, in the capital of KwaZulu-Natal. Situated on the beautiful grounds of St. Charles' College lies the Pietermaritzburg private higher education facility. Well-kept lawns are readily accessible from historically significant buildings and lecture halls, advanced security systems, including biometric controls, ensure student safety.

#### **5.4 DATA PRODUCTION METHOD**

Data production involves collecting information to address the research question. Participants, organisations, and electronic media are examples of data sources (Wahyuni, 2012). Participants in the study were interviewed in a semi-structured manner to collect data. This also allowed me as a researcher to be prepared and appear competent during the interviews with good questions that took time to develop. The interviews were audio recorded and were conducted through an interview guide. I requested permission from the Department of Higher Education to carry out the study even though the interview took place outside of the campuses due to Covid-19. The semi-structured interviews allowed the student teachers to respond openly and share their perspectives on learning to teach isiZulu FAL. Each interview lasted between thirty and forty-five minutes and was conducted over two days in separate weeks.

##### **5.4.1 Observation: Structured**

Lecture observations were widely used as a method to gather data on student teachers' inquiry practices and classroom approaches (Crawford, 2007; Lehane et al., 2014). According to Nieuwenhuis (2007c, p. 83), observation is a "systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants, objects, and occurrences without necessarily communicating with them". As an observer who did not participate, I watched each of the ten participants twice after they completed six weeks of teaching practice in schools. This gave me direct insight into their use of teaching strategies and content

knowledge in delivering their isiZulu FAL lessons. The lesson was recorded to guarantee that the data collected would remain accurate and that the results would be valid and not be distorted. It was also used as a support for observation schedule (note taking). Using an audio recorder allowed me to capture conversations, which could then be replayed and utilised as often as needed (Merriam, 2009). The observations that I conducted enabled me to observe student teachers who are learning to teach isiZulu FAL in intermediate phase. The observation process was structured because I used an observation schedule to record the occurrences that took place when I was in the classrooms. This allowed me to gather 'live' data naturally (Cohen, et al., 2011). Moreover, it was a good idea to take notes during and as soon after the observations as possible. During my research, I was able to observe while student teachers underwent training to teach isiZulu FAL. I used an observation schedule to document the events that happened in the classrooms, which gave structure to the observation process. I was able to collect "live" data in a natural way because of this (Cohen, et al., 2011). Taking notes during and as soon as possible after the observations was also a smart idea.

Babbie (2020, p. 311) advocates that "...even if you pride yourself on having photographic memory, taking notes is critical". Observing student teachers while teaching allowed me to understand the true nature of multi-grade classrooms and how teachers managed activities such as reading, writing, speaking and listening in isiZulu FAL. Marshall and Rossman (2014) elaborate that observation is "...the critical method that holds fundamental and high importance in all qualitative inquiry for discovering complex interactions in natural settings". To ensure that my observations were systematic and aligned with my research questions, I employed a semi-structured observation schedule to direct my focus on the student teachers' experiences in learning to teach isiZulu FAL. After each observation, I reviewed the lesson using my notes and recordings. Participants were also asked to independently reflect on the lesson and document their comments for future discussion. Although immediate discussions would have been more beneficial, time constraints for the participants made this impractical. The observations provided me with valuable data, allowing me to draw connections between teacher knowledge and practices in their isiZulu FAL classrooms.

#### **5.4.2 Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were employed as a second method for data collection. According to Cohan, et al (2017) interviews are a process of engaging with participants on a research focus area by asking leading questions and then using probing questions to gain further clarity or in-depth information. According to Flick (2021) “Semi-structured interviews are interviews which are to be expressed in a relatively openly designed interview situation. Semi-structured interviews use a set of open-ended questions on specific topics the researcher aims to explore. This approach allowed me as the interviewer to dig deeper into responses for a more comprehensive understanding, a process known as “probing for more details.” Probing might involve asking for additional clarification beyond what has been initially provided (Dantzker et al., 2016). In this study, interviews featured flexible, and open-ended questions, enabling participants to elaborate extensively on the subject matter. To ensure accurate data collection, interviews were recorded with a voice recorder. These recordings were subsequently transcribed to extract only the relevant information for the study. De Vos et al. (2002) suggest that when feasible and with participants' consent, recording interviews on tape or video is preferable as it provides a more detailed account than a handwritten one. It allows the researcher to focus on the interview process without distractions. Despite some participants initially feeling uneasy about being recorded, the rapport built during and before the interview assisted them feel more comfortable and willing to share their views openly over time.

Using semi-structured interviews enabled me to have direct, face-to-face interactions with the participants (Cohen et al., 2011). The semi-structured interviews allowed participants to speak for the longest duration while allowing for flexibility, expansion, reordering, and asking follow-up questions (Meeran, 2017). There was a pre-interview session at the beginning of the study to gain biographic information and student profile as well as to create student rapport. A student's background informs and influences how students learn (Thusi, 2017). Thereafter, there was a post-interview session after students were observed in their university lecture rooms. In order to spark discussion and answer follow-up questions, in-depth interview questions were designed. This ensured successful interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer. These interviews took 30 minutes with each student teacher.

## **5.5 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS: THEMATIC CONTEXT ANALYSIS**

It is not enough to collect the data only; it must also be analysed (Neuman et al., 2013, p. 477). The six steps of thematic analysis - familiarisation and immersion; inducing themes; coding; elaboration; interpreting and checking to analyse the data selection, simplifying and abstracting data were used in this study to analyse the data. These steps are well-described by Terre Blanche, Durrheim, and Painter (2006, pp. 322-326).

### **5.5.1 Familiarisation and immersion**

Familiarisation and immersion require you to form initial ideas and theories about the subject of your study. By the time you begin analysing data, you should already have a basic grasp of its significance. After transcribing your data, you must re-engage with it, now focusing on the written texts rather than the original experiences (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). As such, the data was arranged using a process that aligned with the research questions of the study (Preethlal, 2015). I was able to use codes and themes to review a large volume of data and identify patterns, areas of emphasis, and unique components through content analysis (Cohen et al., 2011).

### **5.5.2 Inducing themes**

According to Terre Blanche et al. (2006), induction means to infer general rules or classes from specific instances. It is a bottom-up approach “the process of breaking up the data into parts and reorganizing the parts into a reasonable whole” (Potter, 2013, p. 3). This is an inductive process to identify the relationships amongst relevant themes and analyse, summarise and translate the data in terms of the participants’ points of view (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). I used the interview transcripts to identify and analyse the categories. I then structured and verified the analysis of the individual responses of each participant before proceeding to the subsequent transcript. The consistency and truthfulness of each participant was well maintained (Cohen et al., 2011).

### **5.5.3 Coding**

Terre Blanche et al. (2006, p. 38) state that "coding entails marking different sections of the data as being instances of, or relevant to, one or more of one’s themes”. The content of the text might refer to a discrete idea, explanation, or event, and any textual ‘bit’ may be labeled with more than one code (that is, paragraphs, sentences, phrases or words).

Codes should never be regarded as final and unchanging. In the study, the researcher divided sections and marked them into colour codes that corresponded with each theme. Below is an example of a student teacher's testimony about learning to teach isiZulu. The structured question was: *What content knowledge are you receiving to prepare you to teach isiZulu FAL?*

**Bubu:**

*I don't receive enough content knowledge because I don't know isiZulu and I failed it even at school. I consult children's books they are using currently and use the internet. The knowledge I get doesn't prepare me to teach. I end up going through English to merge with isiZulu so that I can understand the content to teach learners isiZulu FAL. During teaching experience, I had to teach folklore in isiZulu, the learners were correcting me since I was making mistakes while I was reading.*

**Lindy:**

*I understand isiZulu but I'm not confident when it comes to teaching isiZulu FAL. At first, we were taught different strategies on how to teach isiZulu using video, pictures etc. When the time went by it became a theory that did not prepare me to teach learners. I cannot use theory to teach in class. It's about me understanding isiZulu on my own, on how to teach and why it is taught the way it should be. It bit difficult to me. I had to do my own research and asked my father who was a principal.*

Codes should not be viewed as static or permanent and unchanging. In relation to the study, the researcher took sections and marked them into symbols that represented each theme. Bubu's practical experience in learning to teach isiZulu was content knowledge. In these two responses common themes were merged which was the importance of understanding content knowledge when learning to teach isiZulu FAL. On the other hand, Lindy is expected to deliver relevant content and encourage learners to learn isiZulu FAL, but the barrier is the theory she is acquiring instead of content knowledge.

I initially maintained a disorganised list of participants' responses received from the interviews, my observations during lesson presentations, as well as my readings. I then analysed this information, categorising and classifying the data based on similarities and differences to uncover the core meaning of each data source.

#### **5.5.4 Elaboration**

Elaboration intended to capture the subtle details of meaning that might have been missed by the original coding system. “When collecting data and immersing yourself in your material events are viewed in a linear sequence; What inducing themes and coding achieves was to break up this sequence so that events or remarks that were far away from each other were now brought close together; This gave me a fresh view on the data and allows me to carefully compare sections of text that appear to belong together” (Terre Blanche et al., 2006, p. 40). The findings were compared with the literature. Therefore, the data was classified and clustered into meaningful groups to explain the phenomenon (Walliman, 2017).

### **5.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY**

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), as a qualitative researcher, I had to make sure that the study is authentic and legitimate, and more recently these concepts have come to be associated with the concept of trustworthiness, especially in the context of coherence to the epistemological stance taken in this study. In this context, I will explain how credibility and trustworthiness have been upheld during the data production and analysis, which will ensure the findings from this study are believable.

Trustworthiness, according to du Plooy-Cilliers et al. (2014, p. 258) denotes the truthfulness with which the researcher interprets the collected data. In particular, participants' interviews were conducted in person to ensure participant honesty, and the transcripts of the interviews will be the basis for analytical interpretations. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that the key here is the precise explanation of the procedures used in establishing the results of the study to make it trustworthy. Hence, the data collection design for this study will be detailed in terms of the information required, the source of the information needed for the study, and the process of producing the information that will ultimately constitute my data set for the study.

Four principles of trustworthiness which “demand attention in any qualitative research endeavour: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 13). These principles focus on several key aspects: determining whether research findings offer a credible and conceptual interpretation of the data, evaluating the extent to which the findings can be generalised or transferred beyond the specific research context, examining the quality of the data generation and interpretation processes as a whole, and assessing how well the findings are supported by the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Further explanation is provided below.

Credibility, according to Maree (2016), relates to how believable my findings are in terms of reality. In this study, I attempt to achieve credibility by fully disclosing the intent and process of the study with my participants and my supervisor. Through continuous interactions with my participants and with my supervisor, I envisage that the alignment to the intent and process is adhered to so that credibility and believability of its outcomes are ensured. The researcher and participants already had a trustworthy relationship, which assisted to achieve this.

According to Maree (2016), transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of qualitative research can be applied or generalised to different contexts or settings. In this context, I aim to provide a detailed description of the participants, simplify the research context for easy understanding, and descriptively present the data. This approach will allow readers to assess whether the findings can be applied to other settings or similar situations (Bitsch, 2005).

Dependability is considered as the consistency of results over time (Bitsch, 2005). Additionally, “it comprises the participants’ evaluation of the findings, interpretation and recommendations of the study such that all are supported by the data received from informants of the study” (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007, p. 242). I reviewed the effectiveness of the integrated procedures for gathering, analysing, and developing theories by revisiting and reviewing the data collected through ongoing analysis. I will then ensure that “reliable and dependable interpretations flow from the data collected” (Maree, 2016, p. 39).

Maree (2016, p. 40) looks at confirmability as “the degree to which the results of the inquiry could be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers to reduce biasness”. I will provide my critical friends access to my interview transcripts for this study to assess whether or not my interpretations of the data are corroborated by the evidence. The reason for this, will be to reduce the issue of bias.

## **5.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

Since my research focuses on exploring the development of student teachers for learning to teach isiZulu FAL within the initial teacher education programme, ethical measures should be adopted like any research work. I have asked my participants to sign consent forms. Participants were informed that they could terminate their consent at any time if they chose to do so. I also used pseudonyms and when taking photos, I ensured faces were not recognisable. I have secured informed consent from all the relevant bodies such as the University of KwaZulu-Natal, The Independent Institution Education, and the participants. In other words, to advance the credibility of this study, all the ethical requirements including ethical clearance application, permission to conduct the study, formally approaching the intended research participants and obtaining their consent to participate voluntarily, adherence to the confidentiality and anonymity specifications, and permission to audio-record the participants was observed.

## **5.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- Time constrains

The participants had difficulty managing their time, but those who arrived late were allowed to join or have another meeting time scheduled. The time allocated to data generation activities were insufficient. Different case study methods will be used to highlight different facets of what the study intends to explore. This constraint can be weighed by “exploring closely the methods and methodologies applied with close attention to detail and integrity which realise authenticity, relevance and credibility” (Gumede, 2011, p. 35). However, different perspectives will help me to gain an in-depth understanding of the research phenomenon (Niewenhuis, 2010).

- Covid-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic resulting in the shutdown of the school also served as a challenge. However, when the country was open to level 5 people were allowed to meet and go back to school. I would arrange with the participants for meeting; however it was not the same because we had to abide by the rules of Covid-19 such as wearing a mask, sanitising, and social distancing. It was not easy at first because participants were not used to speaking under their masks for more than 15 minutes, however the time changed from 30 minutes to 15 minutes so that they would be comfortable.

## **5.9 CONCLUSION**

The chapter provided a thorough explanation of the research design and methodology, emphasising the appropriateness of the study. A qualitative research method within an interpretive paradigm was employed to explore the lived experiences of student teachers learning to teach isiZulu FAL. The purposive and snowball sampling methods were explained, along with a detailed description of the research site at the private higher institution in Durban and Pietermaritzburg campuses, KwaZulu-Natal. This was followed by an in-depth discussion of the research instruments, including semi-structured interviews and observations. The data analysis process was outlined, and issues related to validity, reliability, and trustworthiness were addressed, detailing how they were managed in the study. Ethical considerations, crucial for protecting both participants and the research site, were also highlighted, particularly given the central role of the sampled participants in the study.

## CHAPTER 6 - DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the research design and methodology utilised to conduct the study. This chapter presents and discusses findings on the experiences of student teachers learning to teach isiZulu First Additional Language within the initial teacher education programmes. The themes that emerged from the data were analysed inductively to provide a rich description of student teachers' experiences of learning to teach isiZulu FAL in Initial Teacher Education. Direct quotes from student teachers' responses are included to support and verify the emerging themes. Lastly, I use the literature review and theoretical framework to interpret findings. I discuss the management of data in the next section.

### 6.2 WORKING WITH DATA (MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF THE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS)

The study followed Bertram and Christiansen's (2014) three main components of data analysis: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The process of organising and storing data through coding classification and pattern recognition within these categories is known as data reduction (Bertram, 2023, p. 132). In addition, I utilised thematic content analysis to analyse data which comprised the six steps namely: familiarisation and immersion; inducing themes; coding; elaboration; and interpreting and checking to analyse the data selection, simplifying and abstracting data that was part of the interview transcripts and observations of students' lessons during their micro-teaching.

**Table 6.1:** Six steps taken to analyse generated data from participants

<b>Student Teachers</b>
<b>Semi-structured individual interviews</b>
<b>Step 1</b>
I organised the recordings of the interview according to the number of participants from which data was generated. I drew columns to record student teachers' responses to help me organise the transcription procedures.

<b>Step 2</b>
I transcribed the interviews with 10 participants to access the data collected. Throughout this process, I listened to the recordings multiple times to ensure the accurate transcription of each participant's responses.
<b>Step 3</b>
I went over the transcripts of the interviews multiple times, taking notes, classifying the material, thinking about the information, and developing a thorough grasp of the perspectives, experiences, and opinions of the student teachers about learning to teach isiZulu FAL.
<b>Step 4</b>
I began applying different coloured highlighters to code the data that was generated from the semi-structured interviews. First, the coding was done on paper, and then it was done on a computer. The same colour was used to mark similar responses. I then organised the colour-coded sentences into groups based on related topics.
<b>Step 5</b>
Five themes emerged from the different categories. The themes and sub-themes were broken down into more detailed sections using a table to merge with relevant literature. The identified themes and sub-themes framework were discussed and taken into consideration while interpreting the data. The descriptions of the themes and sub-themes were refined and concluded after being verified against the body of existing literature.
<b>Step 6</b>
The results were ultimately categorised into five themes to address the research questions. Each theme is backed by direct quotes from the participants' responses which are indicated in italics. The themes that this chapter discusses are: 1. Learning the content; 2. Learning how to teach isiZulu; 3. Learning about managing an isiZulu classroom for teaching; 4. Learning how to assess isiZulu learning among learners; 5. Learning about resources and their integration into teaching.

Drawing from Table 6.1, I transcribed the audio recordings to the document. I then coded and organised it into themes. Transcripts were read several times individually and as I read, I identified certain ideas that were coming out of these ideas and were jotted down. These became the primary themes. I then identified the category, and coloured it. I used

that as a basis for going through all the data transcripts. Once that was done, I brought all together that was similarly coded in one separate document. All those were coded in a different colour and went into the same column - example blue, green, red, yellow, and orange. I then took the entire green column and reviewed all the data to identify common threads across the data, and once I identified the common thread, I named them as a common thread through the theme. Within each of the themes I began to explore as sub-themes and I went through each of the different coding. Once all the data was organised and the transcripts reviewed, the data was coded and categorised into themes. Ultimately, the findings were divided into five key themes to address the research questions. Each theme is supported by direct quotes from the participants, which are presented in italics.

Data presentation involved collecting information through participants' voices, and analysis was conducted by identifying patterns and relationships within the data (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). This chapter aims to present and analyse the data collected from the participants in this study. Ten student teachers shared their learning-to-teach experiences with me. Therefore, this chapter provides some of the student teachers' responses to questions in the interviews conducted with them. The major data generation techniques used were interviews which were presented in themes and sub-themes. As indicated in Chapter 4, I use pseudonyms to protect their identity. I also assigned fictitious names to the participants.

Following these steps was not easy as I struggled to incorporate participants' responses coherently, incorporating the diversity of their experiences and perspectives. However, listening repeatedly to the recorded responses of participants during their interviews assisted me in constructing meaning to the findings of the present study. I therefore concur with Mothemane (2014, p. 60) who maintains that data analysis is the method by which the researcher learns more about the phenomenon they are studying and provides a minimal interpreted description of what they have discovered.

Conducting interviews with participants enabled me to learn about their experiences as student teachers and how they handle curriculum changes. This indicates that the researcher had a keen interest and understanding of the practical aspects of the curriculum

shift taking place in the participating schools, as well as the difficulties they are facing and the solutions they are using.

### **6.3 THEMES AND SUB-THEMES**

In this section, I present the data, as explained above, for each of the identified themes and sub-themes for analysis. Working through the data, five themes emerged. In the subsections that follow, I engage with the respective data to formulate analytical findings which will be subjected to a discussion. Hence, within each theme and sub-theme, an introduction to the theme/sub-theme will be presented, followed by the presentation of the respective data, after which a discussion will unfold. Literature related to the findings will be integrated into the discussions. These themes are: Learning the content; Learning how to teach isiZulu; Learning about managing an isiZulu classroom for teaching; Learning how to assess isiZulu learning among learners; and Learning about resources and its integration into teaching.

#### **6.3.1 Theme 1: Learning the content**

Learning is characterised as the transition from ignorance to knowledge, where experience and practice lead to a lasting transformation in both knowledge and behaviour (Raymond, 2008). However, according to Anisa (2019, p. 10), learning cannot be separated from teaching, as it is essentially "a lasting shift in behaviour that results from repeated practice and reinforcement." In this sub-section, I engage with why the student teachers have chosen isiZulu FAL as a teaching specialisation so that it informs the rationale and process of learning to develop a sound content knowledge of the subject they would teach. Beyond the rationale for choosing isiZulu FAL as a teaching subject specialisation, I proceed to establish what content knowledge they learn and explore how they acquire the content knowledge of this subject. Through this engagement, the process of learning a subject content of a teaching specialisation will be illuminated. Ezenwa-Ohaeto and Ugochukwu (2021) contends that learning the content of a subject leads to learners acquiring more knowledge compared to what they knew previously. Thus, learning leads to the acquisition of new knowledge or deeper insights about a subject that they may not have had previously. Hence, who the student teachers are, why they have chosen to study a subject and how they study a subject content knowledge contributes to the development of their teaching competence of a subject specialisation.

### *6.3.1.1 Sub-Theme 1: Choosing to learn isiZulu FAL*

Participants provided a variety of explanations on why they chose to study isiZulu FAL as a teaching subject specialisation. According to the participants, the reasons included the personal choices to learn isiZulu, a conscious decision to learn isiZulu related to the geography of where one might teach, and the prospects of getting a job as teacher in KwaZulu-Natal. From the data emerging from the interviews, the choice of taking isiZulu FAL was influenced by several factors which were mentioned by student teachers:

***Phil:***

*“I am learning isiZulu FAL by choice, I would choose Afrikaans but I am a student teacher at KZN University, also residing in KZN, it is definitely useful to learn isiZulu because I am not sure where I will get employment.”*

***Zee:***

*“I am not fit enough to stand in front of the class and teach the content of isiZulu therefore I thought learning isiZulu will improve my knowledge to teach isiZulu FAL.”*

***Buki:***

*“It’s because I don’t know much of isiZulu. So, I want to learn more about it so that I will be able to teach proper content”.*

***Sane:***

*“I find it useful to learn to teach isiZulu because, of course, it is for conversational purposes, hence being able to express yourself is quite important in the classroom when teaching Zulu learners, even if your Zulu is not flawless, but simply being able to teach something like listening, speaking, reading and writing. I can even express my opinions and comment on something”.*

South Africa is a multi-lingual country with 12 official languages of communication. Beyond home language acquisition it is expected that learners would be interacting with others who speak different languages. While it may not be expected that every learner or teacher should know each of the 12 official languages, they can choose to learn a first additional language and other additional languages. Hence, the findings acquired from student teachers revealed that the choice of language acquisition outside of their home language is dependent upon a number of factors. In deciding upon taking isiZulu FAL as

a teaching specialisation subject, the choice of taking isiZulu FAL seems to be influenced by factors that include the regional indigenous linguistic dominance, the multilingual context of the classroom, and job opportunities.

These results are consistent with Mqgqwashu's (2007) findings where he identified several factors that influence language acquisition choices which include personal choice, who they commonly interact with, and transactional languages. These factors influencing the choice of language acquisition have been noted in the participants' responses.

#### *6.3.1.2 Sub-Theme 2: Learning about the academic discipline of isiZulu*

An academic discipline is an area of study connected to a university academic department and developed to advance students' professional training (Deng, 2013). He (Deng) further clarifies that schools and higher education institutions have to teach academic disciplines such as philosophy, languages, Mathematics, Geography, History, and Economics which are largely influenced by well-established foundational disciplines. The school subjects aligned to these established disciplines are versions of the academic disciplines taught in higher education (Mitchell & Stones, 2022).

Participants indicated that taking isiZulu FAL as an academic discipline was to acquire professional training in teaching isiZulu FAL. In terms of the policy on teacher education in South Africa (DHET, 2015), to teach a school subject, the minimum required degree of expertise in the subject's topic knowledge is NQF level 6. That is, all students who specialise to teach a school subject must have sound disciplinary knowledge of that subject at a Bachelor's degree level.

#### ***Beli:***

*“Ngifunde isiZulu ngoba kufanele ngibe nolwazi lwalokho okumele kufundiswe, njengokusetshenziswa kolimi, ukuphimisela amagama ngendlela efanele, namakhono okubhala anele, okuhlenganisa i-creative writing, lesson planning kanye noku assessa on creating learners' activities.” [I learned isiZulu because I must have the knowledge of what must be taught like language usage, proper pronunciation of words, and adequate writing skills, including creative writing, lesson planning, assess on creating learners' activities].*

According to Bel, the acquisition of isiZulu as an academic discipline was motivated by the necessity (policy requirement) to acquire comprehensive disciplinary knowledge of the academic subject that a student teacher wants to specialise in.

Participants stated that learning the academic content of isiZulu FAL commenced with learning the structure and functionality of a language. This is what Lin and Sneh stated:

**Lin:**

*“During my first year I learned more about grammar where we learnt verbs, adverbs, and adjectives., singular/plural, apostrophe, in isiZulu. It was more practical as we would do assignments, class presentation, group work then writing tests and examination. The second, third and fourth year the isiZulu modules were written in English. but learned in isiZulu It was more of theory based.”*

**Sne:**

*“The first year isiZulu module madam..... was more of i-language yesiZulu, where we learnt I grammar; ukubhalwa kwama essay nenkulumo ehlelekile nengahlelekile. We would present our assignment orally in class siphinde futhi sisebenze as groups and peers to look i information yesiZulu like reading isiZulu newspapers and summarise it sisebenzisa our own words, Mase sika second year we learnt isiZulu nge English. We were taught how and what to teach learners following CAPS curriculum”.*

**Nik:**

*“How I learnt isiZulu was through an English module guide and prescribed book to create activities that will be used in isiZulu. Teaching. I have learned how to write and present isiZulu lesson, for example amabizo (nouns), isenzo (verb) or izinkathi (tenses). using English instructions, I also learnt to teach isiZulu by teaching each other [students] pretending that I am a teacher and the class were learners. where we were to use the knowledge that we have adapted from English prescribed book.to teach isiZulu concepts.”*

Findings reveal that during student teachers’ initial year of study, the focus in isiZulu language learning was predominantly on grammar and practical application through assignments, class presentations, group work, and written tests and examinations.

However, in the subsequent years (second, third, and fourth year), a significant shift occurred in the academic aspect of the isiZulu FAL disciplinary knowledge. While the isiZulu modules were still presented in the isiZulu language, the methodology adopted turned towards a more theory-based approach. This change in teaching style focused more on theoretical concepts and abstract linguistic analysis rather than practical application and usage. By including a variety of teaching methods and encouraging the use of isiZulu as the primary language of instruction, students can maximise their language learning experience and achieve more comprehensive language proficiency.

The scholarship on learning a language (e.g. Effendi, Rokhyati., Rachman., Rakhmawati, & Pertiwi, 2017) suggests that language acquisition follows a structured approach, meaning that one needs to learn the structure of a language, usually conceptualised as the grammar of a language. From the data generated, learning about isiZulu commences with knowing and understanding the grammar of the language. Each of the participants believed that learning grammar was necessary during their first year of study.

On the other hand, the findings revealed that there are institutions where isiZulu is taught using materials that are written in English language, but the content is taught in isiZulu. Octaberlina and Anggarini (2020) support this idea in that teaching using the English language involves giving instructions, directing, imparting knowledge, and assisting students with actions related to being aware of what to do.

Findings suggest that isiZulu can be learnt using the English language to engage non-isiZulu student speakers, while isiZulu was used to explain, clarify and expand key concepts to assist in teaching proper grammatical structure to learners (Wildsmith-Cromarty, 2018). This implies that learning grammar can assist learners create meaningful sentences while speaking and writing. The participant's views are supported by Wang (2020) in saying that, an adequate understanding of grammar promotes learners' writing comprehensible.

### **6.3.2 Theme 2: Learning to teach isiZulu-FAL**

Learning to teach is a multifaceted process that involves gaining, integrating, and applying various forms of knowledge and skills (Kemmis, 2011; Fitzmaurice, 2010; DoE,

2005; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). During their training, student teachers encounter different types of knowledge, including disciplinary (content) knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, which are delivered through practical, foundational, and situational learning experiences (DoE, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Five subthemes emerged and are briefly discussed in this section. These sub-themes are: Learning about the content within the CAPS curriculum, pedagogical content knowledge, Learning about content knowledge, Learning about planning to teach, Learning about integrating teaching resources within a lesson, including ICT and Learning about teaching within an inclusive classroom.

#### *6.3.2.1 Sub-Theme 1: Learning about the content within the CAPS curriculum*

As part of learning to teach isiZulu FAL, student teachers are exposed to the isiZulu FAL CAPS curriculum in order to learn more about the content of teaching isiZulu. This sub-theme presents findings on how students learnt to teach isiZulu content. Findings reveal that students learnt isiZulu content when they were doing their studies (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year). However, they also learnt more content from the IsiZulu FAL CAPS document. The document gives prescripts on what content to teach and how it should be taught including teaching timeframes. The content includes language structures such as grammar, skills in language, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as methods for language development and effective usage. This means students were taught both the content and how to teach and develop it amongst learners to use it appropriately in different contexts, time, and space. When students asked how they learnt about the content within CAPS curriculum, they expressed the following:

#### ***Buki:***

*“The CAPS curriculum would direct us as to what skills should be taught according to weeks and terms. In “language use” the content was more of idioms, proverbs, figure of speech and the grammar as the part of the language i.e. amabizo, iziqalo, izinciphiso, izikhuliso. (nouns, derivatives, diminutives, augmentatives). As well as four language skills which are: Listening, speaking, reading and writing.”*

#### ***Nompi:***

*“The content that I have learnt is within skills in language, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as methods for language development and effective usage. I learnt grammar to be able to teach learners: prefixes, nouns, sentence construction, adjectives, conjunctions, concords, verbs, proverbs, simple and complex sentences.”*

**Bel:**

*“Within the content of isiZulu FAL, we would draw from CAPS on the four language skills which are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Drawing from four language skills we are expected to teach grammar like teaching spelling in isiZulu, where the focus is in the teaching of consonants and vowels that formulate the word and when we are talking about punctuation we are referring to izimpawu zokuloba [punctuation marks] e.g. capital letters. We also learn about the use of isichazamazwi [dictionary] where learners have to find out the meaning of abstract words used in a text.”*

**Sne:**

*“The content that I have learned was within four language skills which are listening and speaking, reading and writing. Thou in the second year we were focusing into listening and speaking and language development. Then these language skills will work hand in hand with Language Structures and Conventions such as rules include spelling, pronunciation of words in the fourth year.”*

**Bubu:**

*“The content that I have learned from CAPS is a knowledge of vocabulary and grammar which leads to the development of four language skills which are listening, speaking in the second year reading and writing in third year and combining these four language skills with grammatical structure in fourth year have also learned that through Language usage, learners increase their vocabulary, different sentences and utilise this knowledge.”*

**Lindy:**

*“According to my understanding, the content that I have been learning is about knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and language development that provides the foundation for skill. Language Structure is how language is used, pronounced,*

*written and it is also about the usage of vowels and consonants. sounds, words, and so forth of which was learnt in year four.”*

All six participants concur with Maharajh et al. (2016) in saying the CAPS curriculum serves as a foundation for explaining, cutting down on repetition, and adding missing details as needed. Similarly, the DoE (2011) stipulates that the main objective of CAPS is to build clear understanding on what must be taught and learnt on a term-by-term basis.

The participants' responses revealed that the four language skills were important in learning to teach isiZulu FAL. These language skills are to be taught following a teaching plan which is guided by weeks and terms. For example, Buki in her response stated that *the CAPS Curriculum guides the sequential allocation of time, outlining specific skills and knowledge to be taught within defined weeks and terms*. This aligns with Maharajh, Nkosi, and Mkhize's (2016) view that the CAPS curriculum serves as a foundation for identifying gaps, minimising redundancy, and making clarifications where needed. The findings align with the Department of Education (2011), which stated that CAPS was designed to clarify what should be taught and learnt each term. Additionally, the findings from the participants' perspectives highlight the importance of equipping teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge before the new curriculum is implemented (Nkosi, 2014).

#### *6.3.2.2 Sub-Theme 2: Learning about pedagogical content knowledge (PCK)*

The notion of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is not new in the field of education as these were established decades ago – see Magnusson, Krajcik and Borko (1999) and Shulman (1986) who refer to this form of knowledge expected of teachers to teach their subject content. Shulman (1986) defined PCK as the integration of teachers' knowledge of subject matter with their understanding of pedagogy. The participants presented different views about learning pedagogical content knowledge. Some participants indicated that they found choosing specific pedagogies difficult because it was significant to choose appropriate teaching methods as these depend upon a number of factors including where the teaching is taking place or who the learners are. Other participants used learners' needs and development stages to determine effective pedagogies.

**Phil:**

*“Knowing what to teaching is quite easy because you can study it in a few hours and you’re ready to go and present in class. But determining how to teach it is the most difficult part since you have to make sure that your learners perfectly comprehend what you are teaching. At times I ponder for days about what methods to use and how best my learners can learn that particular topic during my teaching. But when I finally choose a method my learners end up enjoying the lesson and grasping, if not everything, the essentials about the topic”.*

**Sneh:**

*“Sifunda indlela yokufundisa okumele abafundi bafundiswe ngayo kwazise esikwaziyo kumele kudluliselwe kumfundi. Ngivame ukuzibeka endaweni yomfundi, ngicabangela ulwazi lwakhe lwangaphambili, iminyaka kanye nolwazi lwakhe lwangaphambilini lapho ngicabanga ngalokho engizokufundisa ngosuku olulandelayo. Uma ngenza lokhu, ngiba nobudlelwano phakathi kokuqokethwe, umfundi kanye nami futhi ngiyakwazi ukuhlonza lezo zindawo ezingadida noma zicike abafundi engizobafundisa. Lokhu kungiholela ekukhetheni amasu ahlukehukene angase agcwalise isifundo futhi asenze sithokozise”.*

*[We learn methods of teaching the learners the way it should be taught since what we know must be passed on to the learners. I often put myself in the student's shoes, taking into account their previous experience, age and experience when thinking about what I will teach the next day. When I do this, I have a relationship between the content, the learner and myself and I can identify those areas that may confuse or bore the learners I will teach. This leads me in learning to choose various isiZulu techniques that may complement the lesson and make it interesting.]*

**Zee:**

*“During my second year at Varsity I was so confident to go out to teaching Experience to teach isiZulu, because the content I needed to teach isiZulu. Oh.. maam, I thought it was enough but we had to do microteaching to gain confidence, to be more fluent in isiZulu and to practically understand language structure and its use. The content I was teaching was related to CAPS curriculum as my lesson was about amabizo, ukuhluzza izinkondlo while standing in front of class and like amabizo, ukuhluzza izinkondlo. But my shock was I couldn’t stand in front of my*

*peers because I couldn't deliver the content as I ended up confusing isiZulu concepts that I have planned. I decided to give them worksheets to do work”.*

**Niko:**

*“We have learnt how to teach pronunciation when teaching to read comprehension text. Most of the learners who learn isiZulu FAL especially in ex-model C schools don't understand isiZulu. So as a teacher I have to know and understand the content of isiZulu as they [learners] will either answer with sifanakalo or say shala instead of hlala.”*

The data suggests that it is not enough to just have the content knowledge to teach, as per Phil's comment. However, student teachers need to think deeply about the purpose and rationale behind the teaching methods they use. Phil's statement concurs with Ma and Rada (2005) who explain that teaching is about reflecting on why the teachers teach and how they can best help learners to learn. In other words, without concrete knowledge of pedagogical content knowledge, no meaningful learning can take place. Lessons should be designed with a clear understanding of the teaching methods that will most effectively and successfully impart knowledge to learners (Gess-Newsome et al., 2019). PCK goes beyond merely having knowledge of a subject (content knowledge) or knowing how to teach (pedagogical knowledge). It involves the integration of both content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, creating a unique type of knowledge that is tailored to the teaching and learning of a particular subject, to a particular group of learners and within a particular teaching and learning context.

Determining how to teach a particular topic effectively, according to Phil, is one of the most difficult aspects of being an educator. It involves careful planning, consideration of the learners' needs, and adapting teaching methods to ensure maximum comprehension and engagement. An overview of the findings reflecting student teachers' understandings towards the learning about PCK clearly showed that choosing the technique on how to teach a topic is a complex process that requires thoughtful consideration, adaptability, and a genuine concern for the learners' understanding and enjoyment. Therefore, the Initial Teacher Education Programme should improve and expand teachers' knowledge of teaching by preparing student teachers to incorporating learner-centered strategies,

active learning, and real-life applications, fostering a positive learning environment, and enriching the learning experience for student teachers (Shulman, 1986).

The responses from student teachers reinforce the idea that teaching is not just about presenting information to learners but is about finding ways to engage them with the material and make it meaningful to them. It is not enough to just have the content knowledge but there is a need to understand ways to make that information interesting and accessible to learners they will be teaching. Perhaps the notion of PCK is inappropriate as it does not only focus on students' knowledge, but it involves a careful and ongoing analysis of the teaching context so that the PCK matches the teaching context for effective learning. Rather, PCK should be conceptualised as following an analytical appraisal of the teaching context and as such would be considered more of a skill rather than a knowledge component of becoming a teacher. While knowledge about the range of pedagogical styles is needed (Liu et al., 2017), the integration of pedagogical styles with the content of what is to be taught could be conceptualised as a skill that Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2007) acknowledge as effective teaching skills.

Zee describes the challenges that one could encounter believing they understand the linguistic matter but only realising when it comes time to put it into practice that the content is not enough. In this study, PCK refers to the isiZulu FAL student teachers' understanding of the subject matter and their capacity to explain the content to learners during teaching of isiZulu (Al-Jaro et al., 2017). When there is lack of content knowledge to teach the isiZulu lesson it leads to confusion about language concepts, and as a result, student teachers need to rely on worksheets instead of an interactive teaching style.

#### *6.3.2.3 Sub-Theme 3: Learning about planning to teach*

Sahin-Taskin (2017) describes lesson planning as a crucial initial step before the learning process begins. It assists teachers in structuring their instructional approach, ensuring they steer any potential obstacles during the teaching process. Similarly, Neisari and Heidari (2014) and Alanazi (2019) concur with Sahin-Taskin in saying, that a lesson plan defines the learning process in detail, which consists of the material to be taught, method, time, place as well as students' evaluation. They argue that with good planning, teachers become more confident while teaching.

The findings suggests that student teachers were aware of the importance of designing lesson plans, lessons that aligned with isiZulu FAL CAPS. Furthermore, to learn how to do lesson plans, they were guided by the CAPS curriculum framework for their specific subject (isiZulu FAL). This framework gave them a structure to complete basic information that one would require of a lesson plan. Hence, their first exposure to doing a lesson plan was through the CAPS curriculum for isiZulu FAL. In their responses, most students indicated that they must understand the CAPS requirement of specific focus in order to create an informative lesson plan. The importance of consulting the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) was to identify the main focus of the lesson and its related content (e.g. listening and speaking, reading and writing). Findings also reveal the importance of understanding the CAPS-specific focus for teachers to be able to plan a lesson accordingly. Also, when planning a lesson, various types of activities should be considered to develop the skills and knowledge required to demonstrate effective learning in the subject. Below are the student's responses regarding learning how to use learning objectives when planning the lesson:

**Sneh:**

*“I have learnt to begin with filling in the general lesson information, such as the name of the program, grade, and time allocation. Then, I read the CAPS curriculum to see the main CAPS Specific focus which contains Content. For example: (Ukulalela nokukhuluma) listening and speaking and other CAPS elements. I also learnt to write teaching phases in steps.”*

**Bel:**

*“We were taught how to develop a detailed LP for isiZulu FAL, then, because we will be teaching FAL we were given a choice of language to write the LP, either in isiZulu or English as long as the LP aligns with CAPS requirements for the specific grades.”*

**Phil:**

*“Planning to teach was learnt by developing a detailed lesson plan for isiZulu FAL. The most important thing was to align the specific focus of my lesson to the CAPS requirement for the specific grade. how to use teaching and learning resources which maps to LO's.”*

**Buki:**

*“I have learnt to plan my lesson by developing LP for a specific grade and write up all elements with precise reference to CAPS including lesson objectives.”*

**Lindy:**

*“Prescribed LP was used to teach us how to plan a lesson. I learnt how to write lesson objectives using measurable verbs such as “Chaza”[explain], then we were assessed through POE (Portfolio Of Evidence) and during Teaching Experience (TE) where our mentors and TE supervisors assess content delivering looking at our LP.”*

**Zuki:**

*“We learnt ukubana yintoni okmele siyfundise, kanjani [what must we teach and how] by creating lesson objectives first that will align with CAPS focus as well as learner’s activities and their assessment at the end of the lesson.”*

Drawing from the above interview extracts, it is clear that learning how to plan a lesson emerges from either following an established framework (like the CAPS curriculum lesson plan) or be introduced to lesson planning and the significance of the various components of such a plan through lectures. Key to lesson planning is the lesson objectives. A learning objective describes what the learner will know or be able to do after the learning experience rather than what the learner will be exposed to during the instruction (i.e. topics) (Nodirovna & Temirovna, 2022). Lesson planning connects the requirements of the curriculum and textbooks with what is presented in the classroom (Li, Chen & Khum, 2009). Thus, preparing a lesson plan helps student teachers organise their activities, construct their goals, and get feedback from their supervisors.

The participants pointed out the importance of consulting relevant books and prescribed teaching and learning materials in order to plan the lesson that will be in line with CAPS curriculum. Bin-Hady and Abdulsafi,(2018) concurs with the participants in saying that reading relevant material or considering the learning material should be utilised by teachers in preparing a constructive lesson plan.

**Nompi:**

*“I always prepare the materials before I teach. I usually read the textbook or any related book. Sometimes, I search the internet to find a new source.”*

**Buki:**

*“Since there is a prescribed resource, I do not have to search the materials anymore. I only read the material from the prescribed resource and figure out how to teach it with suitable method. But, sometimes I use the internet to find any related materials.”*

**Queen:**

*“Before I teach the lesson to the students, I read my lesson plan first, find some references, make some tasks and activities in order to cover all CAPS aspects during my teaching.”*

In response to the question: What did you learn about planning to teach? Student teachers responded by providing the following answers:

**Buki:**

*“We learnt about planning to teach through lesson plan where we write all components of the lesson. We learnt about how to introduce the lesson that is: pre-teaching (Introductory phase), While teaching (actual teaching-Teaching and learning phase) and Post-teaching (closure phase where activities and assessment takes place).”*

Another student teacher concurs with Bel concurred and said:

*“I have learnt to plan teaching by creating LP using prescribed lesson plan template that we also use during our Teaching Experience (TE). And then we would be assessed on how much we know about the execution of the lesson as focusing on Introductory phase, Teaching and learning phase, Post-teaching and assessment with activities.”*

**Buli:**

*“We have learnt how to create lesson plan for teaching using varsity prescribed LP. Then do class activities following LP. We then are assessed if we mastered all lesson plan components as well as delivering the content through written LP, but*

*in schools it is difficult to follow what you have written because learners response sometimes don't go according what you planned."*

Revising lesson plans before lesson execution should be done at all times Bin-HadyA., and Abdulsafi,(2018) confirms that teachers should consider learners' interests and difficulties when planning a lesson. For the lesson to be effective, it should include both teacher-learner- activities from the beginning of the learning process to the end. These learning activities encompass learning objectives, models, approaches, and methods, and are typically divided into initial, core, and concluding phases (Anggrella, Izzati & Sudrajat, 2023).

A well-structured lesson plan acts as a guide for teachers, assisting them in determining learning goals, creating engaging activities, and establishing effective methods for evaluating student comprehension (Anggrella, Izzati & Sudrajat, 2023). By incorporating these essential elements, teachers can foster a dynamic and productive learning atmosphere for their learners. These three key components are in line with Lindy's views when she states that *it was very important to determine the learner's needs so that she will align with lesson objectives and what she wants the learners to finish at the end of the lesson.* This is what she said on her account:

***Lindy:***

*"In lesson planning ma'am. I learnt to determine what you want your learners to learn and be able to do at the end of the lesson. To help me specify my objectives for learners learning, we had to answer the following questions: What is the topic of the lesson? What do I want students to learn? What do I want them to understand and be able to do at the end of class? What do I want them to take away from this particular lesson?"*

Based on the interview, it was found that during the teaching experience period, not all learning activities in the lesson plan were implemented. Most student teachers revealed that learners' difficulties in understanding the content became one of the factors that some activities planned for the lesson plan were not taught as per the curriculum time frame.

**Bubu:**

*“Not all the activities planned in the lesson plan can be implemented in the real process. It is because sometimes the conditions in teaching and learning process, especially when it deals with grammar. Some learners are good achiever, but some of them are low achiever. This situation makes the teaching and learning process becomes slower.”*

Niko added that time is the most challenging factor for isiZulu language learning. He also said that:

*“I thought I must have a lesson plan but during TE the time is not enough to teach the whole lesson. There are so many sub- topics that should be taught, but the time passes by.”*

Drawing from the above, students realise that a plan may not be realised within a real teaching environment as there are several things that can disrupt a planned lesson. Disruptions include the diversity of learners that teachers need to include in their teaching practices, unintended learning that needs to be pursued when learner interactions demand so and un-realistic expectations of the teacher in terms of what needs to be taught within the time frame set aside for the lesson. Hence, adjusting to contingencies of the classroom require teacher agency and a constant revision of lesson planning (Russell, & Murphy-Judy, 2020).

*6.3.2.4 Sub-Theme 4: Learning about integrating teaching resources within a lesson, including Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education refers to the use of technology to assist, improve, and optimise the delivery of educational content (Dixit, 2019). In recent years, there has been growing interest in effectively integrating technology into language classrooms (Medina & Hurtado, 2017). Most teachers agreed that learning to teach isiZulu by integrating resources with ICT can be used to enhance the teaching and learning of isiZulu FAL. Student teachers reflected on this integration based on the experiences they gained during TP. Bubu mentioned *ICT improves learning and teaching by providing learners with greater access to information*. This aligns with Chaudhari's (2017) argument that ICT grants access to a vast pool of global knowledge,

allowing learners to tap into a broader range of resources. This reveals that incorporating ICT in education requires not only just technological knowledge but also pedagogical expertise (Wong, 2015). Integrating ICT, as a teaching tool involves more than simply providing the technology. It requires consideration of pedagogical methods, content, and context (Juggernath, 2020). Studies demonstrate that ICT can enhance teaching and learning when applied effectively (Fadel & Lemke, 2009; Roschelle, Pea, & Hoadley, 2001; Schacter, 1999).

Drawing from the extracts of the interviews with students, most mentioned that integrating resources with ICT effectively, was useful when learning to teach isiZulu FAL.

***Niko:***

*“Mina maam I think successful teaching comes from the learner’s reactions (to my teaching experience), whether they can learn by integrating ICT well or not, it does not depend on what methods I use. One of the resources we learnt was using Kahoots when assessing isiZulu learners but I couldn’t use it during my TP because the school had no internet.”*

***Phil:***

*“We have learnt to teach isiZulu by integrating teaching resource with ICT such as white board, PowerPoint and so forth. Although it was sometimes difficult during my TP but it was useful and important as the learners were excited and more eager to learn isiZulu”.*

***Bubu:***

*“During my TP, I would let them watch isiZulu video clips which draw their attention and focuses more to the lesson”.*

On the other hand, two responses show that the usefulness of integrating technology might not work and relatively teaching and learning will be switched to the traditional approach.

***Buki:***

*“If I try the teaching methods with technology and find it not satisfactory, then I will go back to the traditional approach (e.g. using chalk and board). If the students respond well to my teaching, then I will continue using the approach (with technology).”*

**Bel:**

*“We have learnt to teach isiZulu by integrating teaching resources with technology, but if the traditional approach is good enough, I will stick to the traditional approach. If traditional approach does not solve my problems, then I will look for solutions using ICT.”*

Lindy, on the other hand said that although she is willing to use ICT, she does not agree to teach all isiZulu topics using technology:

*“I don’t think all topics in isiZulu can and should be taught using technology. Rather than insisting the use of technology, I would prefer considering first the right pedagogy and then deciding whether to introduce technology or not to it”.*

Sneh revealed that when teaching the learners, writing on the board is faster than typing on the computer:

*“I don’t think we should use technology in every aspect. For example, sometimes writing on the blackboard is faster than typing on the computer, but it will be more convenient for demonstration if we prepare it on the presentation slides before the lesson. (So) it all depends on the specific needs of the subject.”*

Xoli agreed to what Lindy advocates:

*“I will record an isiZulu story from Nalibali stories (from uKhozi FM) and play it when I am teaching listen and speaking skills. But I will use the board to emphasise the difficult words.”*

Teaching IsiZulu FAL, in particular, benefits from the use of ICT through visualisation and active knowledge construction involving difficult vocabulary and higher-order

thinking (Wenglinsky, 1998). The respondents of this study confirm this. ICT achieves more positive effects than traditional learning methods (Wang & Lieberoth, 2016) which is also confirmed by the participants of this study. It becomes a powerful teaching and learning approach when teaching the language (Bicen & Kocakoyun, 2018) as expressed by the participants of this study.

Niko's statement concurs with researchers (Bicen & Kocakoyun, 2018; Ismail & Mohammad, 2017; Johns, 2015; Licorish et al., 2018) in saying that Kahoot is a simple assessment tool that teachers can use to create game-based assessments such as quizzes and surveys and track learners' ongoing formative learning process.

ICT enhances learning and teaching as learners can get access to more information via ICT. This is in line with Chaudhari's (2017) views that ICT gives access to knowledge as learners can draw on a global pool of knowledge. Lindy's response was similar to Bubu who maintained that the use of videos can help learners understand concepts they did not understand in the classroom. Student teachers gained knowledge on how to change traditional ways of teaching isiZulu lessons by using a digital projector during lesson presentations. Thus, teachers consider ICT to improve the presentation of material, and to make lessons more fun (Cox, 2022). These learning experiences may further promote their use of technologies and promote learning in a technology-enriched environment in the future (Wong, 2015). Student teachers' experiences in learning about integrating teaching resources with ICT when teaching isiZulu FAL shows that the use of ICT in education adds value to teaching and learning by enhancing the effectiveness of learning. Integrating teaching resources with ICT in isiZulu lessons may also be a significant motivational factor in learners' learning, and can support them to engage in collaborative learning. The key learning from the data is that, in addition to noting the value of integrating ICT into the teaching and learning processes, the decision when to use this is crucial for effective learning. Hence, learning about integrating ICT into the teaching and learning process is important, but when to integrate ICT and when not to do so is dependent upon the teacher as she/he appraises the usefulness or not of such use of ICT within a lesson.

#### 6.3.2.5 Sub-Theme 5: Learning about teaching within an inclusive classroom

Abbott (2007) introduces the term “e-inclusion”, which refers to “the use of digital technologies to enable inclusive learning practices for learners with learning difficulties” (p. 7). The range of challenges confronting the school system while including children with diverse abilities and from diverse backgrounds must be met by integrating teaching within an inclusive classroom (Stubbs, 2009). During the interview sessions, the participants raised the critical issue of teaching within an inclusive classroom.

**Xoli:**

*"Integrating teaching within inclusive classroom is where the teacher provides visual aids and hands-on activities. I have learned to use a variety of teaching methods that cater for different learning styles. This helped me to actively participate in the classroom with learners who need special attention".*

**Phil:**

*"It took me some time to understand how to deal with individual strengths and challenges within the inclusive classroom. During our learning to teach isiZulu we were provided with additional support when necessary and offered different ways to demonstrate our understanding of teaching isiZulu with the inclusive class. This approach helps me feel empowered and motivated to teach isiZulu."*

**Queen:**

*"... I was teaching the isiZulu class. I had to tell the class to keep quiet in both Zulu and English as most of the learners did not understand isiZulu. Sometimes they will feel left out because most of the learners speak English. Mostly if the things they say, they don't understand learners who speak isiZulu language, it would make life easy to speak in English even during isiZulu language period."*

**Niko:**

*"It was so challenging to teach within inclusive classroom during TP. Learners can't read or write isiZulu; however, they were excellent at making a noise. When I complain, my mentor teacher, she would always say that at least they are gaining knowledge and skills which they can present orally."*

**Zee:**

*"In my class I have learners who did not like to communicate. They do not want to participate in class activities and they have low self-esteem. Although some*

*learners can write, they were too shy to conduct oral activities. As a result, I just ignored them and work with normal learners because I was not taught to deal with such situation.”*

Xoli's response is in line with Patesan et al. (2018) view that visual aids as an additional tool in the teaching-learning process are important as learners are stimulated, motivated and focused on the activities in class, thus enhancing learning. The data suggests that using visual aids is helpful in inclusive classrooms. Visual aids are items of a visual manner, such as graphs, photographs, video clips etc. used in addition to spoken language (Kurniawan, 2016). The data reveals that learning to teach within an inclusive classroom is largely experiential. When faced with the reality of the classroom, students become aware of the issues that they need to respond to within an inclusive classroom. While the students are exposed theoretically to learner inclusion, being exposed to a diverse group of learners is a challenge that requires substantial support from mentors and flexible learning approaches to express a sense of empowerment and motivation to teach isiZulu in an inclusive manner.

This notion is supported by Sneh, who stated the following:

*“In our school where I was doing TP there were slow learners during assessments. We encourage them to translate isiZulu into English before they attempt to answer the questions. Sometimes even the teacher has to translate everything from an examination paper into English, because they do not even understand the questions.”*

In summary, this statement highlights the complexity of teaching isiZulu in a classroom where some of the learners are not proficient in the language. The teacher faces the challenge of ensuring that all learners, regardless of their language background, can participate and understand the instruction. To address this, the teacher resorts to code-switching, using both isiZulu and English, and recognises that using English during the isiZulu language period might be a practical way to ensure effective communication and inclusivity in the classroom. This situation underscores the importance of flexibility and adaptability in teaching to meet the diverse needs of students.

### **6.3.3 Theme 3: Learning about managing an isiZulu FAL classroom**

Classroom management encompasses the skillful planning of lessons, the ability to provide a structured and safe environment where learners can learn curriculum coverage and the ability to manage a lesson (Rosenblum-Lowden, 2000). Hence, within this theme, three sub-themes emerged from the collected data. These sub-themes include learning about who the learners are and classroom management during teaching and managing learner participation in lessons.

#### *6.3.3.1 Sub-Theme 1: Learning about who the learners are*

For an inclusive class, the knowledge of learners is of great importance in teaching and learning. These issues include knowledge of their “home background, individualised assistance, interests, capabilities, how they respond to particular situations, beliefs and values and anything that surrounds the child as a learner” (Brant, 2006, p. 10). This was evident in Nik’s recount:

*“Learners were diverse in terms of race. There were isiZulu learners who spoke isiZulu as their home language. There were other learners who understand isiZulu but their home language was not isiZulu, such as Xhosa and some Coloured learners. There were learners who couldn’t speak isiZulu, their home language was English such as Indians and Coloureds. Knowing the learner’s background helped a lot because I realised that they all come with their own backgrounds and just makes you understand that if you are asking for homework, don’t expect it tomorrow or maybe don’t even give homework because that’s what we were taught to do, to just give class work and give extra activities to those who want to do it but if someone is not doing their homework, it helps you understand the learners, so that helped me a lot”.*

Learner’s diverse demographics and understanding of a learner’s background need to be taken care of when managing the classroom during the teaching and learning of isiZulu FAL (Masino & Niño-Zarazúa, 2016). Knowing who your learners are, contributes to learning how to teach because pedagogic decisions made by the teacher has implications for what the learner knows in terms of learning. Learners not able to do their homework will impact on what the teacher does in subsequent lessons. This means that beyond

planning for a lesson, knowing who your learners are, has the potential to disrupt a planned lesson. Hence, teachers need to work with issues that may disrupt planned lessons. Such points related to the importance of understanding a learner's background, particularly in the context of teaching isiZulu FAL considering the historical and social dynamics of South Africa, has a critical component in determining a learner's success in learning a FAL, particularly isiZulu. Understanding learner diversity enables educators to use the appropriate pedagogy and resources to ensure that learners find it easy to understand the curriculum. Nik's response concurs with Ladson-Billings (2023) in saying that teachers who create culturally relevant learning contexts are those who see students' culture as an asset, not a disadvantage to their success. Teachers therefore can actually use learner's culture in their curriculum planning and implementation to allow learners to develop the isiZulu FAL skills. This awareness can lead to more effective teaching isiZulu FAL with tremendous respect for the diverse learner population, particularly in a context marked by historical inequalities and linguistic diversity like South Africa. Shulman (1986), Turner-Bisset (1999) and Grossman (1990) are of the view that teaching and learning take place in a social context and therefore cannot be ignored. Lin's recount resonates with other participants and maintains:

*“Some of the learners are non-South Africans and are struggling in learning isiZulu FAL.”*

**Bel:**

*“Some learners could not explain isiZulu concepts because they could not speak Zulu. If those terms were taught in English it would be easier for them to understand. Some of the learners came from townships, others from semi-suburbs and others came from nearby shacks. Others come coming from rural areas due to their parent employments.”*

**Zee:**

*“I remember walking around the class and there was this girl who was so young but reading isiZulu so fluently. I felt... I actually envied her ma'am. It made me think, you know.... I think maybe even the curriculum needs to have rules and regulations on how to learn isiZulu. I then realised that even though it was not only isiZulu speakers who were learning FAL but were learners who were very fluent in reading while I didn't know how to read isiZulu properly.”*

Based on these responses, the students displayed an understanding on how learners' biographies and personal circumstances influence the classroom dynamics and as such teachers will learn how to navigate these dynamics. There is also a better understanding of the knowledge of learners and to respond to challenges in class in a professional manner, as many children in South Africa come from different racial home backgrounds. Due to the socio-economic inequalities in South Africa, teachers as professionals must bear in mind that they need to be careful when addressing other problems in the classroom.

#### *6.3.3.2 Sub-Theme 2: Classroom management during the teaching of isiZulu FAL*

Classroom management is intended to provide learners with more opportunities to learn the things that a teacher does to “organize students, space, time, and materials so that students’ learning can take place” (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016, p. 163). The participant’s views indicate that classroom management can be learnt by reflecting on one's learning experience on how they were expected to behave in the classroom.

***Sne:***

*“We have learnt to manage the classroom by reflecting during our school days, how we behave as learners, the teacher’s responsibility and how learners disrupt the classroom which would affect classroom management.”*

***Bubu:***

*“It was case studies with different types of learners within classroom...I remember one of case study had disruptive learners and we were supposed to come up with effective ways of managing such classroom ma’am. We also learnt through classroom observation during TP.”*

***Xoli:***

*“I learnt classroom management by learning types of learners that need to be managed and manage lesson guided by time frame.”*

Learning how to manage a class is done in several ways. The use of case studies provides some theoretical responses to how one can manage a class. Real life experience in the classroom, either through observations or while teaching provides learning moments for teachers to manage a class. For example, Xoli used *learning about the types of learners*

in her class as a way to understand how to manage these learners. Her real-life experiences of being in a class provided the opportunity to find ways of dealing with classroom management i.e. *knowing the types of learners that need to be managed*. An interesting observation from the data is that one participant recalled the days when she was a learner to understand how to manage learners within her classroom. Knowing how learners disrupted classes during her school days provided her with deeper insights into how to manage her learners in class.

Drawing from the data it seems that teachers are not trained on how to manage a class. Rather they draw their learnings from readings, observations, real classroom experiences and memories of them as learners. The findings are aligned to Allen's (2010) view that student teachers can learn classroom management in three areas: classrooms that they inhabited for thirteen or more years as learners, schools where they do field observations and practice teaching, and training for their profession. The preparedness of teachers in classroom management skills is significant, particularly in the era of an outcry by teachers on learner ill-discipline and their failing to control learners. In addition, conducive learning plays a critical role in effective teaching compared to chaotic or uncontrollable classrooms. Perhaps this suggests a gap in pre-service training programmes in modules or content addressing classroom management is insufficient. Therefore, the study suggests that student teachers need to be furnished with skills that will help them support positive and cooperative different behaviour in the isiZulu FAL classroom.

#### *6.3.3.3 Sub-Theme 3: Managing learner participation in lessons*

Learner participation became another important factor in the teaching of IsiZulu and, therefore needed to be managed. The management was critical because of learner dynamics such as large classroom numbers, active and shy learners. Hence, findings indicated different strategies teachers used to ensure maximum participation in IsiZulu classrooms. Using pairs, question and answer, group and class discussion were some of the strategies teachers found effective because learners worked together, thus increased exposure in delivering opinions, dialogue and debate to generate ideas and perspectives. Learning about learners' participation assists and prepares student teachers to anticipate some of the issues involved in a lesson during learning and teaching the language. Students expressed these sentiments on managing learner participation.

**Zee:**

*“It was nice to work with learners when working in pairs helping them to make great ideas by working in pairs.”*

**Nompi:**

*“Kwakungelula ukumeneja I class ilapho ngangenza khona i-TP yami ngoba ikilasi lalilikhulu kakhulu. Lapho behlukaniswa abafundi ngamaqembu noma ngababili kuzoba nomsindo ekilasini futhi isifundo kwakufanele siphindwe ngosuku olulandelayo.” [It was impossible to manage the class where I was doing my TP because the class was too big. When dividing learners into groups or in pairs there would be noise in class and the lesson was to be repeated on a next day.]*

**Buki:**

*“Ma’am...there were some fewer active students in delivering opinions, asking or responding toward the answer of other groups.”*

Buki’s insights indicate that group work can be a valuable approach for teaching students how to articulate their ideas during class discussions, as supported by Pike and Kuh (2005). This method positions the teacher as a facilitator and encourages learners to actively engage in building their knowledge of isiZulu FAL. Consequently, group work serves as an effective strategy that enhances comprehension, allowing learners to benefit from both their teacher's and their peers' contributions. Strydom and Mentz (2010) agree that quality education should involve students in the process of knowledge construction, rather than relying solely on a dominant teacher who imparts knowledge. When implementing group activities, teachers need to be adept at assigning students to various groups.

**Phil:**

*“During my observation, I noticed that the learners’ participation during class discussion was less varied. Learners who answered the question from other groups were only the spokesman and the rest of the group would keep quiet.”*

This response suggested an exciting dynamic that some learners were more active than others; however, participants did not mention how they managed this dynamic. Over-

participating of a few individuals leads to over-reliance on answers from one class member. In contrast, the rest of the class takes a back seat. Monobe et al. (2017) argues that individual learning styles, past experiences, and comfort level with participation and collaboration in a classroom setting may influence this dynamic. Some students may embrace the idea of active engagement and collaboration, while others may have reservations or prefer different learning approaches. Therefore, this may mean that participants' classroom management skills were not yet 'ripe' because pre-service teachers are still trying to master the art of the classroom. In addition, participants shared the following experiences:

**Sneh:**

*"I follow the system that my isiZulu lecturer taught. I manage learner participation by first giving them textbooks and worksheets so they can guess what the lesson is all about. I will then give them like five to ten minutes to have a look at the text, and asked them about their prior knowledge about that particular aspect."*

**Zee:**

*"I first introduce the content to the learners. During the introduction of the content I cover important aspects of the particular content I am teaching, like rules and important information, such as writing the salutation, etc. When I'm satisfied that the learners have a better understanding, I then give them an activity to write. e.g. an introduction of an informal letter. The participation in that activity will determine whether learners need extra lessons or whether they have gained enough knowledge. Sometimes, after introducing the lesson, I ask questions. Therefore, learners will actively participate until the end of the lesson."*

**Queen:**

*"The isiZulu policy document has certain procedures that guide the teachers on how to teach content to the learners. Every topic or content of isiZulu, according to the policy document, requires the teacher to follow four skills to learners, which are talking, reading, writing and language usage. So, when we learn to teach a certain topic to learners, for instance speaking, we would first discuss the*

*pronunciation. This gives me an opportunity to check 'learners' understanding as they would be actively engaged in class participation. They would read and spell new vocabulary that are supposed to be used in speaking. Then I hand a written words to them so they can read and be exposed to an example of the correct pronunciations. Then they read either individually, pairs or groups or in class to manage fruitful participation... ma' ma' ma'am."*

Bel shared the same experience with Zee in saying she first asks questions at the beginning of a lesson:

*"Before I even introduce the topic of the day I would ask my learners what we did the day before. Once they have responded to the questions, I introduce the new subject matter before giving them resources, so that they can grasp the most important aspects. Then I give them books and worksheets to enhance the lesson. This is exactly what we were taught when we deliver our lesson during micro-teaching."*

The above extracts portrayed different perspectives on how student teachers understood the management of learner participation. It seemed they understood what is known as teaching approaches and lesson development/procedures as the management of learner participation. For instance, teaching components include articulating the lesson rules, giving worksheets and textbooks, activities, and checking learners' prior knowledge/experiences before the lesson commences. Furthermore, determining whether learners need extra classes forms part of diagnostic assessment and does not necessarily promote learner participation.

Though teachers assess based on learner participation, they did not mention the nature of learner participation activities leading to decisions on extra classes. This seemed to suggest a gap in the participants' knowledge of how to encourage learners to participate in class. Monobe et al. (2017) argue that effective management of learner participation helps learners obtain confidence and inspiration in learning because they feel excited. Similarly, Scanlan and Stephen (2010) believe that learner participation promotes social interaction and encourages them to want to learn more and retain the material longer. This

also helps them understand the connection between what they are learning in class and how it connects to their daily life.

#### **6.3.4 Theme 4: Learning to assess isiZulu FAL learning amongst learners**

Assessment is the most important aspect in teaching and learning isiZulu FAL to test learners' acquired knowledge about the language. Assessment enables teachers to assess their teaching strategies and pedagogies, to determine whether they are effective or not (Khuzwayo, 2020). Formative and summative assessments are important in assessing learners for attained learning outcomes. The most visible assessments in schools are summative. Summative assessments are carried out at the end of each unit to evaluate what learners have learnt, assess whether they are prepared for the next steps, and ensure how well they met the required set standards (Hill et al., 2020).

Student teachers learn different types of assessments to assess isiZulu FAL for them to acquire language skills set by the CAPS curriculum. When student teachers were asked how they learn to assess learners within isiZulu FAL, three forms of assessment were suggested. These include formative, summative and remedial assessments. For formal assessment, the participants stated that they follow the guidelines in their CAPS documents, which describe the use of both formal (summative) and informal (formative) assessments (Motshekga, 2009). In learning to assess isiZulu FAL, formative and summative assessments play a crucial role in helping both teachers and learners track progress toward achieving learning outcomes. These assessments can be approached in various ways, ensuring that learners meet the desired educational objectives. Observations, summaries, and reviews are used to improve teaching and learning in isiZulu FAL learning. Such assessments are usually not graded; instead, they serve as a tool to gauge learner's progress and to determine whether the teaching has an effect (implementing appropriate methods and activities) not evaluated and evaluate whether or not the instruction is having an impact (by providing suitable exercises and approaches). Summative assessment, also known as assessment of learning, is a final evaluation that summarises the results of formative assessments, where teachers grade learners based on their achievement of learning outcomes. This type of assessment typically occurs at the end of the learning process.

#### *6.3.4.1 Sub-Theme 1: Formative assessment (Assessment for learning) in learning isiZulu FAL*

Formative assessment intends to improve learners' language skills by providing ongoing feedback (Afitska, 2014). Thus, formative assessment supports isiZulu FAL learners in their learning and in their daily progress to meet their goals set throughout the teaching and learning of isiZulu. When participants were asked how they learnt to assess isiZulu FAL learners through formative assessment strategies, they mentioned learning to assess the isiZulu FAL content from the lecturers, through CAPS policy as well as during their teaching experience where they were preparing assessment activities and tests. This is how student teachers responded:

**Queen:**

*“We learnt to assess isiZulu through tutorials where lecturers send us activities on the student portal such as class activities, group work, and projects. We also do class activities in groups and individuals and write assignments, two formal tests one main examination during the first year. Then we would learn through PoEs.”*

**Phil:**

*“We were given Programme Assessment Schedule (PAS) at the beginning of each semester which will indicate the number and types of formative assessments we need to complete per module on how to assess learners. Most of the activities related to assessing learners were posted on the student portal.”*

**Buki:**

*“We were assessed by doing ICE tasks which are made by a variety of tasks. We were supposed to complete those tasks before and during or after going to schools for teaching practice.”*

**Bubu:**

*“We learnt assessment through lesson planning when assessing learners whether the objective set were achieved at the end of the lesson.”*

**Sneh:**

*“We learnt how to assess learners where there is a lesson plan where we are assessed on delivering the lesson including lesson objectives, teaching strategies lesson presentation with relevant activity based on the lesson from lesson plan.”*

During teaching practice Niko expressed,

*“I use formative assessment by letting each learner read for me to see whether they can read isiZulu because the most important thing a learner must know is to read and know the vocabulary. Thereafter I will correct them by giving feedback. If the learner knows these, then he/she will be able to read and answer questions in isiZulu.”*

**Lindy:**

*“Uhm.....ma'am we use formative assessment in spelling activities' and the correction of the pronunciation in order to see if the learner is capable of reading and writing.”*

**Zee:**

*“Through formative assessment I was able to identify the needs of a learner. For example, if the learner has challenges in isiZulu during class work, you are able to communicate with them and see how you can help them.”*

**Sneh:**

*“So many things had to be assessed as it is divided. There is listening, speaking, reading and writing and language use. There is no longer just testing everything at once, but we assessed component by component at the end of the lesson.”*

Niko stated that to develop isiZulu FAL, learners needed to know how to read and know isiZulu vocabulary as those are the most fundamental aspects of isiZulu FAL. This indicated that Niko's use of formative assessment on reading and vocabulary enabled him to see the strengths and weaknesses of every learner and provide feedback. Niko's response concurs with Ghimire's (2023) view that offering constant feedback during the lesson is important. Feedback seems to encourage telling learners what to do rather than allowing learners to play an active role in the feedback process where learners can develop critical thinking and evaluative skills (Covic & Jones, 2008). Additionally, Magwele (2019) also concurs with Niko in saying that assessment should be used to provide feedback to the learners to inform planning for teaching. Therefore, assessment should provide regular feedback to learners to enhance the learning experience and not be seen as separate from learning activities taking place in the classroom. (DBE, 2011, p. 116).

Sneh's comment suggests that the assessment policy has brought innovative ways of assessing learners. Teachers had to assess isiZulu FAL at random on everything covered, but currently, they focused on each section at a time. Sneh' view aligns with Kanjee's (2020) who maintains that the introduction of the current assessment policy emphasises a wide range of assessment information, such as the frequency and kind of assessment that ought to be assessed. The shift from testing everything simultaneously to assessing individual components at the lesson's end demonstrates a more focused and detailed approach to assessment. By employing these varied strategies, student teachers can gain a holistic view of what their learners have grasped, where they might be struggling, and how they can adapt their teaching methods to address the learners' needs (Gholam, 2019).

The success and effectiveness of an assessment depend on its application in the classroom and whether it contributes to learning improvement. According to the student teachers' recounts, implementing formative assessment requires teachers to know how to use it in a way that benefits a diverse group of learners. King (2016) emphasises that formative assessment aims to establish goals, offer meaningful feedback, and identify each learner's strengths and weaknesses, thereby facilitating efficient and effective learning. According to student teachers, it is evident that the CAPS curriculum is seen as the guideline that provides the structure to execute assessments in isiZulu FAL (DBE, 2011). The purpose of the assessment policy is to guide the teacher (subject) on how to conduct an assessment (object) using formative assessment as the tool. Student teachers also comment on the formative assessment experiences during their teaching practice:

***Buki:***

*“I think IsiZulu teachers do not give learners enough time to learn and understand what is being taught because they put more focus on the Annual Teaching Plan while some learners are left behind.”*

***Beli:***

*“Learners who don't speak isiZulu are given a chance to express themselves in isiZulu so that we [teachers] can see whether learners have gained language skill.”*

Bubu in her response explained:

*“We followed the learning objective from the lesson plan set by the CAPS curriculum when assessing isiZulu FAL learners to give constructive feedback.”*

Formative assessments occur whenever teachers engage learners during classroom activities, such as questioning, reviewing assignments, or working through activities (Khumalo & Maphalala, 2018). These learning activities are used as a collection of relevant information and form part of formative assessment (Khoza, 2015).

According to student teachers’ experiences, formative assessment is affected by the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP). However, the ATP is meant to serve as a guide for teachers, particularly the isiZulu content. They were required to teach to meet the deadlines as the ATP acts as a roadmap for what to cover, when to cover it, and when to wrap up (Hoadley, 2023). Bubu’s comment revealed that there is a need to follow daily lesson plans when assessing isiZulu FAL learners as the assessment is not complete without a lesson planning component adopted from ATP. Therefore, assessing a learner’s progress is a teacher’s daily activity during teaching and learning period (Ridhwan, 2017).

#### *6.3.4.2 Sub-Theme 2: Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning)*

A summative assessment provides an overview of the learner’s achievement of learning outcomes and typically involves grading at the end of a learning period. Examples include annual, internal, or external exams. This type of evaluation employs various methods, such as assignments, tests, and projects, to assess students' overall performance (Bhat & Bhat, 2019).

Student teachers did not say much about learning to assess using summative assessment during their learning to teach isiZulu FAL. This shows that summative assessment was learnt as a theory not in practice. When student teachers were asked how they learn about summative assessment to be able to assess isiZulu FAL learners these were the responses:

#### ***Queen:***

*“We develop tests and exams using lower to higher order questions to test learners knowledge”.*

Bubu shared the same comment with Queen:

*“I learnt to set the paper according to their level. I follow the document.... when I am setting the paper, so, we have to understand the correct breakdown in terms of higher-order and lower-order and middle-order of questions.”*

**Sneh:**

*“We use the different order questions like lower-order ... the learners that are weak, with the lower order questions and they able to, you know, get at least some marks there.”*

**Zee:**

*“..so, we learnt to follow a certain format when developing summative assessments. So, we (student teachers) cannot just go and assess as we pleased.”*

From the student teacher's views, it was evident that they learnt about summative assessments in several ways. These include a theoretical understanding of summative assessment – usually done through lecture and learning by practicing to develop and use summative assessments. The number of formal assignments (test and final exam) that must be completed for each term' are set by the Department of Basic Education (DBE, 2011). This means that summative assessment occurs at the end of the learning process and assists learner development, deepens and shapes their learning (Hargreaves et al., 2014). Student teachers were therefore exposed to several summative assessment strategies during their training as teachers such as Bloom's Taxonomy. They became exposed to these strategies during teaching practice. Bloom's Taxonomy (BT) plays an important part in the analysis of the assessment strategies (Laddha et al., 2021). This is in line with Haataja et al. (2023) in saying that it is helpful to set the question paper according to different levels of the questions in the test or exam. Laddha et al. (2021) define BT as two dimensions in which one dimension is a cognitive process, and another is a knowledge dimension. Therefore, the student teachers need to be exposed to cognitive processes with the knowledge dimension of questions when assessing isiZulu FAL learners. These cognitive processes are: Remember, Understand, Apply, Evaluate, Analyse, and Create. Therefore, student teachers were able to find out in which particular cognitive process and knowledge dimension isiZulu FAL learners were lagging. Thus, the findings from student teachers suggest that questions in summative assessment should

be used to ensure that struggling learners are progressing while pushing them to think ‘out of the box’ (Murphy Odo, 2016). Student teachers also indicated that they learnt consistently to set summative assessments for isiZulu language skills according to the CAPS policy document. They did not set or design assessments for the sake of it. Lin revealed that:

*“It [assessment] has to be in line, in keeping with the protocols of isiZulu FAL policy document”.*

**Nik:**

*“... design clear and measurable learning objectives to guide our summative assessments and ensure they align with the CAPS curriculum.”*

The findings from student teachers revealed that the summative assessment tasks were aligned with CAPS. Hoadley (2023) argues that the CAPS curriculum sets out what needs to be covered in detail, and teachers must follow these details to teach and assess the learners. The current CAPS curriculum is a prescriptive curriculum that demands uniformity across the nation even in assessment tasks in every subject (Ramatlapanana & Makonye, 2012).

### **6.3.5 Theme 5: Learning about teaching resources and its integration into teaching**

The ongoing in-depth mentoring is an answer to improving student teachers’ competency and self-assurance within the classroom (Burstein et al., 2009). Student teachers must be mentored thoroughly during their Teaching Practice (TP) to acquire an understanding of curriculum adaptation and be exposed to classroom challenges to address the demands of a world that is changing (Berkvens et al., 2014). This theme consists of one subtheme which is being mentored during TP.

#### *6.3.5.1 Sub-Theme 1: Being mentored during TP*

The student’s recounts indicated a variety of teaching resources that are acquired to incorporate into their isiZulu FAL lessons.

**Niko:**

*“I appreciate my isiZulu mentor's efforts to make us understand how to deliver the content. We learnt to plan isiZulu lessons including different teaching resources which aligned with language skills required when engaging with isiZulu learners.”*

**Bel:**

*“Imentor yami yangi support ngempela ekwenzeni I curriculum ibe lula ize ibe sezingeni labafundi, ngakho ngaliphatha ngempumelelo ikilasi lami. Unginike o lesson plan bakhe abadala, ekade ebasebenzisa zasebenza njenge teaching resource.’[..my mentor supported me in simplifying the curriculum to the learners’ level, so I successfully managed my classroom. She gave me her previous lesson plans, which served as a teaching resource.]”*

From the statements above, it is clear that students received mentorship from teachers who were consistently ready to support them. This shows that mentors play a crucial role in motivating student teachers to always be willing and prepared to teach using relevant teaching resources which align with isiZulu FAL content. According to Kimosop (2015, p. 64) “Teaching does not happen accidentally, and for it to be effective it needs thorough planning and preparation.” She adds on to say that teaching is complicated and involves managing classrooms, planning lessons, setting up resources for teaching and learning, and adequate preparation by teachers. Therefore, using suitable teaching and learning resources when teaching isiZulu promotes opportunities for multilingualism between diverse racial and cultural groups of learners (Ngcobo et al., 2014). Thus, student teacher preparedness, as well as their learning to teach isiZulu FAL integrating teaching resources and the content are valuable in learning to teach isiZulu FAL.

**Queen:**

*“My mentor assisted me by showing me that the isiZulu policy document has certain procedures that guide the teachers on how to introduce content to the learners. Each topic or content of isiZulu, according to the policy document, requires the teacher to implement four language skills to learners, which are listening& speaking, reading, writing and language usage. As a result, I can introduce a certain topic to learners using prior knowledge, then integrate it with relevant worksheets and textbooks.”*

This above account shows that Queen learnt both practical and theoretical knowledge in her teaching practice. Student teachers also learn to merge practical and theoretical knowledge in their teaching of isiZulu FAL. Thus, student teachers gain teaching experience by using learners' social backgrounds and prior knowledge to produce cognitive knowledge that can be successfully transferred to learners (Ljubin-Golub al., 2020).

Lindy indicated that when they first came to schools, they were given important documents for isiZulu FAL which are used by the teachers, such as policy documents, text books, teacher's guide as well as curriculum tracker:

*“The policy gives us guidelines on the content that we have to teach, the tasks that we need to complete, and how much time we need to spend on each section. This helped me a lot because now I know what to do, when and how to do the tasks.”*

**Xoli:**

*“The textbooks either focus on language usage or reading. When my lesson is based on reading, my mentor advised me to use the textbook with short stories or izinganekwane (folktales). However, when the lesson is based on teaching content, like adverts or articles, I use content-based textbooks or electronic versions in the form of DVDs that are also available. Although these DVDs are for the teachers' guides only. This enables me to do proper planning and look for textbooks that will enhance my teaching when teaching isiZulu FAL.”*

The findings from Lindy suggest that the curriculum tracker is important to student teachers who are learning to teach isiZulu because it assists isiZulu teachers in planning and organising their weekly teaching materials. Teachers can use this curriculum tracker to keep track of their progress and determine if they are working in the right direction. The accounts provided indicate that student teachers have learnt to integrate both print and digital resources to improve their teaching of isiZulu as a First Additional Language (FAL). The print resources include textbooks, physical copies of the policy document, and the curriculum tracker, while the digital resources consist of electronic formats like CDs and DVDs. These materials assist in effective isiZulu instruction, as the policy

document helps in lesson structuring and planning to ensure all content is covered, while the textbooks enhance the specific subject matter. Consequently, the teaching practice involved in learning to teach isiZulu FAL helps support students to merge theoretical and practical knowledge, thereby enhancing their professionalism and contributing to high-quality education, as noted by Mbele (2019).

#### **6.4 CONCLUSION**

The chapter has presented, analysed, and discussed the data gathered from semi-structured interviews. The findings were examined through thematic analysis, leading to the identification of five themes that shed light on particular aspects of student teachers' experiences in learning to teach isiZulu as a First Additional Language at a private university in KwaZulu-Natal. The next chapter will provide a summary of the findings and recommendations to conclude the study.

# **CHAPTER SEVEN: KEY FINDINGS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

## **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study explores how student teachers learn to teach isiZulu FAL within the ITE programme. In Chapter Six, a detailed analysis of student teachers' experiences in various aspects of learning and teaching isiZulu FAL was provided. The analysis and presentation of themes were derived from both data and literature. I then interpreted and discussed some of the key findings that emerged from the data analysis. In this chapter, I present a synthesis of the study, focusing on the main findings highlighted in previous chapters. It is discussed along with the literature and theoretical frameworks that informed this research. When explaining the findings, I used the sub-themes and research questions as the basis for my discussion, aligning them with the purpose and rationale of the study. The study aimed to address the following research questions:

- What knowledge and skills are taught to student teachers specialising in isiZulu FAL within the initial teacher education programme?
- How do student teachers specialising in isiZulu FAL learn the required knowledge and skills within the Initial Teacher Education programme?
- Why are student teachers of isiZulu FAL learning to teach in the way they are within the initial teacher education programme?

## **7.2 KEY FINDINGS**

### **7.2.1 Learning the content (Theme1)**

In attempting to answer the research question, 'What knowledge and skills are taught to student teachers specialising in isiZulu FAL within the initial teacher education programme?'

I needed to begin my participants' intentions in choosing to teach isiZulu FAL. To understand how students learn to teach isiZulu FAL, knowing why they chose this teaching specialisation helps to contextualise their learning journey. Drawing from the data, the participants made a strategic decision in choosing isiZulu FAL as a teaching

specialisation. The reasons advanced by the participants include foresight on employment opportunities and the dominance of isiZulu as a language of communication amongst the learners in the majority of schools in KwaZulu-Natal. These are the contextual realities of schooling within the Province of KwaZulu-Natal and as such, this teaching specialisation (isiZulu FAL) would enhance the possibilities of getting a job as a teacher in South Africa. Getting a job as a teacher requires one to apply to the Provincial Department of Education and selection is based on alignment with the needs of a particular school (Samuel, 2009). This means that, as a qualified teacher, one can only apply for a job as a teacher in a school if you have the required teaching specialisation. Furthermore, because of the oversupply of teachers (Inayatullah, 2017), there will be many more applicants for a post at a school. This means that competition for a job is great. Choosing isiZulu (FAL) would be a strategic decision to increase the chances of getting a job because the school would benefit from such a teaching specialisation because it could benefit the school in several ways. Having a specialist in isiZulu FAL could become a resource to the school to provide support to other teachers who would be or are using FAL to facilitate teaching and learning in a school. Having isiZulu FAL as a specialist could also provide generalist teaching in a school and as such, teachers with this specialisation can be deployed to teaching across the school curriculum offerings.

### **7.2.2 Learning to teach isiZulu FAL (Theme 2)**

Findings reveal that students learnt isiZulu content when they were doing their studies (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year). However, they also learnt more content from the IsiZulu FAL CAPS document. The document gives prescripts on what content to teach and how it should be taught including teaching timeframes (Bekker, 2020). The participants presented different views about learning pedagogical content knowledge. Some participants indicated that they found choosing specific pedagogies difficult because it was significant to choose appropriate teaching methods as these depend upon several factors including where the teaching is taking place or who the learners are. Other participants used learners' needs and development stages to determine effective pedagogies.

Findings suggested that student teachers acknowledged the significance of designing lesson plans, and lessons that aligned with isiZulu FAL CAPS. Furthermore, to learn how

to do lesson plans, they were guided by the CAPS curriculum framework for their specific subject. Learning how to plan a lesson emerges from either following an established framework (like the CAPS curriculum lesson plan) or being introduced to lesson planning and the significance of the various components of such a plan through lectures. Key to lesson planning is the lesson objectives.

Most teachers agreed that learning to teach isiZulu by integrating resources with ICT can enhance the teaching and learning of isiZulu FAL. Student teachers reflected on this integration based on the experiences they gained during TP. The calibre of 21st-century learners differs from that of earlier generations, as they tend to have shorter attention spans, excel at multitasking, seek immediate results, and have easy access to communication and information through the use of ICT (Matulich et al., 2008). Consequently, 21st-century teachers must recognise the importance of integrating technology into their teaching methods (Gumbi, 2019). Therefore, technology should be utilised to meet the objectives of the isiZulu FAL lesson.

The data reveals that learning to teach within an inclusive classroom is largely experiential. When faced with the reality of the classroom, student teachers are aware of the concerns that they need to respond to within an inclusive classroom. This means teachers have a crucial role in fostering inclusion and supportive classrooms that meet the different needs and experiences of the learners. This is in line with Shulman's (1986) view in saying learners of different ages and backgrounds contribute to different conceptions, preconceptions, and ideas associated with influencing how learners learn the most commonly taught topics and lessons. Therefore, there is a need to incorporate what the learner requires to learn, and the materials through which the content will be learned (Leballo et al., 2021).

These aspects associated with learning and teaching make learning to teach isiZulu FAL a complex process. The fundamentals assist the student teacher in achieving foundational knowledge of being a teacher and include knowing what to teach (use of the CAPS curriculum as a guide), how to teach (using lesson plans to guide the teaching process), an appraisal of who and where teaching is taking place to nuance the learning and teaching to the contextual needs of who and where teaching is taking place and what

resources would enhance the teaching and learning process. This means there should be dialogical engagement between the fundamental aspects needed to teach and the contextual realities of teaching and that this dialogical engagement is a dynamic process consonant with the changing dynamics associated with what is being taught, who is being taught, where and when teaching and learning is taking place and what resources are available to support teaching and learning.

### **7.2.3 Learning about managing an isiZulu FAL classroom (Theme 3)**

Drawing from the previous chapter, the summary of findings relating to learning to manage an isiZulu FAL classroom includes understanding the backgrounds of learners, being able to make pedagogical decisions about the lesson to be taught, and the ability of learners to do the assigned tasks (e.g. homework tasks) due to their personal home circumstances. Professional capital by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) defines teachers who will need to develop their capital in three areas, professional capital, social capital, and human capital. These areas encompass a comprehensive understanding of the learner's subject matter, teaching methods, and the psychology behind learners and their learning processes (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) believe that a teacher needs to acquire these capitals to provide and make appropriate decisions in line with who their learners are and under what conditions they teach within.

The study highlights the importance of understanding the learners' background who come from different social conditions. This relates to how teachers take into consideration the social elements that influence the learners' lives. The more teachers know and understand learners' social issues, the better their ability to manage learners in class as they will be able to respond to the various issues that the learners present. Additionally, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) stress that the learners are human and that being humane in their teaching practices contributes to the learning process. Being caring, having empathy and understanding individuality contributes to better alignment between their teaching and how the learners feel in the way they are being taught. Hence, human capital is explained as part of professional capital which is an important part of being compassionate teachers in interactions with learners (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012). They argue that being human creates a conducive environment in the classroom. In this instance, the teacher pays attention to the particular needs of learners in the teaching-learning process. Hargreaves

and Fullan (2012) speak about decisional capital in the sense that the teachers begin to develop trust in the decisions that they make, based on how the previous decisions they have made influence what happens. Hence, professional capital is a crucial theoretical concept for understanding how a teacher can effectively manage their role, ensuring that both the teaching environment and the learner's needs and challenges are addressed. The students highlighted these challenges as part of their exposure to practicing teaching when they were teaching learners. They initially found it difficult to be able to manage the classrooms. As they progressed within their teaching practice periods, they were able to identify these challenges which speak directly to what Hargreaves and Fullan conceptualise as professional capital. Therefore, to manage the isiZulu FAL classroom, teachers need to acquire the professional capital so that they will be able to facilitate an efficient and effective teaching process within the isiZulu FAL classroom. This means that managing the isiZulu FAL classroom needs an understanding of learners' backgrounds (content knowledge) and translating this knowledge into effective pedagogical strategies (pedagogical knowledge) for teaching isiZulu FAL (Shulman, 1987).

Additionally, drawing from the findings, and my own experience of teaching and managing multi-racial and multicultural isiZulu classrooms, learning to teach isiZulu entails having superior knowledge beyond pedagogies and the CAPS curriculum. It means knowing the intricacies that support teaching, and that the classroom is the lifeblood of all teaching endeavours and, therefore, requires proactive classroom management. Classroom management means a critical awareness of several factors, such as the racial divide (learners speaking different languages as well as foreign learners within the classroom), depending on the context where isiZulu is taught. Managing diversity is significant in curbing tensions that could spark controversy that may arise because of the nature of the subject (isiZulu) and being offered as a FAL e.g. former Model C schools, where English is the primary language spoken at home. The controversies may be embedded in cultural preference and subdivided into learner-teacher and parent-teacher.

On the one hand, learners whose home language is English may not be eager to learn isiZulu because of previous histories of African languages, which show that isiZulu is an

inferior language. On the other hand, parents are prejudiced against the teachers because of historical racial tension between Whites and Blacks. Therefore, learning to teach isiZulu meant understanding multifaceted factors including that teaching is not a stand-alone entity but that classroom management is a significant determinant for all teaching endeavours.

#### **7.2.4 Learning to assess isiZulu FAL learning amongst learners (Theme 4)**

Learning to assess means understanding that assessment and different assessments are an integral part of teaching. This means that assessment facilitates learning and therefore it becomes significant to use suitable assessment forms in line with Bloom's Taxonomy. For instance, being able to differentiate formal from informal assessment and using appropriate assessment strategies and the importance of feedback. For example, assessing an essay and unprepared speech (requires a rubric) is different from assessing a test which requires a marking memorandum. Understanding the gravity of assessment would mean teachers take time to design fair assessments and marking that is fair.

Drawing from the findings of this theme, learning to assess isiZulu FAL, the use of various formative assessments such as observations in classrooms, students recognised the importance of feedback in enhancing and addressing learners' strengths and weaknesses. While not exclusive, and extensively discussed, student teachers acknowledge the importance of summative assessment. Thus, learning to assess IsiZulu FAL is largely driven by formative assessments. Since the student teachers do not have the opportunity to set the exams during their practice teaching, they learn assessments, through formative forms of assessment, such as formal tests to monitor learners' progress and informal assessments that give the teacher a sense of competence of learners in being able to converse in isiZulu. Hence, assessment for learning, formal and informal, seem to be the most appropriate form of assessing learners' competence in conversing in isiZulu, which is the intention of FAL learning. According to Kanjee (2020) assessment for learning has various components. Firstly, it consists of various types of assessment. Secondly, the students are consistently reminded about the intent of the learning and the objectives of learning. Thirdly, the teachers give feedback to learners when they assess them. Therefore, if they are doing oral assessment such as question and answer activity, the teachers give feedback to that. By questioning and answering and giving feedback,

student teachers get a deeper sense of what assessing means in learning. This aligns with Ghimire (2023) who emphasises the value of continuous feedback during formative assessment which allows teachers to guide learners effectively and address specific language learning needs. For student teachers to teach isiZulu FAL, they focused a lot on assessment for learning strategies to assess learners' competence during the learning-to-teach process. The findings drawn from this theme indicates that learning to assess aligns with Kanjee's (2020) framework by highlighting the importance of formative assessment strategies tailored to isiZulu FAL learners' needs and abilities as teaching and learning are taking place. This integration of assessment within the teaching and learning process of isiZulu FAL aligns with Shulman's notion of PCK when integrated with content knowledge (isiZulu FAL).

#### **7.2.5 Learning about teaching resources and its integration into teaching (Theme 5)**

Through observations and consultations with mentors and trial and error, they also have insights into using technologies. COVID-19 has exposed the entire schooling system to the possibilities of using technology in teaching and learning. Teachers have more insights into what technology is available, and how they could use it in the learning and teaching process. Student teachers learn from their mentor teachers during teaching practice sessions on what technologies can be used and how these can be integrated into it. What technologies are available, what they can do with it and how it can be used effectively is largely through the actual use of them in the school, and a review of the use thereafter. Therefore, student teachers learn to use and integrate technology in the teaching and learning processes.

To understand how student teachers learn about integrating technology into the teaching and learning processes, one can draw on what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) refer to as affordances and assemblage. Affordances provide insights into the possibilities embedded within a specific technology and assemblage allows for the beholder of the technology to use it in a meaningful way that contributes to the intended outcome of its (technology) use. In this case, the technologies used within the teaching and learning process are nuanced in a manner that exploits its (technology) potential to meet a specific objective (of the lesson) through carefully thought-out processes of inclusion (of the technology) throughout the process teaching and learning. Technology offers various

affordances for language teaching. These might include access to authentic language materials (e.g. videos, and articles) from around the world, and expanding learners' exposure to diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) encourage language teachers to approach technology as a dynamic and contingent element within complex assemblages, focusing on the affordances it offers and how its use can shape the learning experience. By critically examining the relationships between technology, pedagogy, and socio-cultural contexts, educators can harness the transformative potential of technology to enhance language teaching and learning.

While technology and resources can provide support, ultimately, it is up to the student teacher to take ownership of their learning journey. Thus, technology and resources encourage them to set goals, develop effective learning strategies, seek out feedback, and persist in the face of challenges. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) identified a concept of affordances as 'potentially rich and provocative' when teachers use technology in their classrooms. As such, student teachers explore a deeper understanding of the nature of (ICT) and how it could be harnessed to enhance the development of pedagogical design of learning activities effectively.

By integrating Deleuze and Guattari's notion of affordance with the responsibility of a student teacher learning isiZulu, a holistic and reflective approach can be fostered to language learning that emphasises the dynamic interactions between language, technology, culture, and identity. This approach can empower the student teachers by taking ownership of their learning journey while also fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the isiZulu language and culture.

Drawing from student teachers' findings, when classroom practitioners plan to integrate teaching resources in isiZulu FAL lessons, they should consider incorporating the technology and content knowledge of isiZulu FAL required by learners. This is the good practice for teaching language concepts (Kafyulilo et al., 2015). Teachers have access to all available information as they are exposed to several sources on the internet. Observation enhances learning for learners. As such, learners can visualise various isiZulu concepts through the use of technology-based tools. When concepts are presented in a practical rather than theoretical manner, most learners can be assisted to understand

them. Using technology as a teaching tool facilitates the teacher's access to abstract subjects, which are difficult for learners to understand if presented abstractly. Learning about teaching resources and their integration into teaching benefits the use of technology-based tools in isiZulu FAL lessons and is considered as a modern and creative teaching approach utilised in the 21st century.

### **7.3 WHAT HAVE I FOUND IN MY STUDY**

My study found that choosing to specialise in isiZulu FAL was often a strategic decision driven by practical considerations. Participants highlighted the foresight of increased employment opportunities in KwaZulu-Natal, a region where isiZulu is a dominant language. This decision aligns with the provincial needs for teachers who can effectively communicate and teach in isiZulu. For instance, Phil's reflection, *"I am learning isiZulu FAL by choice... it is useful to learn isiZulu because I am not sure where I will get employment,"* emphasises this pragmatic approach. I also found that choosing to teach isiZulu FAL as a subject is driven by external motivation with the key drivers being employment opportunities and extensive teaching opportunities in schools. Choosing to teach isiZulu FAL demonstrated an awareness of the changing workplace landscape that required employees to be multilingual. In addition to English and other languages, learning to teach isiZulu therefore would enable student teachers to be functional multilinguals. Other external motivation factors include attractive incentives and high salaries to teach isiZulu as in the case of ex Model C, private or independent schools. External motivation also comes with negative motivation, for instance, pressure from both the student and family members to get employment. The saying "I am because we are" (*umuntu ungumuntu ngabantu*) is a dominant narrative in most Black communities. The learned individual in the family must take everyone out of poverty by working. In this instance, learning to teach isiZulu provides leeway to achieve this.

Learning the subject content is not extensive. It focuses on the technical structure usage of the language rather than its epistemic knowledge and understanding which is a privilege in content learning (Vollmer, 2024). The content knowledge provided to student teachers was not sufficiently comprehensive. There were concerns about the depth of their understanding of isiZulu FAL. For example, Lindy admitted, *"I understand isiZulu but I'm not confident when it comes to teaching isiZulu FAL... it's about me understanding*

*isiZulu on my own*,". This is the reflection of the gaps in the curriculum that left student teachers feeling unprepared.

While the isiZulu FAL CAPS document provided a structured framework for what subject matter to teach and how to teach it, did not fully equip student teachers with the extensive content knowledge required for effective teaching. The CAPS document prescribes the content and teaching timeframes but does not explore deeply into the nuances and complexities of isiZulu language and culture. Thus, learning to teach isiZulu FAL follows the subject content aspect of the learning process. This component of learning to teach the isiZulu FAL dominates the sub programme of teaching specialisation.

## **7.4 KEY COMPONENTS OF LEARNING TO TEACH ISIZULU FAL**

### **7.4.1 Learning the content of the CAPS Curriculum**

#### **Guidance by the CAPS Curriculum:**

Gaining an understanding of the CAPS curriculum is largely guided by what is required by CAPS across the various grades. Hence, their learning is rather restricted to what the CAPS policy demands of teachers. One of the key components of learning to teach isiZulu FAL is the content of the CAPS curriculum, which provides a structured framework that prescribes what content should be taught and how it should be taught, including specific timeframes. For instance, student teachers noted that the CAPS curriculum helps them understand the specific skills that need to be taught in each grade, which includes language structures, grammar, and language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Department of Basic Education, 2011a, p. 17).

#### **Content knowledge acquisition:**

The methods of teaching isiZulu FAL vary. Choosing particular or generic methods of teaching was not appropriate as the content of teaching and who is being taught, influences how teaching isiZulu is to be done. Student teachers learn isiZulu content progressively from their first to fourth year of study. This incremental learning process starts with basic grammar and language structures and advances to more complex linguistic and pedagogical concepts. This gradual build-up of knowledge ensures that students are well-prepared to teach isiZulu FAL effectively. For example, one participant, Buki, mentioned, *"The CAPS curriculum would direct us as to what skills should be*

*taught according to weeks and terms,"* highlighting how the curriculum provides detailed guidance on content delivery.

#### **7.4.2 Planning to teach**

##### **Lesson planning:**

The planning for teaching is largely dependent upon the lesson objectives that are to be taught. Student teachers learn about lesson planning from lecturers, from the guidance introduced by the CAPS curriculum, and from experiential opportunities during TP. These plans guide the teaching process and ensure that lesson objectives are met.

##### **Contextual adaptation:**

Student teachers also learned the importance of adapting their lesson plans to the specific context of their classrooms. This includes considering the learners' backgrounds, the available resources, and the teaching environment. By tailoring their lesson plans to the contextual realities, they could enhance the effectiveness of their teaching. For instance, integrating technology into lesson plans was highlighted as a significant method to engage 21st-century learners who are accustomed to digital tools and resources.

#### **7.4.3 Learner characteristics and needs**

##### **Understanding learners:**

Noting that the learner is taking isiZulu FAL and are not home language speakers of isiZulu and that they have diverse linguistic backgrounds, teaching within an inclusive classroom is largely experiential. Looking at the experiences of student teachers of learning to teach isiZulu FAL, the reinforcement of their approach to teaching within an inclusive classroom, creates supportive and inclusive classroom environments that cater to the diverse needs of their learners. Integrating teaching within an inclusive classroom where the teacher provides visual aids and hands-on activities, highlights the importance of using varied teaching strategies to fulfil each learner's needs. This includes adapting teaching methods and materials to ensure all learners are engaged with an understanding of the content. By starting to adapt teaching methods and materials to the diverse needs of learners, there is an assurance that all learners are engaged with and understand the content. The development of teaching strategies to teach isiZulu FAL to multilingual learners from diverse backgrounds and varying levels of proficiency is essential. This

involves recognising the different preconceptions and experiences the learners bring to the classroom, as noted by Shulman (1986).

Learning to teach isiZulu FAL is a complicated process and does not fall into traditional Applied Sciences conceptions of teacher development. Unlike usual teacher education programmes where one learns to teach through practice in controlled environments, teaching isiZulu FAL requires a combination of motivation, job opportunities, and varying emphasis on content knowledge of the core discipline. Additionally, the pedagogical process is learned both experientially and through formal training, informing how educators learn to teach isiZulu FAL.

#### **7.4.4 Insights from my study on learning to teach isiZulu FAL**

##### **7.4.4.1 Shulman's ideas on how one learns to teach**

In my study, I drew heavily on Shulman's conceptualisation of teacher knowledge to better understand how student teachers learn to teach isiZulu FAL. Shulman (1987) emphasises the significance of both content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). Through my research, I discovered that effective teaching of isiZulu FAL requires an in-depth understanding of the subject matter itself, as outlined in the CAPS curriculum and being able to transform this content into teachable forms that can be easily understood by learners. Having content knowledge alone is not sufficient for effective teaching; rather, they need to deeply reflect on the purpose and rationale behind the teaching methods they employ. This aligns with Shulman's concept of PCK, which emphasises the integration of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge to create a unique type of knowledge tailored to the teaching and learning context. It is not enough for student teachers to only understand the content they are teaching but also possess the skills to transform that content into a format that is available and meaningful for their learners. This process involves considering the diverse needs and learning styles of student teachers, adapting teaching methods accordingly, and ensuring that the material is presented in a way that promotes comprehension and engagement. Shulman's framework on PCK emphasised the importance of this integration of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge in effective teaching, emphasising the detailed nature of the teaching process. By recognising the dynamic interaction between subject matter

expertise and pedagogical strategies, student teachers enhance their ability to engage and support their learners effectively in the learning process (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

#### **7.4.4.2 The insufficiency of learning how to teach isiZulu FAL**

Learning to teach isiZulu FAL is not just about acquiring pedagogical skills; it also involves understanding the broader educational, social, and cultural contexts in which teaching occurs. My study revealed that simply knowing the CAPS curriculum and various teaching methods is insufficient. Student teachers must also navigate the complexities of diverse classroom environments, manage learner behaviours, and address the specific needs of non-isiZulu speakers. For example, understanding the learners' backgrounds and experiences is crucial for creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment. This includes being sensitive to cultural differences, language barriers, and varying levels of proficiency in isiZulu. Therefore, effective teaching of isiZulu FAL requires a holistic approach that integrates pedagogical knowledge with a deep understanding of the learners and the social context of the classroom.

It is not sufficient to solely learn how to teach isiZulu FAL because effective teaching goes beyond just knowing the subject matter. The process of teaching requires a deep understanding of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), which involves integrating subject matter knowledge with pedagogical knowledge to create meaningful learning experiences for students. Without a solid grasp of PCK, teachers may struggle to choose appropriate teaching methods, leading to potential confusion among students and reliance on passive learning tools like worksheets rather than interactive and engaging teaching styles. Therefore, simply possessing content knowledge without the ability to effectively translate it into comprehensible content for learners can hinder the teaching process and limit students' learning experiences in the isiZulu FAL classroom.

#### **7.4.5 Reflection on Shulman's Knowledge Systems in preparing student teachers to teach isiZulu FAL**

Teacher knowledge systems, as outlined by Shulman, incorporate content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and curricular knowledge, provide a comprehensive foundation for preparing student teachers. Within the context of isiZulu FAL, this framework is particularly relevant, but, based on the findings and theorisation of my

findings, PCK of Shulman's teacher knowledge framework can be extended to include the integration of technology within the teaching and learning process and which has already been known through the TPACK framework (Koehler & Mishra, 2009), but with further insights through using Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) conception of affordance and assemblages to advance Shulman's notion of PCK and Koehler & Mishra's conception of TPACK where teacher agency becomes the driving force in the teaching and learning processes. Teachers' professionalism would then become the conductor of the teaching and learning process and that PCK should not be independent of or marginalised in the decisional (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012) process. This realisation then pointed me to utilise Aoki's (1999) conception of curriculum as experienced.

#### **7.4.6 Drawing on Aoki's knowledge of curriculum as experienced or lived**

The concept of curriculum as experienced or lived by Aoki (1999) emphasises the dynamics and interactive nature of teaching and learning. In my study, I found that student teachers' lived experiences in the classroom are critical for their development as effective teachers. This approach highlights the importance of experiential learning, where student teachers actively engage with the curriculum in real classroom settings. According to Aoki (2004), the lived experiences of both teachers and students are crucial for effective learning to take place. It is challenging for a teacher to design a lesson without understanding the evolving dynamics of the classroom. Consequently, teachers need to draw on their own classroom experiences to make the prescribed curriculum engaging and relevant. For instance, during their teaching practice, student teachers encountered various challenges and had to adapt their lesson plans and teaching methods accordingly. This experiential learning process allowed them to understand the curriculum's practical implications of and develop the flexibility needed to address diverse learner needs. By drawing on Aoki's ideas, I learnt that the curriculum is not just a static document to be followed but a lived experience that evolves through interaction with learners and the teaching environment. This perspective encourages student teachers to be reflective practitioners who continuously adapt and improve their teaching practices.

#### **7.4.7 Aoki's curriculum as lived in dialogue with Shulman's conception of teaching**

The integration of Aoki's curriculum as lived with Shulman's conception of teaching provides a holistic framework for teacher education. Shulman's emphasis on content and

pedagogical knowledge systems complements Aoki's focus on the student teacher's and learner's curriculum as lived. In my study, this dialogue between the two frameworks became evident as student teachers engaged with the curriculum both theoretically and practically. For example, while Shulman's framework guided the student teachers in understanding the foundational knowledge required for teaching isiZulu FAL, Aoki's concept of lived curriculum encouraged them to reflect on their teaching experiences and adapt their practices based on real classroom interactions. This combination allowed them to develop a deep, contextualised understanding of teaching that goes beyond mere theoretical knowledge.

## **7.5 RESPONDING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

### **7.5.1 Research Question 1: What knowledge and skills do student teachers specialising in isiZulu FAL are taught within the initial teacher education programme?**

In my study, it was found that student teachers specialising in isiZulu FAL are taught a comprehensive set of knowledge and skills essential for effective teaching. This includes content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and practical teaching skills. The curriculum of the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme ensures that student teachers are well-versed in:

#### **1. IsiZulu content knowledge:**

- Student teachers learn the intricacies of the isiZulu language, including grammar, vocabulary, language structures, and conventions. They are introduced to the content prescribed by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), which includes language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

#### **2. Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK):**

- PCK is crucial for transforming content knowledge into teachable material. Student teachers are trained in various teaching methodologies and strategies to effectively deliver isiZulu lessons. They learn how to create lesson plans, develop teaching materials, and use assessment tools.

#### **3. Lesson planning:**

- Emphasis is placed on designing lesson plans that align with the CAPS curriculum. Student teachers learn to set clear lesson objectives, plan teaching phases, and integrate assessment components. They also learn to adjust lesson plans to address the varied needs of their learners.

**4. Assessment skills:**

- Student teachers are trained with developing skills to conduct both formative and summative assessments. They learn to design and implement various assessment forms, give constructive feedback, and use assessment results to guide and improve their teaching practices.

**5. Classroom management:**

- Effective classroom management is taught to ensure that student teachers can create conducive learning environments. They learn strategies to manage diverse classrooms, handle learner behaviour, and engage students in the learning process.

**6. Technology integration:**

- Recognising the importance of technology in modern education, the programme trains student teachers to integrate ICT resources into their teaching. They learn to use digital tools to enhance learning, make lessons more interactive, and cater to the needs of 21st-century learners.

**7.5.2 Research Question 2: How do student teachers specialising in isiZulu FAL learn the required knowledge and skills in teaching FAL within the isiZulu FAL within Initial Teacher Education programme?**

The learning process for student teachers in the ITE programme is multi-faceted and involves both theoretical and practical components.

**1. Theoretical instruction:**

- The programme provides a strong theoretical foundation in language teaching. Courses cover linguistic theories, language acquisition, curriculum studies, and educational psychology. Lectures and seminars introduce student teachers to essential concepts and pedagogies.

## **2. Practical training:**

- A significant portion of the learning takes place through practical training, including Teaching Practice (TP) and internships. During TP, student teachers spend time in real classrooms, applying their theoretical knowledge in practice. They observe experienced teachers, conduct lessons, and receive feedback.

## **3. Experiential learning:**

- The study highlighted that much of the learning of isiZulu FAL occurs experientially. Student teachers engage in micro-teaching sessions, peer teaching, and role-playing activities. These experiences allow them to experiment with different teaching methods and refine their teaching skills.

## **4. Mentorship and supervision:**

- Throughout their training, student teachers receive guidance and support from mentor teachers and university supervisors. Mentors provide constructive feedback, model best practices, and help student teachers navigate classroom challenges.

## **5. CAPS Curriculum Familiarisation:**

- Learning to teach isiZulu FAL is closely guided by the CAPS curriculum. Student teachers familiarise themselves with the CAPS document, which prescribes what content to teach and how to teach it. This ensures that they are aligned with national educational standards.

## **6. Integration of technology**

- The programme incorporates training on using technology in teaching. Student teachers learn to leverage ICT tools to enhance their teaching and create more engaging learning experiences. They practice using digital resources in their lesson plans and classroom activities.

### **7.5.3 Research Question 3: Why are student teachers of isiZulu FAL learning to teach in the way they are within the initial teacher education programme?**

The approach to teaching isiZulu FAL in the ITE programme is influenced by several factors:

#### **1. Contextual realities:**

- The choice to specialise in isiZulu FAL is often influenced by the contextual realities of schooling in KwaZulu-Natal, where isiZulu is a dominant language. This specialisation increases employability and aligns with the linguistic needs of the region.

#### **2. Policy and curriculum requirements**

- The ITE programme is designed to comply with national education policies, such as the CAPS curriculum, which dictates the content and pedagogical approaches for teaching isiZulu FAL. The programme ensures that student teachers are prepared to meet these requirements.

#### **3. Experiential learning focus**

- The study found that much of the learning is done experimentally, which is essential for developing practical teaching skills. The programme emphasises hands-on experience through TP and internships, recognising that real classroom exposure is crucial for teacher development.

#### **4. Holistic teacher development**

- The programme aims to develop well-rounded teachers who possess not only content and pedagogical knowledge but also the ability to manage classrooms, assess learners effectively, and integrate technology into their teaching. This comprehensive approach ensures that student teachers are prepared for the multifaceted demands of teaching isiZulu FAL.

#### **5. Mentorship and support**

- The structured mentorship and supervision within the programme provide student teachers with continuous support and feedback. This helps them to refine their teaching practices and gain confidence in their abilities.

#### **6. Adaptation to diverse learner needs**

- The programme recognises the diversity of learners in South African classrooms and trains student teachers to adapt their teaching strategies accordingly. This includes understanding learners' backgrounds, addressing language barriers, and creating inclusive learning environments.

### **7.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

#### **7.6.1 Policymakers:**

This study lies in its capacity to guide policy decisions sought to enhance the quality of isiZulu First Additional Language (FAL) instructions. The study aimed to equip policymakers with the tools to develop and implement strategies that can improve teaching methodologies, curriculum design, teacher training programmes, and resource allocation. This can ultimately lead to more effective language instruction, better educational outcomes for students, and the preservation and promotion of isiZulu as a vital component of South Africa's linguistic and cultural heritage.

- Policies should mandate longer and more frequent teaching practice periods to ensure student teachers gain sufficient hands-on experience.
- Policies should emphasise the integration of ICT in teacher training programmes, ensuring that future teachers are well-equipped to use technology in their teaching.

#### **7.6.2 Designers of teacher education programmes**

The significance of this study to designers of teacher education programmes lies in its potential to shape the development of comprehensive programmes.

- These programmes will furnish future teachers with specific needs of specialising in isiZulu FAL.
- By emphasising the critical role of PCK in developing advanced skills beyond content knowledge, programme designers can integrate training modules.
- This can enhance teachers' readiness to teach isiZulu FAL effectively.

- Teacher education programme developers can design curricula that equip teachers to provide high-quality isiZulu FAL education, ultimately raising the standard of language instruction.
- Designers of Teacher Education Programmes should Enhance Experiential Learning: This will give student teachers more hands-on experience in actual classroom settings.
- Student teachers can better understand the dynamics of a real classroom, apply theoretical knowledge in practical scenarios, and refine their teaching skills through real-world experience. This can be done by extending the duration and scope of teaching practice and internships.

### **7.6.3 Universities**

Universities can use the findings to refine their teacher education programmes, making them more effective and relevant to the needs of future teachers. Preparing and training future teachers, as well as their professional development, necessitates strong knowledge-building in education, in which isiZulu FAL can play a significant role.

- Universities should strengthen partnerships with local schools to facilitate more practical training opportunities for student teachers to gain valuable real-world experience.
- They should also provide continuous professional development for teacher educators, keeping them updated with the latest teaching strategies and technological advancements.
- Additionally, universities should implement mechanisms for continuous feedback from student teachers and mentor teachers to inform and improve their programmes.

### **7.6.4 Principals of schools**

Principals can use the findings to better support new teachers, ensuring they have the resources and guidance needed to succeed in their teaching roles.

- Implement support mentorship programmes within schools to help new teachers transition smoothly into their roles.
- Facilitate continuous professional development to all teachers, focusing on both content knowledge and pedagogical skills.

- Encourage a collaborative environment in which experienced teachers might share the most effective practices and support new teachers in their professional growth.

### **7.6.5 Teacher educators**

This study provides insights into effective teaching strategies for teacher educators, emphasising the importance of practical experience and technology integration.

- Teacher educators can use real-world teaching scenarios and case studies in training sessions to prepare student teachers for classroom challenges.
- They can also encourage student teachers to engage in reflective practice, helping them to continuously improve their teaching skills.

### **7.6.6 Student teachers**

To Future Teachers: This study offers practical advice and strategies for student teachers, helping them to better understand the complexities of teaching isiZulu FAL and the importance of continuous professional development.

- Proactively seek additional teaching practice opportunities beyond the minimum requirements to gain more hands-on experience.
- Embrace technology as a tool to enhance teaching and learning and seek training opportunities to improve digital literacy.
- Participate in workshops, seminars, and other professional development activities to be kept informed with the latest teaching methodologies and strategies.

## **7.7 CONCLUSION**

This study focuses on the essential outcomes of the preceding chapters, which explored the sub-themes and research questions. These findings were shaped by the literature and the theoretical frameworks used in the study. I briefly explained what I have found in my study. I then explained what I have learnt through my study using Shulman's ideas on how one learns to teach together with Aoki's knowledge of curriculum as experienced or lived to enable student teachers to teach isiZulu FAL, recommendations, responding to the research questions, the significance of the study, and benefit from this study.

The key findings showed that student teachers face challenges in selecting appropriate pedagogies due to varying learner needs and contexts. Effective PCK development is facilitated through a blend of structured lesson planning, guided by CAPS, and experiential learning during TP. In addition, the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and inclusive teaching practices were identified as essential components of modern education. Student teachers benefit from practical exposure to these elements, preparing them to meet the diverse needs of 21st-century learners. The chapter also showed that managing isiZulu FAL classrooms requires a deep understanding of learners' backgrounds and the ability to make informed pedagogical decisions. Developing professional capital, which includes human, social, and decisional capital, is vital for effective classroom management. Lastly, the chapter highlighted that formative and summative assessments play a significant role in the learning process. Student teachers need to be proficient in designing and implementing various assessment strategies to monitor and support learner progress effectively.

This thesis has provided a comprehensive examination of how student teachers learn to teach isiZulu FAL within Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes. The study's findings emphasise the importance of a multifaceted approach to teacher education, incorporating both theoretical and practical elements. By investigating the experiences of student teachers, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in preparing teachers for isiZulu FAL instruction. The findings highlight the critical role of experiential learning in developing effective teaching skills. Extended teaching practice and internships are recommended to provide student teachers with more authentic classroom experiences. The study highlighted the need for teacher education programmes to integrate ICT and inclusive teaching practices, preparing future teachers to navigate and leverage these elements in their classrooms.

The primary objective of this study was to explore how student teachers learn to teach isiZulu FAL within ITE programmes. The research aimed to uncover the knowledge and skills imparted to student teachers, the methods through which they acquire these competencies, and the reasons behind the instructional strategies employed. The findings reveal that student teachers acquire essential content knowledge and pedagogical skills through a combination of coursework, CAPS documents, and experiential learning during

teaching practice. This study drew on the theoretical frameworks of Shulman's Knowledge Systems and Aoki's concept of curriculum as lived experience. Shulman's framework provided a lens to understand the necessary knowledge bases for effective teaching, including content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and curricular knowledge. Aoki's perspective on curriculum emphasised the importance of understanding the lived experiences of both teachers and learners, highlighting the dynamic interaction between curriculum design and its enactment in the classroom. These frameworks guided the analysis and interpretation of data, underscoring the need for a holistic approach to teacher education that values both theoretical foundations and practical applications.

The research employed a qualitative methodology, utilising interviews, observations, and document analysis to gather data from student teachers, teacher educators, and policy documents. This approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of the participants' experiences and perceptions, providing rich insights into the processes and challenges of learning to teach isiZulu FAL. The qualitative data were analysed thematically, revealing key patterns and themes related to the research questions. The findings of this study stress the complexity of preparing student teachers for isiZulu FAL instruction. Key insights include the strategic decision by student teachers to specialise in isiZulu FAL due to employment prospects, the importance of aligning teaching methods with CAPS guidelines, and the value of integrating ICT and inclusive practices into teaching. The study also highlighted the challenges encountered by student teachers in managing classrooms and assessments, emphasising the importance of practical experience and mentorship to develop these skills effectively.

The study recommends that policymakers should consider extending the duration of teaching practice and emphasises the integration of technology and inclusive practices in teacher training curricula. It stresses that designers of teacher education programmes should ensure a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical experience, incorporating longer teaching practice periods and internships. In addition, universities and teacher education institutions should strengthen partnerships with schools, provide continuous professional development for teacher educators, and implement feedback mechanisms to improve training programmes. Consequently, teacher educators and

school principals should enhance mentorship programmes and provide ongoing professional development opportunities to support new teachers in their transition to the classroom. This thesis provides valuable insights and practical recommendations for improving the preparation of student teachers specialising in isiZulu FAL. By addressing the identified gaps and implementing the proposed changes, stakeholders can ensure that future teachers are fully prepared to deliver high-quality education, ultimately contributing to the advancement of language education and the broader educational landscape in South Africa.

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**APPENDIX A: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITHIN THE IIE INSTITUTION**

████████████████████  
Castle Hill Newlands West  
4037

14 June 2019

**The Academic/ Research Manager  
The Independent Institution of Education**

Dear Ms Newport

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITHIN THE IIE INSTITUTION**

**Topic: LEARNING TO TEACH ISIZULU FAL: EXPERIENCES OF STUDENT TEACHERS IN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

I, WINILE PORTIA THUSI, am a registered Doctorate student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood Campus).

I am in the process of undertaking research in the field of Teacher Development Studies.

This research is concerned specifically to get an understanding of the content that is taught to initial teacher education students for teaching isiZulu FAL as well as to understand the experiences of pre-service teachers on how to teach isiZulu FAL within an identified teacher education programme.

I, therefore, hereby request permission to conduct an interview with IsiZulu First Additional Language students. All contact with the students will be scheduled accordingly with your permission and that of the student concerned.

**STUDENT'S PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY AND THEY MAY WITHDRAW AT ANY GIVEN TIME WITHOUT FEAR OF REPRISALS.**

The data collecting instruments does not require any form of identification therefore the identity of your campus, the student and that of the visiting school is guaranteed anonymity and non-traceability. All information obtained will be treated in the strictest of confidence. All ethical processes will be followed and applied for, including the protection of the rights of the participants and their right to withdraw from any of the

processes to be followed in the curriculum transformation process without any consequences to the individual.

It is anticipated that the findings and recommendations of this study will be used effectively to improve teaching and learning in this area of isiZulu First Additional Language.

My supervisor for this study is **Prof Labby Ramrathan** in the School of Education and he can be contacted [REDACTED]

Thank you

Yours faithfully

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**Winile Portia Thusi**

[REDACTED]

**Email: [winnythusi@gmail.com](mailto:winnythusi@gmail.com)**

## APPENDIX B: PERMISSION LETTER TO THE PARTICIPANTS

██████████  
Castle Hill  
Newlands West  
4037

Attention: BED Student teachers

RE: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN MY RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Winile Portia Thusi 213570355. My contact details are: ██████████  
email: winnythusi@gmail.com. I am a registered PhD student in Education at the University Of KwaZulu-Natal. As part of the PhD programme, I am required to complete a research Thesis/dissertation. My research topic is **Learning to teach isiZulu FAL: Experiences of student teachers in initial teacher education programme.**

I request that you participate in my study. Participation is voluntary and should you wish to withdraw from participating I will understand and allow you to withdraw.

The information in this consent form is provided to assist you in deciding whether you would like to participate in this study. If you decide to participate, you will be required to participate in semi-structured interview, participate in focus group.

I will do my research at your university at your convenience and not disrupt the normal daily sessions. Data will be generated by using interviews, focus group discussion, observation and document analysis. We will have only one session for semi-structured interviews. I will conduct observe two times at your lecture room and have two sessions for focus group. The first session will be the introductory session where the researcher will be introducing the purpose of the research and developing student's rapport. The second session will be post observation (reflections) where issues arise from the lecture observation will be discussed.

I am bound by the research ethics and I therefore assure you that everything within that research concerning your university will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Should you have any concerns and questions about this study, please feel free to contact my supervisor **Prof Labby Ramrathan** in the School of Education and he can be contacted on ██████████ or contact me at ██████████ or Email: **winnythusi@gmail.com.**

Or

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS  
ADMINISTRATION**

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building  
Private Bag X 54001 Durban 4000  
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA  
Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609  
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

## APPENDIX B

Your participation in my research will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

---

Mrs .W. P. Thusi

## **INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

I \_\_\_\_\_ have been informed about the study entitled **Learning to teach isiZulu FAL: Experiences of student teachers in initial teacher education programme by Winile Portia Thusi.**

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

I am at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time,

I will have access to all transcripts and right to add, change and withdraw data I have given,

My participation is voluntary,

There is no payment for participation.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at [REDACTED] winnythusi@gmail.com.

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

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS  
ADMINISTRATION**

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001 Durban 4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent, where applicable

**APPENDIX B**

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Video-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Use of my photographs for research purposes YES / NO

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**Signature of Participant Date**

- [REDACTED]  
Castle Hill  
Newlands West  
4037

16 September 2019

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL**

Topic: **Learning to teach isiZulu FAL: Experiences of student teachers in initial teacher education programme**

I, WINILE PORTIA THUSI, am a registered Doctorate student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood Campus).

I am in the process of undertaking research in the field of Teacher Development Studies. This research is concerned specifically to get an understanding of the content that is taught to initial teacher education students for teaching isiZulu FAL as well as to understand the experiences of pre-service teachers on how to teach isiZulu FAL within an identified teacher education programme.

STUDENTS PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY AND THEY MAY WITHDRAW AT ANY GIVEN TIME WITHOUT FEAR OF REPRISALS.

The data collecting instruments does not require any form of identification therefore the identity of your campus and the student is guaranteed anonymity and non-traceability. All information obtained will be treated in the strictest of confidence. All ethical processes will be followed and applied for, including the protection of the rights of the participants and their right to withdraw from any of the processes to be followed in the curriculum transformation process without any consequences to the individual. It is anticipated that the findings and recommendations of this study will be used effectively to improve teaching and learning in this area of isiZulu First Additional Language

My supervisor for this study is **Prof Labby Ramrathan** in the School of Education and he can be contacted [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully

- [REDACTED]

---

**Winile Portia Thusi**

[REDACTED]

**Email: winnythusi@gmail.com**

**APPENDIX C: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH TO BE CONDUCTED ON IIE  
STAFF/ STUDENTS**

REF: R.14019

Enquiries: [research@iie.ac.za](mailto:research@iie.ac.za)

Date: 30 August 2019

**REQUEST FOR RESEARCH TO BE CONDUCTED ON IIE STAFF/ STUDENTS**

Dear Ms WP Thusi,

The committee considered your request and have **granted conditional permission** to conduct research on IIE staff/students - on condition that you strictly adhere to the conditions stipulated below and that you **obtain ethics clearance for your study from the University of KwaZulu Natal**. This conditional approval is based on the assumption that the information you have provided is true and factually correct and that ethics clearance will be obtained from the university.

Please note that data collection may not commence until the ethics clearance letter has been submitted to the committee and final approval has been granted.

Also note that should you wish to conduct research on IIE students teaching in a public school, you would require clearance from the Department of Education as well as the School's Governing Body.

<b>Conditional approval is granted for:</b>	W Thusi
Initial(s) and Surname:	
Student number:	N/A
Institution where registered:	University of KwaZulu Natal
Qualification/ Output:	Doctorate
Year in which research will be conducted:	2019 - 2020
Title of study/ paper:	Learning to teach isiZulu: Experiences of student teachers in initial teacher training

## CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

*Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.*

**Please note:** The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. A copy of the final paper must be submitted electronically to The IIE's Dean of Postgraduate Studies at [research@iie.ac.za](mailto:research@iie.ac.za) no later than 30 days post finalisation.
2. The researcher(s) is not permitted to refer to The IIE/ brands or use The IIE/ brand's name, logo, brand or any other identifiers in any way including in questionnaires, surveys, interviews, proposal, research reports, etc. The IIE/ brand needs to be referred to in a generic manner, for example 'An HE provider; ... an educational brand of an HE provider; ... etc.'
3. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
4. If the Learning Management System (LMS) of The IIE is used, the researcher(s) is not permitted to refer to Learn by name. Learn needs to be referred to it in a generic manner such as the "Learning Management System of a Higher Education provider."
5. A copy of this letter to be forwarded to the relevant person(s) at the brand or The IIE Central Academic Team that would be involved in the study.
6. Research to be conducted in such a way that the normal programme of the site/ offices is not interrupted.
7. The principal/ manager of a site must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher(s) may carry out the research at the site.
8. The researcher(s) may only use this data for these research purposes and in no other way.
9. Should the researcher(s) wish to publish this research or in any way make the results public, such as publishing the results on social media etc., this committee will need to approve the request first.
10. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.
11. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
12. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
13. If any of The IIE reports or policies are used as part of the research, identifying information needs to be removed.
14. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.

The Independent Institute of Education Pty Ltd, its associated companies, employees, contractors, representatives and directors, are indemnified against all claims which may arise in connection with or as a result of any loss, damage or injury to you as a researcher entering into an agreement with a participant in the course of your research, provided that such loss, damage or injury is caused by the gross negligence or intentional act(s) or omission(s) of The Independent of Institute Education Pty Ltd, its associated companies, employees, contractors, representatives and directors.

Wishing you the very best of luck.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Franzél du Plooy-Cilliers  
Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies  
The Independent Institute of Education

## APPENDIX D: APPROVAL NOTIFICATION - UKZN



02 March 2021

Mrs Winile Portia Thusi (213570355)  
School Of Education  
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Thusi,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00001191/2020

Project title: Learning to teach isiZulu FAL: Experiences of student teachers in initial teacher education programme.

Degree:Phd

### Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 11 March 2020 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 02 March 2022.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Professor Dipane Hialele.

Professor Dipane Hialele (Chair)

## APPENDIX E: SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

### SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

1. Why did you choose to learn to teach isiZulu?
2. What factors influenced your decision to choose isiZulu as your First Additional Language (FAL)?
3. Describe the nature of the module you are doing (What are you learning in this module?)
4. What content knowledge are you receiving to prepare you to teach isiZulu FAL?
5. Describe the methods that you are exposed to when learning to teach isiZulu FAL.
6. How does reflective practice influence your understanding and application of pedagogical knowledge in diverse classroom settings?
7. How do you learn to teach isiZulu FAL?
8. What resources are you exposed to, in order to teach isiZulu FAL learners effectively?
9. How do you prepare to manage the classroom activities when teaching isiZulu FAL during your teaching practice?
10. What assessment tasks are used in assessing your ability to teach isiZulu FAL?
11. What are the most common misconceptions that learners have when learning isiZulu FAL?
12. What challenges have you encountered in making isiZulu FAL an engaging and relevant subject for diverse learners, and how do you address these challenges in your teaching practices?