SUPPORT STRATEGIES USED BY FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHERS TO DEVELOP COGNITIVE ACADEMIC LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

by

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ABSTRACT

The study explores how teachers, in English medium Foundation Phase classrooms, use support strategies to improve Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) in learners whose home language is not English. The research design adopted for this study was an ethnographic case study that was analysed through qualitative methods at one primary school in the Western Cape. The participants were three teachers in their Foundation Phase classes, chosen on the basis of the phenomenon studied.

The focus was to evaluate how successful the language support strategies are and to determine any gaps in the strategies used. Validity was assessed by means of lesson observations, supported by interviews and analysis of the teaching documents. Further, to increase the trustworthiness of the study, findings were compared across these data sources and methods to triangulate the results. Findings illuminated: (i) Factors impacting language teaching; (ii) Strategies used by teachers; (iii) Teachers' understanding of support strategies; (iv) Teachers' understanding of CALP; (v) Effectiveness of the support strategies; and (vi) Gaps in the strategies teachers used in improving CALP. Data were intentionally analysed to identify pervasive patterns and main themes in the data and a thematic report foreground the voices of the research participants.

The study raised questions about the teachers' practice in teaching CALP. Teachers taught using familiar methods, taught to a task and lacked linguistic structures in their lessons. Finally, the study report ended with a list of limitations and recommendations for future research in strategies that the Foundation Phase teacher can use to improve the CALP in South Africa's schools.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated, acknowledged by means of the complete Harvard convention for citation and referencing. Each contribution to, and quotation from, the work(s) of scholars has been attributed, cited and referenced. Furthermore, this thesis represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Signed: -- Date: --

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GLOSSARY

ANA	Annual National Assessment
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
BLA	Balanced Language Approach
CA	Curriculum Advisor
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
DBE	Department of Basic Education
ELoLT	English Language of Learning and Teaching
FAT	Formal Assessment Task
FP	Foundation Phase
HoD	Head of Department
LiEP	Language in Education Policy
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
MNED	Metropol North Education Department
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
NEPA	National education Policy Act
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPA	National Protocol for Assessment
NSNP	National School Nutritional Programme
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
OECD	Organisation for Co-operation and Development
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SACMEQ	The Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SASA	South African Schools Act
SBST	School Based Support Team
SGB	School Governing Body
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UWC	University of the Western Cape
WCED	Western Cape Education Department
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

Language remains a substantial issue in basic education, particularly among learners from disadvantaged backgrounds (Nomlomo and Desai, 2014). As stated by the DBE (2011, 2013 & 2015), many South African schools in sub-economic areas perform well below their potential in language: improving basic education outcomes is a prerequisite for the country's long-range development goals (Taylor, 2012). Both international and local tests of language indicated poor performance by learners. South African learners performed well below an international reading literacy benchmark assessment, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (DBE, 2014). Similarly, the 2015 Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) report highlighted the difficulties faced by South African learners in terms of language.

In a National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) report, Taylor (2012) claims that the fundamental problem of South Africa's education system lies in teachers' weak tuition skills and lack of subject content knowledge. These reports highlight the urgency for developing language support strategies for improving language tuition and subject knowledge in the Foundation Phase (Howie, van Staden, Tshele, Dowse and Zimmerman, 2012). At the Foundation Phase level learners need to acquire crucial cognitive and perceptual skills for language development.

This research project was designed around a case study that was analysed through qualitative research methods and was undertaken over a period of three months. The researcher's aim was to examine a particular phenomenon in order to understand it better (Henning, van Rensburg and Smit, 2004:41). The study involved observations, face-to-face interviews and analysis of documents of five participants (Creswell, 2009). The research methodology is discussed in detail in Chapter three.

This chapter describes the background, purpose and rationale of the study, and presents the research questions. A discussion of the organisation of the thesis concludes the chapter.

1.2   Background

The schooling system before 1994 exemplifies the period of racist beliefs in the history of South Africa (Biko, 2013). Apartheid divided education. The South African Government had a language policy of separate development, unequal resources and a cognitively impoverished curriculum for Black (especially African and Coloured) schools that resulted in the greater population being deliberately under-educated. Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs in 1953, openly planned to keep blacks down. White schools were better funded than any of those of other races. Black schools were the most poorly financed. Schools were the main vehicle for propagating apartheid government's beliefs (Soudien, 2007). According to Soudien (2007), schools of colour had poorly qualified teachers and rote learning was the norm.

After 1994, several curriculum changes were made by the South African government. At a policy level, a range of changes aimed at educating all South Africans was promulgated in the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 (Burger, 2009). In 1997, Curriculum 2005 was introduced by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) which sought to implement Outcomes Based Education (OBE) in all schools. OBE was a learner-centred and activity-based approach to education (Spady, 1995). In Jansen (1998)'s view, OBE was flawed from the outset because important transition phases which were needed to effect the difficult change from an apartheid education to a libertarian system were not in place. According to Jansen (1998), the most significant of these problems were the need for intensive teacher re-training, the weak culture of teaching and learning, classroom infrastructure and resource allocation. Alexander (2002) asserts that the new OBE policy corrected some of the past inequalities but that it was not successful in providing more teachers to schools with historically disadvantaged learners. Soudien (2012) reiterated that in the post-apartheid era disadvantaged children attend Coloured, Indian and African schools which still lack resources and have large teacher: learner ratios.

One of the greatest challenges facing Foundation Phase teachers in South Africa is the language diversity of learners in classrooms (Soudien, 2007). In the National Policy on Whole School Evaluation (2000), the Minister of Education, Kadar Asmal, highlighted the poor quality of home language results in schools and appealed for an overall improvement in levels of language achievement among Primary School learners. Low levels of language proficiency relate directly to results of standardised tests where learners engage with formal printed language activities. The percentage of learners reaching the 'achieved' level of performance in the Annual National Assessment (ANA) in English Home Language varies from 12% to 31% (DBE, 2013). Even the average provincial figure in this regard, 46% for

Grade three English Home Language in the Western Cape (DBE, 2013:6) is 50% and well below what can be considered acceptable. The WCED use externally set, administered and marked Systemic language tests to provide diagnostic information for improving language performance in the Western Cape (DBE, 2013). Grade three learners in the Western Cape scored 37% in 2013 and 42.4 % in 2014 (WCED, 2014).

According to SACMEQ (Wilkinson, 2015), South Africa performed more poorly than many low-income African countries such as Tanzania, Kenya, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Research results from an international benchmark assessment, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), revealed South Africa to be the country with the lowest percentage in language with almost 80% of the Grade four and Grade five participants not reaching the minimum low international benchmark (Howie, van Staden, Tshele, Dowse and Zimmerman, 2012:17). PIRLS is a comparative study on reading and processes of comprehension conducted in 40 countries (Howie *et al*, 2012). South Africa has one of the highest rates of public investment in education worldwide. The South African government spends more on education than on any other sector: approximately 7% of gross domestic product (GDP) and 20% of total state expenditure (DBE, 2013).

Teachers are, and have always been, the primary focus of schooling systems around the world. According to the Organisation for Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2005:2), teachers are the most important influence on effective learning, and 'teacher quality' is the single most important school variable influencing learner achievement. In order to improve pedagogy, overall performance and accountability, teachers in the multi-cultural and multilingual South African school setting urgently need to devise and implement effective teaching support strategies in literacy classes to assist learners whose home language is not English.

My study developed from my own experience in the classroom as well as my role as Head of Department (HOD) in the Foundation Phase. Teachers often indicate the difficulty they experience teaching classes in which learners' home language is not English, and in which learners struggle to develop phonics, reading and writing. Due to the gap between home language (Afrikaans or IsiXhosa) and English, which is the language of learning and teaching (LoLT), the competence levels of many learners in LoLT are inadequate for successful formal learning (Viljoen and Malefe, 2001). This shortcoming results in learners performing poorly in formal home language assessment tasks.

This research project is born out of a concern to assist teachers who face severe difficulties in their language classes as a direct result of the under-developed cognitive and language proficiency levels of many learners whose home language is other than English, which is the LoLT.

1.2.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to identify the support strategies that teachers, in English medium Foundation Phase classrooms, can deploy to improve Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) among learners whose home language is not English; to establish how successful those strategies are and determine any gaps in the strategies used.

1.2.2 Rationale

The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in the area of CALP support strategies. The study helps curriculum planners and the Department of Basic Education (DBE) by highlighting areas to be re-visited regarding teacher needs in the classroom. This study benefits curriculum advisors as they interact with teachers and make recommendations for implementation by teachers.

1.2.3 Research Question

The main question in this study is:

What support strategies do teachers in one school's Foundation Phase use to develop learners' Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) in their classes?

The answer to this question is presented by answering the following three sub questions:

1. What experiences do teachers encounter in improving CALP?

2. What are the actual support strategies that Foundation Phase teachers use and that they report they are using?

3. Which further strategies could Foundation Phase teachers use to improve CALP among their learners?

1.3 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

1.3.1 Introduction

The background review describes the purpose of the study, rationale, research questions and sub-questions regarding support strategies used by the Foundation Phase teacher to develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). The purpose of the literature review is to provide a comprehensive glossary of the foundational works written before

commencement of the investigation and to explain the theory of Cummins (1984, 1994 and 2000). Concepts such as language, language of learning and teaching (LoLT), CALP and basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) of Cummins, are clarified. Language and CALP in the South African context are discussed.

1.3.2 <u>Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)</u>

1.3.2.1 Language

Language is described as the means by which a person learns to organise experiences and thoughts (DBE, 2012:5). According to Dornbrack (2009), language is at the heart of school learning: if a learner cannot use language for the purpose of learning, s/he cannot progress in a subject. Motshekga (in DBE, 2010) states that language is the foundation for learning and is an integral part of the Foundation Phase curriculum.

1.3.2.2 Home Language

Home language is described in Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (DBE, 2012) as the first language acquired by learners through immersion at home: it is the language in which an individual learns to formulate thought. De Witt and Niemann (1998) define home language as the language a learner learns from parents as a child and is most commonly spoken by members of a family for everyday interactions at home.

1.3.2.3 First Additional Language

First additional language denotes a language learnt in addition to home language which can be used for basic intercultural and interpersonal communication social situations and for acquiring cognitive academic skills essential for learning across the curriculum (DBE, 2012). English as an additional language is the study of the English language by non-English home language speakers in an English-speaking environment (Johnson, 1992).

1.3.2.4 Second Additional Language

Second additional language signifies a language learnt in addition to home language and first additional language; primarily for interpersonal and social purposes (DBE, 2012).

1.3.2.5 Language of learning and teaching

Language of learning and teaching (LoLT) refers to the language medium in which learning and teaching, including assessment, takes place at school (DBE, 2012:3). The LoLT is chosen by a school's governing body (SGB) in consultation with parents (DBE, 2012).

1.3.2.6   BICS and CALP

Cummins (1984) defines Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) as language skills needed in social situations. BICS are day-to-day language skills needed to interact socially. BICS include such skills as listening and speaking on the playground, at parties and on the sports field. Cummins (1986:25), however, defines CALP as the basis for a learner's ability to cope with the formal academic demands placed upon him or her in the various context embedded subjects. In language this includes listening and speaking, reading, comprehending and writing. Cummins (1986) explains that if learners have achieved CALP in their home language, this competence can be transferred to the additional language, permitting them to participate successfully in academic learning in the language of teaching (LoLT). Cummins (1986) argues that it takes many years to achieve CALP in an additional language. He (1986:21) states that the two languages of an individual can develop independently up to the BICS stage. However, at the CALP level, according to Cummins (1986:22), they work inter-dependently. Cummins and Swain (1986) suggest that language-related skills should be taught in only one language – home language. In South Africa this has not been the case. Schooling thus, in Walton's (2002) view, has posed a challenge for learners and teachers in the learning and teaching of English which is an additional language for many.

1.4   Language and CALP in the South African context

The Constitution of South Africa (SA Government, 1996) provides for eleven official languages: Afrikaans, English, IsiNdebele, IsiXhosa, IsiZulu, Northern Sesotho, Sesotho, Setswana, SiSwati, Tshivenda and Xitsonga. Several of these languages may be represented in a single classroom at the same time: the task of the teacher in the Foundation Phase English language classroom can be overwhelming when trying to cope with a multilingual situation of such complexity.

According to Dornbrack (2009), the greatest difficulty South African English teachers face is that fewer than one South African child in every ten speaks English as a first language. The reality for many South African teachers is that English as a language of instruction may be a second or even third language for most members of a class (Dornbrack, 2009). The theory of Cummins (1994 & 2000) is useful in understanding learning in an additional language. CALP is the basis for a child's ability to cope with the academic demands placed upon him/her in the English language classroom.

Teachers are concerned about learners' low academic performance. Many Foundation Phase teachers are struggling to teach academic language proficiency to learners whose home language is not English. The National Education Policy Act (NEPA) (Act 27 of 1996) proposes additive bilingualism. According to the Constitution (1996), as well as legislation in government policies (Section 29 (1) (SA Government, 1996), all children in the country must have access to education. With regard to the curriculum, the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) supports the principle of maintaining home language while providing access to additional languages (DBE, 1997). According to Heugh (2000), despite the government's commitment to promotion of language rights, the education sector does not reflect the complex multilingual nature of South African schooling. For instance, refugees and immigrants from African countries cross the South African borders in search of a better life.

Foreign language learners emigrate from countries such as Congo, Angola, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Rwanda: many speak French and Portuguese but are taught through the medium of English. Article 21 (1) of the Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution (SA Government, 1996) commits governments to make special provision for children who are refugees or seeking refugee status: they are to receive the right to education. Government has an obligation to take active steps to ensure that every child of whatever nationality has access to educational facilities and enjoys the right to education. This provision means government and schools (as its agency), should not hinder access to education. The Bill of Rights obliges national, provincial and municipal government to honour this constitutional undertaking.. Additional rights of access to education for refugees in South Africa are provided for in the Refugees Act of 1998 (SA Government, 1998).

Biber (1996:391) states that many of the learning problems that persist throughout a learner's schooling can be traced to the "fundamental disruption" that occurs with the start of receiving teaching in a language other than the home language. Soudien (2012) concurs that the switch to English as LoLT may occur too early for Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) to be established: where children start Grade One in English medium classes but with a home language of Afrikaans, IsiXhosa or one of the African foreign languages. Second, teachers "are often not proficient enough in the English language to teach adequately in it" (Dornbrack, 2009:2). Soudien (2007) and Dlamini (2007) concur that many teachers teach in English despite the fact that it is not their home language, nor that of their learners. Some teachers teach English as a subject but were not trained in teaching languages.

This trend continues. The majority of teachers being trained in South Africa are not home language speakers of English (Alexander, 2002). The difficulties created by this lack of preparation are far-reaching and intensified when learners have little or no support structures at home. Learners may not have access to proper English sources, or resources, or practise English at all, other than with the teacher. This problem adds to the complication of existing language issues for the teacher. An important goal of the Foundation Phase teacher is to teach learners more effectively, to prevent underachievement and raise standards in general. For the past ten years, the standards achieved by the greater number of Foundation Phase learners in English language have shown little improvement (Viljoen and Malefe, 2001). In particular, in English as Language of Learning and Teaching (ELoLT), there has been little improvement in the percentage of Grade three learners reaching code four (the level expected to progress). Children's learning is impeded by a lack of understanding and effective implementation of the teaching strategies by Foundation Phase teachers (Viljoen and Malefe, 2001).

There is a greater awareness of learners' cognitive academic language under-achievement. However, attention needs to be paid to strategies that teachers can adopt as they face language diversity in their classrooms and are pressured to deliver good language results. These data strengthen the argument that ways in which to rectify low language levels must be found.

1.5   Methodology

1.5.1   Research Paradigm

The methodology used was a qualitative study located within an interpretative case study. In qualitative research, detailed thought is given to the holistic picture in which the research topic is grounded (Briggs and Coleman, 2007:27). Patton (2002) defines a qualitative method as naturalistic; to the extent that the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the participants for purposes of the evaluation. A qualitative case study represents, describes and aims to understand particular views of the educational world (Creswell, 2009b). In this case, the interpretative paradigm was underpinned by observation and interpretation of the support strategies teachers in the Foundation Phase used and made meaning of that information (Maxwell, 2005). Observation, face-to-face interviews and documents were used as data collection methods (Henning, van Rensburg and Smit, 2004).

1.5.2   Sampling and sampling procedure

Based on a situational and contextual analysis (Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit, 2004), purposive sampling has been found to be suitable for this study and took place in a non-random manner, based on specific criteria relevant to the research problem. The sample consisted of three Foundation Phase teachers and one Head of Department (HOD) from one school in the Western Cape, as well as one Foundation Phase Curriculum Advisor (CA). Morse and Niehaus (2009) define purposeful sampling as the aptitude to impart practice and opinions in an articulate, expressive and speculative manner. Creswell (2012) adds that purposeful sampling is the selection of individuals and groups that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest. Maree (2010:178) and Patton (2002) allege that in qualitative research; the goal is to collect rich data to represent the reality accurately. Interviews with five respondents were conducted to determine language support strategies they used in classes and to determine whether there were any gaps.

Of the 220 primary schools in the Metropole North Education District (MNED) in Cape Town, this research study was limited to the Foundation Phase in one public primary school and five respondents participated. The respondents were three Foundation Phase teachers, with one teacher in each of Grades one, two and three, respectively, as well as the Foundation Phase Head of Department (HOD) and the school's Foundation Phase Curriculum Advisor (CA). The rationale behind including the HOD and the CA was the researcher's belief that they would yield the most relevant information about the topic under investigation. The school serves 980 learners with 34 teachers, and the LoLT is English. This school is classified as Quintile one, meaning the school is located in a working-class community and the children who are found in these classes are from low-income to no-income households. The home language of these learners is primarily Afrikaans and IsiXhosa.

The reason this school was chosen was the poor Systemic Assessment results in 2013 of 19%. The average literacy scores of the selected school in the Annual National Assessment (ANA) were 35% in Grade one, 21% in Grade two and 20% in Grade three. The previous year it was even lower; at 12%. This was not the only school with low results, but the school represents a common language problem of most schools in the area.

1.5.3   Data generation

1.5.3.1   Interviews

Semi-structured, open-ended individual interviews were conducted with three teachers sampled for this study. Interviews were in-depth and open-ended. After interviewing the three teachers, an interview with the HOD and CA was conducted in order to triangulate the interview findings from the different data sources. The interviews took place after school hours in the classrooms of Teachers one, two and three and the HOD respectively; and the CA's office at MNED.

1.5.3.2   Non-participant observations

The researcher observed each teacher thrice. Specific attention was paid to teacher interactions with the learners, the teachers' language usage and written tasks that they gave learners to do. The researcher collected data in these English medium classes over a period of three months. The reason for this choice of procedure was in order to construct a worthwhile argument about current strategies used in Foundation Phase classes and to determine if there were gaps.

Observations, in Briggs and Coleman's' (2007:95) view, can be powerful, flexible and 'real'. Briggs and Coleman (2007) claim that observations involve studying people in 'naturally occurring settings'.   The researcher observed teachers in practice in their natural classrooms. Extensive field notes relating to each teacher's strategies were taken: with the permission of the teachers, lessons were audio-taped.

1.5.3.3   Document analysis

The researcher analysed the South African educational policy documents namely LiEP and CAPS, teachers' lesson planning and assessment files as well as the learners' classwork exercise books. The purpose of the document analysis was to confirm the data obtained from interviews and observations relating to the Foundation Phase teachers' support strategies to develop CALP (Babbie and Mouton, 2004:146 and 147).

Methodological triangulation as noted by Patton (2002) is the use of multiple methods to study a single problem. The researcher intended to triangulate data from the observations and interviews with the documents analysed to support the assumptions of support strategies Foundation Phase teachers are using to develop CALP and to authenticate the findings.

1.5.4 Data analysis

The interview and observation generated data were repeatedly examined in order to obtain an overall impression of the support strategies the teachers used (Creswell, 2012). The researcher interpreted and analysed the data by searching for main themes and identifying pervasive patterns in the information. I wrote a narrative content analysis of the development, using the same data.

The reviewed literature and the theories which framed the study served as reference to the analysis and the findings (Patton, 2002). The researcher intended to analyse the teachers' responses and practices in light of the CALP theory of Cummins (2000) and identified any gaps that were evident.

1.5.5 Credibility, Reliability and Validity

Briggs and Coleman (2007) indicate that using a combination of data collection methods increases trustworthiness because the strengths of one method can compensate for the weaknesses of another. Patton (2002) questions whether the use of multiple sources of data allows for convergence in support of the research question or assists in establishing the trustworthiness of the research. For the purposes of this research, data was collected and triangulated by means of interviews, classroom observations and document analysis.

To ensure credibility, examination of trustworthiness is crucial. Patton (2002) emphasises the credibility of the techniques and methods used to ensure the integrity, dependability and accuracy of the findings. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) contend that multi-method approaches enhance the credibility and reliability of the research. Through respondent validation, the researcher reduced the risk of bias. Carefully formulated questions restricted the bias.

1.5.6 Ethical consideration

The researcher ensured the confidentiality of all interviewees' information and adhered to ethical principles. The researcher applied for ethical clearance to conduct the study from the Educational Research Department of CPUT. In order to conduct this research in the school, permission was obtained via a letter from the Directorate: Research at the WCED, the Principal of the school, the Teachers and learners' parents. This letter informed them that, among other ethical principles, participation in the study was voluntary, that a participant could withdraw from the study at any time they felt like so doing, that data collected would remain strictly confidential and identities would be kept anonymous, and no harm would befall any participants as a result of participating in the study. The written approval from the

WCED to conduct the research was presented to the school principal and School Governing Body (SGB). The teachers, parents, HOD and CA received a letter of consent, ensuring their anonymity.

1.6   Summary

In Chapter one, the introductory orientation and formulation of the research problem were presented. This chapter comprises an overview of the aim of the study. The key terms have been clarified and the purpose, significance, limitations and ethical consideration were verified. This chapter places the study in perspective and orientates the reader to the nature of the study.

Success rates in English deteriorate constantly at schools where learners are not proficient in English as LoLT. Learners' under-achievement in language and the high retention rate plague teachers at these schools. In view of these factors, the teaching of English proficiency in Foundation Phase to learners whose home language is not English and provision of guidelines for teachers warrant urgent research. The main purpose of this study is to obtain an insight into the teacher's role in implementing support strategies to develop CALP, the effectiveness of these strategies and the gap that exist. The new knowledge assisted the researcher to identify support strategies used by Foundation Phase teachers to develop CALP efficiently.

Chapter two presents literature and debates on the support strategies Foundation Phase teachers used to develop CALP in the Western Cape. The conceptual framework is based on the socio-cultural theory of learning, the CALP theory of Cummins (1994, 1996, 2000 and 2011). Reference is made to the social development theory of Vygotsky (1978) and the theory and the phases of cognitive development of Piaget (1972). In this chapter teaching strategies of teachers in the Foundation Phase are investigated, reflecting on both the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) documents.

Chapter three outlines the research method by giving a detailed explanation of the case-study approach which was used during this study. This chapter describes both the interviews, observations and analysis of the teaching documents analysed as the instruments used to gather data, as well as the design of the research process. It gives detail of the three Foundation Phase classes where the data was gathered and the language support strategies used by the teachers. The sample size was one case study.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   Introduction

In this chapter, literature pertinent to strategies used by Foundation Phase teachers use to support learners' Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) is presented. First, aspects regarding language as a medium of communication, language policies in South Africa before and after 1994, and challenges experienced by Foundation Phase teachers in English-medium classrooms, are reflected on in detail. CALP theory of Cummins (1994, 1996, 2000 and 2011), with reference to Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory and Piaget's (1972) phases of cognitive development theory are debated. Last, a critique of CALP theory, teaching strategies and the role of the teacher is offered.

Educational inequity is the dark inheritance of apartheid in a liberated South Africa. The present education system is left to grapple with a complex problem. Society, politics and education have an influence on a school and its teachers. Barber and Mourshed (2007:14) assert that 'available evidence suggests the main driver of the variation in learning at school is the quality of the teachers.' According to Jansen (2013), the quality of a country's teachers and the quality of its education system are intimately related. This interconnection is a decisive element of the education system. Barber and Mourshed (2007:12) contend that the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers.

All children deserve better preparation by their teachers in the Foundation Phase to read, write and think critically (Soudien, 2012). Soudien (2012) emphasises that these skills are the foundations on which further studies, job satisfaction, productivity and meaningful citizenship rest. Cummins (2011:142) agrees that language proficiency is often an indicator of future academic achievement. Language engagement consists of cognitive strategies and conceptual understanding. Language strategies are crucial because academic language is primarily in printed text rather than in everyday conversation.

2.2   Language as Medium of Communication

Language, as defined by Cook (1999:121), the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary and Thesaurus (2008), and the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2011), is a practice of human communication. This practice of communication is applied to convey needs, requirements,

requests, wishes, desires and ideas. The Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary and Thesaurus (2008) defines language as either spoken or written, consisting of the use of sounds, words and grammar in a structured and conventional way. Cook (1999) adds, it is through this practice that people come into contact with each other emotionally, spiritually and culturally. Individuals exchange their needs and points of view through language.

Language, according to Vygotsky (1978), is the most important means by which children acquire social knowledge from other people. Language plays a central role in how children learn in schools. Desai (2012) states that language plays a crucial role in learning: through language children develop ideas or concepts; through language children make sense of the teaching they receive in the classroom and the written texts; and through language children express understanding of what they have learnt from the teacher. Language gives utterance to ideas and perspectives. As learners begin to use social speech, egocentric speech, and inner speech, they learn to communicate and form thoughts and regulate intellectual functions (Vygotsky, 1978). Mead (2006) adds that through language, the contrasts become known and evident. Through language, ideas are spoken and expressed (Jenkins, 2005). Cummins (1986:23) affirms that "each language lays down its boundaries within the amorphous thought-mass and stresses different factors in it in different arrangements, puts the centres of gravity in different places and gives them different emphases".

According to Viljoen and Malefe (2001), language has always been a contentious issue in South Africa because policies developed post-1994 were not informed by linguistic considerations. Viljoen and Malefe (2001) claimed the policies were not shaped by pedagogical consideration and were not drafted for empowerment of speakers of black languages. The Western Cape has a special language context: Cape Coloureds combine English and Afrikaans in a distinctive, informal local dialect of their own making. A concern for Foundation Phase teachers in South Africa is for the cognitive needs and language deficiencies and consequent scholastic build-up of Coloured learners.

Foundational skills in language are crucial for a good education system: quality education promotes technology shifts and changes imperative to solve present-day challenges (Mead, 2006). The quality of the schooling system and its teachers significantly affects the building blocks for learning, of which language is part. Education entitles individuals to spell out their identity, take control of their lives, raise healthy families, take part confidently in developing a just society and eradicate poverty. Education and quality education improve the social capital of a country.

2.3   Language Policies in South Africa Pre- and Post-1994

The Bantu Education Act No 47 which was passed in 1953 by the South African government advocated separation of citizens of the country on the basis of race (Hartshorne, 1992). Four ethnic groups, Whites, Coloureds, Blacks and Indians had four separate education departments and maintained separate cultures through language for these four different population groups (Biko, 2013). All Black schools were forced to use both Afrikaans and English as language of teaching and learning (LoLT). Soudien (2007) stated there were striking inequalities between these four education departments regarding curriculum development and protocols, teacher qualifications, teacher-learner ratios, funding, equipment, facilities, buildings and books. Heugh (2000) reiterated that during the apartheid era education for the majority black South African population (including Coloured and Indian races), was undermined, but was particularly devastating for Blacks. Teachers were poorly qualified which influenced the standard of education and resulted in high failure rates (Hartshorne, 1992).

Post-1994 the National Education Policy Act (NEPA) of 1996 (SA Government, 1996) was introduced which aimed for 'the advancement and protection of the fundamental rights of every person' guaranteed in terms of Chapter two of the Constitution. Section five (1) of the South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996, declared that 'a public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirements, without unfairly discriminating against them in any way.' A crucial teaching problem for the teacher was how to reconcile the needs of all the different language speaking learners in terms of curriculum demands.

In the DBE documentation, specifically the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (DBE, 1997), the emphasis is on developing multilingualism within a framework of additive bi/multilingualism. The LiEP is 'part of a continuous process by which policy for language in education is being developed as part of a national language plan encompassing all sectors of society (DBE, 1997:2).' The Language in Education Policy (DBE, 1997), grants parents the right to exercise language rights on behalf of minor learners. Teachers face new challenges due to these rapidly increasing numbers of linguistically diverse learners in their classes.

Several curriculum changes followed. The changes started with Outcomes Based Education (OBE) which was implemented to move away from the apartheid curriculum. The new system focussed on skills, knowledge and values (Alexander, 2002). Jansen (1998) though, predicted the failure of OBE: something which would hamper what teachers actually taught in their classrooms for a long time. Shortly after implementation of OBE, Curriculum 2005

followed and was aimed at empowering teachers: the adjusted system was resource intensive but not directive enough to be implemented successfully in most schools (Soudien, 2007).

In 2002 Curriculum 2005 was reviewed and changed to reduce its complexity. The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) was introduced (DBE, 2002). The RNCS simplified the outcomes and emphasised basic skills, content knowledge and grade progression (DBE, 2002).

DBE repeatedly point out how critical it is to improve the teaching of English home language, in order to play its cross-curricular role effectively (Heugh, 2000). However, according to Heugh (2000), what is not corrected, is the lack of a strong cognitive and academic development in home language.

2.4   Difficulties experienced by Foundation Phase teachers in English-Medium classrooms

DBE required that all teachers follow the national curriculum, CAPS. However, the teaching of language in the Foundation Phase classroom, according to Taylor (2012), creates obstacles for Foundation Phase teachers. Eleven languages have been granted official status in South Africa and in the Western Cape the distinctive Cape dialect is spoken. The School Governing Bodies (SGB), which represents the interests of parents, has the power to determine the LoLT at schools. Given the number of languages spoken in South Africa, there can be considerable language diversity within the school: learners do not all speak the same home language.

Language issues remain of great concern due to parents who have a choice to enrol their children at historically 'Coloured, White' and 'Indian' English-medium schools even though such schools may not represent children's home language. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) expects teachers to assist these learners with limited language abilities. More often than not, three or more languages are spoken by learners in one classroom (Vermeulen, 2000:265). Significantly, research conducted in South Africa by Soudien (2012) suggests that English as Language of Learning and Teaching (ELoLT) has become synonymous with poor academic performance, low self-esteem and social marginalisation. Alexander (2002) and Soudien (2012) states that teachers face the daunting task of teaching the academic curriculum and a new language concurrently. Teachers are frustrated by

having learners in their classes who are eloquent in their home languages but otherwise quiet when having to speak, read or write in English' (O'Connor, 2000:3).

Teachers struggle to respond adequately to the increased linguistic diversity found in their classrooms because they are often not familiar with most of these languages spoken by some learners. Teachers have to face the language challenges in the classroom for which they may not have been professionally prepared (Robinson, 2003). Heugh (2000) confirms that professional support for teachers is scarce in the area of instruction for children who begin school knowing a language other than English. Kwenda and Robinson (2010) assert that there is no national curriculum for teacher education in South Africa and that institutions have to design their own curricula, guided by national policy. Language development in the Foundation Phase is a crucial aspect of learner's general conceptual development: Nomlomo and Desai (2014) revised the language curriculum which they have designed at The University of the Western Cape (UWC) to improve language curricula before offering the programme to student teachers in 2016.

The South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996 (SA Government, 1996) allows learners to fail once in a phase. Underprepared learners, particularly in home language, which depends on key skills of phonics, reading, comprehending, writing and language structure as well as prior knowledge to build on, were promoted without having the requisite skills. Out of frustration, teachers blame parents, learners for not learning, previous teachers who taught the learners and eventually CAPS. Teachers have to put in much more work for these learners who are not academically on par and requiring considerable support.

Last, a substantial difficulty exists in so far as classes are filled beyond capacity even though policy indicates the learner-to-educator ratio is 30.3:1 (DBE, 2013). In reality, the learner-to-educator ratio on average is 40:1. It has progressively become the duty and responsibility of teachers to develop strategies to facilitate quality education for their learners. However, teachers require support strategies aimed at improving teacher pedagogy, performance and overall accountability at the Foundation Phase level.

2.5   Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

Cognition, as stated by McKay (2003), is the mental activity and behaviour that allows learners to understand the world. Cognition includes functions of learning, perception, memory and thinking and pertains to mental processes and proficiency (Cummins, 2011). Learners are not likely to absorb the language as they did in the social communication stage.

This level of language learning is essential for learners to succeed in schools (Cummins, 2000).

Cognitive development forms a significant part of Vygotsky's and Piaget's theories. But both Vygotsky and Piaget differ in their view of learner's cognitive development. Vygotsky (1978) emphasises the role of the teacher as mediator and the need to have support from a 'more knowledgeable other' in learner's cognitive development. Piaget (McLeod, 2015) offers an alternative view to that of Vygotsky and claims that cognitive development is at the centre of the human being.

A significant feature of Vygotsky's theory is his concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Vygotsky (1978) describes two levels of attainment for the ZPD. Level one describes what a learner is capable of doing without any help from others. Level two means denotes what a learner can achieve with help from teachers. The gap between level one and level two, is what Vygotsky (1978) described as the ZPD. Another important aspect of this theory is scaffolding: when a teacher provides support for a learner's cognitive development, the degree of support given can be adjusted give depending on the individual's progress. Vygotsky (1978) believes that learning occurs before cognitive development yet Piaget (1972) disagrees and believes cognitive development precedes learning.

Piaget (1972) believes that language is contingent on knowledge and understanding acquired through cognitive development. According to Piaget (McLeod, 2015), children actively seek out information and adapt it to the knowledge and conceptions of the world that they already have. Among the most significant of Piaget's ideas is the notion that children organise their knowledge into increasingly complex cognitive structures called schemata: the errors they make provide important clues about their thinking, and cognitive development can be discerned in perceptual-motor behaviour as well as in language skills. Piaget believes learner's cognitive development occurs in four unique stages. The pre-operational stage (pre-schoolers, Grade R, Grade one) can use language and other symbols to represent objects. Learners need to describe and explain things through the use of speech (Snowman and Biehler, 2006): learners should be given the opportunity to express themselves. During this pre-operational stage there is rapid increase in language ability (Eggen and Kauchak, 2014:48).

The concrete operational stage, seven to eleven years is considered by Piaget (1972) to be an important stage in the learner's cognitive development, due to the start of logical or operational thought. This stage involves perception, imitation, mental imagery, drawing and

language. Piaget (1972) states that assimilation is the means by which learners perceive, and adapt to, new information: fitting it into their existing cognitive schemas. By contrast, accommodation occurs when the existing knowledge does not work and needs to be changed to deal with a new situation.

This study focuses on Cummins's theory. Basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and Cummins's CALP theory (2000) propose a difference between conversational language in everyday activities and academic language which includes vocabulary knowledge in specific areas. Cummins (2000) is of the opinion that conversational language differs from the language that teachers use in the classroom, and from language children are expected to learn to use. BICS, as explained by Cummins (2000), refers to conversational fluency in a language.

Cummins (2000) refers to CALP as formal academic learning. Specific teaching of phonics, key vocabulary, reading, writing and sentence structures are required for these tasks. Foundation Phase teachers are responsible for teaching language components. Conversational language, as identified by Cummins (2000, 2011), does not require higher order thinking skills such as hypothesizing, evaluating, inferring, generalizing, predicting or classifying. Yet, Cummins (2011) concurs that these are the language functions which are related to learning and development of cognition: they occur in all areas of the curriculum and without them a child's potential in academic areas cannot be realised. Learning, in an additional language may support BICS but impedes achievement of CALP.

2.6   Critique of CALP

Early critiques of the difference between BICS and CALP of Cummins were put forward by Carole Edelsky and her colleagues (Edelsky, Hudelson, Altwerger, Barkin and Jilbert, 1983). Edelsky et al (1983) and Wiley (1996) observe that distinctions between BICS and CALP reflect an independent view on language that disregards its position in social practices and power relations. Edelsky *et al.* (1983) attribute bilingual learners' academic difficulties to low CALP and argue that CALP or academic language proficiency represents little more than assessment results. Edelsky (1990) argues that CALP is an artifact or the work of the inappropriate way in which it has been measured. Edelsky *et al.* (1983) argue that the notion of CALP promotes a 'deficit theory' (shortage of something needed) in so far as it attributes academic failure of bilingual minority learners to low CALP rather than to poor schooling.

The BICS and CALP distinction has been critiqued by Scarcella (2003) who regards it as oversimplified, reflective of an 'autonomous' rather than an 'ideological' notion of literacy. Corson (1995) highlights the linguistic difference between typical conversational interactions in English as compared to academic uses of English. The implication of the CALP theory is that learners already have oral communication skills (i.e. BICS) acquired in their own language but weaker literacy skills. In terms of Cummins's (2000) theory, learners have acquired BICS but not CALP. The BICS and CALP distinction was formulated to improve language proficiency in communication as well as academic performance. This conclusion is illustrated by Biber's (1996) factor analysis of more than a million English speech and written texts from a wide variety of genres. The analysis reveals underlying dimensions consistent with the distinction between conversational and academic aspects of language proficiency (Biber, 1996).

In reaction to these critiques, Cummins and Swain (1986) and Cummins (1996) alludes to the fact that the construction of academic language proficiency does not depend on assessment results to support either its validity or relevance to education, as illustrated by the analysis of Corson and Biber. Cummins points to the 'elaborated socio-political framework' within which the BICS and CALP distinction was placed (Cummins 1984, 1986, 1996). Much of the critique of the distinction derives from removing constructs from their original context and arguing that they are not appropriate in a different context. Cummins (1986) believes that underachievement among learners who were assessed at schools may be ascribed to persuasive relations of power operating in society at large.

A misconception is that CALP (academic language) is a 'superior' form of language proficiency than BICS (conversational language). This interpretation was never intended (Cummins, 2000). Conversational language performance is not necessarily related to the linguistic demands of schooling. Access to specific forms of language is required to continue to progress academically: something which remains a major goal of schooling and requirements of teachers.

2.7 Teaching strategies

Strategies are methods chosen to bring about a desired solution to a problem (Konishi and Torone, 2004). Support strategies, on the other hand, are integrated approaches, designed, tested and implemented to achieve improvement (De Witt and Niemann, 1998). An important focus of academic instruction in De Witt and Niemann's (1998:119) view is development of

appropriate teaching strategies: mental processes for facilitating proficiency of language knowledge and skills.

The review of literature indicates that there is no general agreement on teaching English strategies. There are two widely separate schools of thoughts. One approach emphasises cognitive processes. The theories of Krashen and Terrell (1983) and Cummins (2000) intersect; both emphasizing the value of understanding and comprehending teacher language input. A second, related notion is that of Tharp and Gallimore's (1990), whereby teachers assist learners through the language zone and the content zone. Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory, the zone of proximal development, is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what s/he can do with help. Vygotsky believes that a learner's cognitive development is shaped by the cultural context in which s/he lives (Gauvain and Parke, 2010). Vygotsky (1978) claims teachers and more competent peers guide each learner's social and cultural experience. Konishi and Tarone (2004), on the other hand, argue that cognitive processes are not influenced by instruction. However, Cummins (2000) points out that the preferred method is to lead learners through transitional stages towards academic proficiency.

Walker (1989:13) relates teaching practices to teachers' own schooling and training and their 'socialisation' into practice. Many teachers understand literacy learning as a matter of learning sets of skills before they can be used (Walker, 1989:14). Vinjevold and Roberts (1999:232) observed language teachers in the FP and found that learners hardly engaged with books. Reading consisted predominantly of sentences written on the board and chanted by the class as a whole. Motshekga (in DBE, 2010) voices her concern regarding the need for teacher support in implementing the curriculum. Early improvement in language enhances standards overall and corrects underachievement, as clearly stated by Tharp and Gallimore (1990). This finding has become a national priority, particularly in language (Motshekga, in DBE, 2010).

Teaching language well is important to children's success. Few studies take the teacher's vital role into account. Coleman and Goldenberg (2006:61) argues that it is surprising how little research around the effects the Foundation Phase (FP) teacher has on the cognitive academic language proficiency of learners within the South African context. Coleman and Goldenberg (2006:19) concurs with this view by stating that teachers lack an adequate research base from which to answer important questions, particularly about promoting cognitive academic language proficiency. The little available research that exists argues that the struggle with language continues especially in poor schools to the extent that it is 'an

area of dire neglect' (Vinjevold and Roberts, 1999:236). Research into South African schools is growing, however, with the broadening of standardised systemic testing and the availability of data. These studies take teachers' views into consideration but do not study the teacher as the primary participant. This is a gap in the body of knowledge which I mean to fill by means of this research project.

The work of Cummins forms the foundation of this study, not because his ideas are significantly different from those of others writing from this perspective, but because he yields a broad set of clearly defined terms with which to improve academic language instruction.

2.8   The role of teachers

Teachers are central to education. To teach is a socio-cultural, mediated process that involves interaction between individuals such as teachers and learners (Darling-Hammond and Bransford, 2005; Fitzmaurice, 2010). This interaction requires supervision, coaching and feedback to enable learners to apply different kinds of knowledge in the classroom (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2005). Teachers set the tone for their classrooms but most of all teachers teach knowledge to learners. In the Foundation Phase, this teaching occurs where the teachers teach the class as a whole or in small focussed groups.

The core role and duties of teachers require delivery of the curriculum. Teachers are given the curriculum, CAPS, and must follow the guidelines that meet South Africa's educational policies. Throughout the year, CAPS is followed by teachers so that all pertinent language knowledge and expected language competencies are developed. The second primary framework that underpins this research is how language is taught in an educational setting, and how it is located within the field of Applied Linguistics. McCarthy (2001) views Applied Linguistics as a way of relating basic disciplines with practical language use concerns. Stern (1992:8), on the other hand, uses the term 'applied' as 'intermediary' and McCarthy (2001:8) uses the term 'mediator' where the teacher mediates her knowledge of the language to the learners. In the Foundation Phase, teachers teach the class as a whole and in small groups.

2.9   Summary

The preceding chapter deals with the conceptual framework in support of the research question: strategies used by teachers in the FP and the influence the teacher has on improving CALP. Different aspects of support strategies and cognitive academic language proficiency are analysed within this debate. Chapter two focuses on the review of related

literature with regard to Cummins, a key theorist, in order to clarify and gain a deeper understanding of the research topic. Reference was made to Vygotsky and Piaget. The South African educational policies pre- and post-1994 were reviewed. Teaching strategies, the role of the FP teacher and challenges experienced by FP teachers were explored. The research gap was identified as the teacher as the primary participant in support strategies used to develop CALP with the prevalence of research in FP classes.

Chapter three discusses the research methodology by giving a clear explanation of the interpretative case-study approach. Identification and selection of the case, discussion of the data generation instruments, procedures of the research process and analysis are described. The context and participants are explained as well as the rationale for adopting a qualitative paradigm. Issues of credibility, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations are included.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

In this chapter, the following aspects are presented: research approach, interpretative paradigm, and research design. The rationale for choosing a qualitative paradigm for this study is explained. Chapter three identifies and justifies use of a case study. The sampling procedure, context and participants of the study are described and a clear description of the processes is presented. A description of the data collection methods and the procedures for data collection and analysis follow. Included in this chapter are issues of ethical consideration, reliability, validity, rigour and trustworthiness. The research was guided by the research question: support strategies used by Foundation Phase (FP) teachers to develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).

According to Atkins and Wallace (2012:6), research is a process of investigation that is systemic, controlled and empirical, and is based on a collection of data. Bassey (1999:38) argues that critical research enquiry is aimed at educational judgements and decisions to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and wisdom aimed to improve educational action. It was the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that the research process is systematic, rigorous, credible and reliable (Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit, 2004). Neuman (2006) emphasises the fact that qualitative research calls for moral responsibility: not quick answers.

3.2   Research Approach

Of relevance to this research study is the qualitative research approach: the study is concerned with teaching support strategies to develop CALP in practice in the Western Cape. Qualitative research, according to Creswell (2009b), is an in-depth inquiry, value-laden, context-dependent and non-universal. This view corresponds with that of Henning *et al.* (2004) who claim that the reason for framing a study within a qualitative framework lies in the quest for understanding and in-depth inquiry. Mason (2002), Henning *et al.* (2004) and Creswell (2009b), reiterate that qualitative research produces holistic understanding of rich contextual, and generally unstructured, non-numeric data by engaging in conversations with research participants in a natural setting.

Miles and Huberman (1994) describe other strengths of a qualitative research: it focuses on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings. Patton (2002) states and explains that the researcher does not attempt to manipulate participant responses for purposes a pre-determined outcome. The qualitative method examines individual actions and approaches of teachers most effectively (Patton, 2002). Teachers can be understood, from the way in which they articulate their views on language strategies they employ, and how they make sense of teaching language in a natural setting: the classroom. A naturalistic inquiry was well suited for this study because the researcher is interested in studying teachers' natural behaviour and practice in the classroom. Its strength is that it offers insights into experiences in the classroom and the effects the teacher has in a way that quantitative data cannot provide.

A quantitative methodological approach is ill-suited to capturing the lived experiences of the teachers in this study. Quantitative research has shortcomings and limitations to take into account the complex and multiple contexts in which this study occurs. Creswell (2012) identified distinctive differences between qualitative and quantitative research designs: quantitative research uses numbers, is concerned with behaviour and uses generalisations; qualitative research uses words, is concerned with meaning and uses case studies. The researcher is interested in focusing on unanticipated outcomes in the classroom and not in evaluating predetermined variables. The qualitative case study research was best suited for the study.

The concern in this research project is with the teaching strategies teachers used and the observation and interaction between teacher and learners as well as the classroom environment. Because of the nature of the problem under investigation, and the choice of the research method, the study follows an interpretative paradigm.

3.3   Interpretative Paradigm

In making sense of research information and transforming that information into data, researchers draw on a set of beliefs or assumptions called paradigms (Bassey, 1999:42). Seal, Gobo, Gubrium and Silverman (2008), point to four fields of educational research, namely positivism, interpretivism, critical theory and postmodernism.

The foundational principle to all interpretative work, according to Aspers (2009), is that it attempts to understand human beings in a social context. Neuman (2006:72) asserts that the interpretative paradigm in qualitative research analyses social actions in their natural setting, through direct and detailed observation, in order to understand and interpret how people

create meaning in their social world. On the other hand, Henning *et al.* (2004) points out that in an interpretative paradigm participation; collaboration and engagement are key factors to qualitative research. Creswell (2009:14a) explains that qualitative research attempts to describe, understand and interpret how various participants in a social setting construct the world around them.

This study is situated in the interpretative paradigm because it attempts to document and interpret the teacher's language strategies in a specific classroom. Likewise, the study is exploratory in nature and follows issues that are of interest in ethnographic studies because of the socio-cultural interactions between learners and teacher (Stake, 1995). It focuses on discovering and expressing important characteristics of a certain phenomenon as it exists the way certain subjects (language teachers) experience the phenomenon (Maxwell and Satake, 2006). Creswell (2009a) adds that it is the study of 'structures of consciousness' as experienced from a first-person perspective. An interpretative paradigm, grants the researcher greater scope to address issues of impact and allows for greater understanding of teachers' perceptions of support strategies used to develop learners' CALP.

In this interpretative paradigm, the researcher is a participant observer who studies the language classroom activities and discerns the meaning of the teacher's actions as they are expressed. Using qualitative methods such as interviews and observation, and presenting this information and the perceptions from the perspective of the teacher participants, affords the researcher the opportunity to gather 'deep' information (Aspers, 2009). It was effective at highlighting experiences and perceptions of the language teachers from their own perspectives.

3.4 Research Design

A research design focuses on the end-product and all the steps in the process to achieve that outcome (Yin, 2009). Research design, according to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004), can be thought of as a 'logic plan' that enlightens the study to be conducted. Burton and Bartlett (2005, 215) claim it is imperative, before undertaking research, to create guidelines that give order and direction to the study, to assist the researcher and not to lose focus. For Henning *et al.* (2004:31), research design pertains to participation, collaboration and engagement. Creswell (2009b), however, describes a research design as a descriptive case study that is analysed through qualitative methods.

The research design adopted for this study is an ethnographic case study analysed through qualitative methods. According to Maxwell (2005) and Flick (2009), ethnographic case studies provide a detailed, in-depth description of everyday life and practice. Ethnography, according to Henning *et al.* (2004), is a research process based on fieldwork using a variety of research techniques (interviews and observations) which include engagement in the lives of those being studied over an extended period of time. The eventual written product (ethnography) draws its data primarily from this fieldwork experience and usually emphasises descriptive detail as a result (Bryman, 2004).

Ethnographic work, with its attention to contextual and cultural interpretation, added to the researcher's knowledge of how teachers are applying language support strategies. This kind of research method, as viewed by Patton (2002), allows researchers to gain an insight into the real situation of teachers teaching language in the classroom. Bryman (2004) confirms that an ethnographic investigation can provide a potentially rich description of the context in which language learning takes place.

A defining feature of qualitative case study research is its focus on 'how' and 'why' questions (Myers, 2009). For this reason it is appropriate for descriptive and exploratory studies (Mouton, 2001). A case study can focus on describing processes and individual behaviour in its natural setting or sequence of events in which the behaviour occurs (Stake, 1995). Case studies as stated by Boyce and Neale (2006), are a detailed story about something interesting, special or unique and the researcher is integrally involved in the case. They provide a chronological description of the perceptions of the teachers and highlight specific events relevant to the case. Bryman (2004) agrees and refers to a case study as a method which captures unique characteristics through detailed data within a setting. Sturman (1999) argues that a distinguishing feature of a case study is that human systems have a wholeness or integrity to them, rather than being a loose connection of traits, necessitating in-depth investigation.

Yin (2009), cautions that researchers must be mindful of overcoming criticism and limitations such as lack of precision, objectivity and rigour when conducting case study research. Merriam (2009) argues that the strength of a case study outweighs its limitations because it is anchored in real-life situations and is the best way to answer the research questions. Case studies, as affirmed by Bryman (2004), can penetrate situations in ways that are not always susceptible to numerical analysis.

McMillan (2008) concurs with the above authors when he describes a case study as a detailed analysis of one or more events, settings, programmes social groups, in their natural context. The focus may be on several entities (multiple-site study) or one entity (within the site of study), as in the case of this research project. Multiple studies allow the researcher to analyse within each setting and across settings. A holistic case study with embedded units, allows the researcher to understand only one unique critical case. In a multiple case study, more than one case is studied in order to understand the similarities and differences between the cases. Yin (2003:47) describes how multiple case studies can be used to predict similar results or to predict contrasting results. However, this research was neither a comparative nor a predictive study but a way of understanding and exploring support strategies Foundation Phase teachers used to develop CALP. This case study was an intensive study of a single unit; one school that was observed over a period of three months.

The choice of an ethnographic research strategy based on classroom observation is appropriate for the study of the behaviour, activities, interaction, teaching processes and discourse of the teacher in the classroom (Hornberger and Corson, 1997). It allowed the researcher to gain access to what really happens when teachers teach language in the classroom.

3.4.1   Sampling

3.4.1.1   Sampling procedure

Purposeful sampling was selected. Purposeful sampling is concerned with the identification and selection of individuals or groups of individuals who are especially knowledgeable about, or experienced with, a phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2012). As well as knowledge and experience, Bernard (2002) adds the significance of availability and disposition to take part.

Morse and Niehaus (2009) point out that qualitative method of sampling highlight thoroughness and validity. Purposeful sampling is the aptitude to impart practice and opinions in an articulate, expressive and speculative manner. Sampling must be consistent and congruent with the goals and premises inherent in the use of qualitative methods. Qualitative methods bring to a successful conclusion, deep understanding (Patton, 2002). Maree (2010:178) and Patton (2002) allege that in qualitative research; the goal is to collect rich data to present the reality accurately.

Of the 220 schools in Metropole North Educational District (MNED) this research study was limited to one public primary school in the Northern suburbs of Cape Town, South Africa. The circuit team manager of MNED identified three schools. One of the three schools was chosen

first on its low socio-economic background in which unemployment and poverty prevailed. The second reason this school was chosen was its poor Systemic Assessment results in 2013 as well as its low average literacy scores of the Annual National Assessment (ANA) in the Foundation Phase. This school is the most representative of the common language problem faced by most of the schools in the context in which this study was conducted.

The participants of this research design were purposefully selected based on their involvement in teaching language at Foundation Phase level and on the basis that they could provide answers related to strategies for teaching CALP. Although there are three phases in this primary school, the Foundation, and Intermediate and Senior Phase, the study was limited to the Foundation Phase. The latter Phase was chosen because the purpose of this study was primarily to identify the support strategies that Foundation Phase teachers use to develop the CALP of learners whose home language is not English; to determine how successful they are and to determine gaps in the strategies used.

In keeping with the purpose of the study, it was important to include the Foundation Phase Head of Department (HOD) at the participating school. Interviewing the HOD was crucial because she holds a central position at the school: her interview limited the risk of misrepresentations (Flick, 2009). Last, the Curriculum Advisor (CA) of Metropole North Educational District (MNED) was interviewed because she monitors and offers support to Foundation Phase teachers. The rationale behind including the CA was the researcher's belief that the latter would yield relevant information about the topic under investigation. This interview was conducted at the district office at which the CA is stationed. The HOD and CA were selected since they were considered the most appropriate contributors to find possible answers to the research question. Their interviews increased the objectivity and impartiality of responses. Subsequently, the interview data of the three teachers and the HOD were triangulated with data from the Foundation Phase Curriculum Advisor as a method of cross-checking the data gathered (Morse *et al.,* 2009).

The participating school serves 980 learners and has 34 teachers. It is classified as Quintile one: indicating that the school is located in a working-class community and that the children who are found in these classes are from low-income to no-income households. The formal LoLT of the school is English. Different cultures in the school include Coloureds, AmaXhosa and foreign nationals. Each Grade one class has 43 learners, the Grade two class have 40 and the Grade three class have 41 learners. This school is close to the researcher's school which facilitated visiting the field site and minimised the costs incurred, thus making the sampling of the school convenient.

3.4.2   Data generation methods

The selection process began via a letter that was emailed to request participation. The letter had a return slip on which participants indicated their willingness to participate. Arrangements for the administering of the interviews (Appendices D, E and F) and observations (Appendix G) were made. An initial meeting-place, time and date were established for the convenience of the participants and the researcher. The main tool of data generation was the interview, supported by lesson observation and analysis of the policy documents: LiEP, CAPS; teaching documents and learner books.

3.4.2.1   Interviews

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004:79) define interviews as communicative events with the purpose of determining what participants think, know and feel. Maxwell (2005) reiterates and refers to the informal nature of interviews. The interviewer is guided by the interview schedule and concerns that emerge from the topic. The questions in this study were aimed at gaining insights into the support strategies of teachers in Foundation Phase classes.

Aspers (2009) states that an interview is a reliable data collection tool for discovering what people know, what they value and what they think. Open-ended, semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with the same three teachers whose lessons were observed in order to ascertain what language support strategies they used in their classes and the effectiveness of such strategies.

An open-ended, semi-structured interview schedule, consisting of 27 questions (Appendix D), was prepared to gain insight into the strategies that Foundation Phase teachers use to develop CALP. Aspers (2009) explains that the semi-structured method of interviewing has features of both structured and unstructured interviews: it uses open-ended questions. As a result, semi-structured interviewing has the advantage of both methods of interview. The aim of interviews, as explained by Briggs and Coleman (2007), and supported by De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005:296), is to discover underlying motives and desires.

The researcher met on three occasions with each of the three teachers at a convenient time after school hours in the teachers' classrooms. With permission from the three teachers, face-to-face interviews were conducted. According to Ruben and Ruben (2005), this is a direct method of obtaining information that is distinctly different from everyday conversations. Notes were taken and interviews were recorded on a smartphone. Data were transcribed. Each interview lasted for approximately 30 to 40 minutes.

The researcher met and interviewed the Foundation Phase HOD (Appendix E) after school hours in her classroom on her role as supporting the Foundation Phase teachers with language strategies. It was important for the researcher to find out the role the Foundation Phase HOD played in assisting teachers with effective language support strategies which they could use in the classroom.

Last, the researcher interviewed the Foundation Phase Curriculum Advisor (CA) (Appendix F). This interview took place at Metropole North Educational District. The aim was to acquire a deeper understanding of the support strategies that Foundation Phase teachers use to develop learners' CALP. The researcher probed the interviewee for information regarding her role in assisting Foundation Phase teachers with language support strategies.

Interview questions were prepared in advance but the researcher exercised her discretion to digress from the set questions in their order of presentation as the situation demanded. This discretionary adjustment, in Ruben and Ruben's (2005) view, allows for deeper investigation than the prepared and standardised questions. The open-ended, semi-structured individual interview technique allowed effective articulation of how teachers teach, feel, think and implement language strategies in teaching. In-depth, open-ended interviews were conducted with each of the three teachers, the HOD and the CA before the detailed classroom observations.

3.4.2.2   Non-participant observations

Non-participant observation involves the researcher watching teachers in their Foundation Phase classes, applying their knowledge, but without the observer taking any active part in the situation under study (Merriam, 2009). The researcher watched and listened to what teachers said and sometimes asked clarifying questions afterwards (Maxwell and Satake, 2006:45). Kelly (2006) is of the opinion that observation complements other data collection methods; adding to the quality of data collection and the overall study. In Briggs and Coleman's (2007:95) view, observations can be powerful, flexible and 'real'. Briggs and Coleman (2007) claim that observations involve studying people in 'naturally occurring settings'.

Observation, in conjunction with interview data, is important in Flick's (2009) view because there is commonly a contradiction between what people say about themselves and what they actually do. Teachers were observed teaching language in their natural situation in the classroom, because observation, as a research method, has the advantage of directly evaluating teachers' language teaching strategies. The researcher sat at the back of the

classroom while teachers were presenting their lessons. The researcher observed how effectively the teacher used support strategies in Foundation Phase classes to develop CALP in learners whose home language was not English. The rationale behind this procedure was to observe what support strategies teachers used in the language classroom.

During the first week, each teacher teaching phonics and reading lessons was carefully observed once. The researcher returned twice to each of the three teachers being studied for follow-up language lessons. Specific attention was paid to teacher interaction with learners; to what posters and pictures were on the walls, what teaching resources were used, and the quality and quantity of written tasks. As pointed out earlier, the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) is English. However, the home language of these learners is mostly Afrikaans, IsiXhosa and French. The researcher paid particular attention when teachers posed questions to the learners, when interactions took place, or when instructions and explanations were given. As shown earlier, each classroom was visited thrice and the researcher spent an hour each time in each classroom to observe facilitation and approach to the language support and strategies used while teachers conducted lessons (Appendix G). The reason for this scrutiny was to construct a coherent argument about strategies used in Foundation Phase classes, to determine where there were gaps in the learning process and to devise strategies for filling such gaps. Flick (2009) points out those participants tend to change their behaviour when they are aware that they are being observed. To counteract this effect, the following are further areas that were observed in detail to ascertain teacher support to develop CALP in the FP classes:

- How teachers manage to respond adequately when learners used Afrikaans, IsiXhosa or a foreign language to seek assistance or ask for clarification of the teacher.
- How teachers dealt with incorrect language use and mother-tongue interference when learners did not understand concepts or instructions.
- Physical layout of the classroom: whether learners needing support had access to learning resources and the teacher.
- The seating arrangements of the learners: could the teacher monitor language needs and could learners see the language charts on the walls.
- How assessment tasks are administered and assessment results analysed.
- What teaching materials are used and how effectively they were used.
- How teachers planned their language lessons.

Bourdieu (1998) emphasizes the gap that often exists between research into language teaching and the actual practice of it by the teacher - what teachers actually teach when they are in the classroom. Bell (1997:5) re-iterates this view when she argues that there were not enough teaching practices satisfactorily reported on: she claims that 'much educational research does not reflect the reality of the language classroom'.

Classroom observations occurred after teacher interviews. Each observation lasted approximately 60 minutes. Extensive field notes relating to each teacher's strategies were taken. With the permission of the teachers, lessons were audio-taped using the researcher's smartphone. According to Neuman (2006), observation comprises the researcher observing and recording behaviour without attempting to change any observed behaviour. Recordings helped to balance the notes taken with the actual recordings for maximum results.

Limitations that the researcher experienced with the observation method are that the teacher's opinions and attitudes regarding the strategies they used could not be studied while they taught (Flick, 2009). Neither could a complete answer to the effectiveness of these strategies that teachers used to develop CALP be obtained by observations alone (Briggs and Coleman, 2007).

3.4.3   Document analysis

The purpose of the document analysis was to corroborate and confirm data obtained from interviews and observations relating to Foundation Phase teachers' support strategies to develop CALP (Babbie and Mouton, 2004:146 and 147). DBE policy documents, LiEP, CAPS and the National Protocol for Assessment (NPA) (2012 - 2014) provided insight into the developmental stages of language. The teachers' lesson planning and assessment files as well as mark schedules were used in order to answer the sub-research questions concerning what support strategies teachers used. Learners' classwork books and DBE workbooks were analysed to correlate the teaching strategies of teachers and to assess the understanding and interpretation of language knowledge obtained by learners during language lessons. Learners' profiles were not used as their evidence was not needed for this study.

One of the key advantages for conducting documentary research, in Patton's (2002) view, is that the researcher has access to detailed background information and brings up issues not noted by other means. The researcher analysed teachers' lesson planning, assessment files, mark schedules and learner exercise books to uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the support strategies FP teachers used. The quantity as

well as the quality of learner tasks was checked. The following evidence was sought from the documents to determine whether:

- teaching aims stipulated in CAPS had been covered;
- activities and tasks embedded language skills and knowledge;
- text-based writing and language improvement tasks were given; and
- teachers recorded CALP support strategies in lesson planning.

Methodological triangulation, as viewed by Patton (2002), is the use of multiple methods to study a single problem. By triangulating data, the researcher corroborated the findings across data sets and reduced the impact of being potentially biased: something which can occur in a single study (Briggs *et al,* 2007). In this study, methodological triangulation was achieved by using three data generation methods: interviews, observation and document analysis. Flick (2009) points out though those documents can be time-consuming to collect, incomplete or unavailable.

3.5   Credibility, Reliability and Validity

Credibility is consistency or stability of measurement over a variety of conditions in which essentially the same results should be obtained (Bollen, 1989). If the results of the study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable and credible (Joppe, 2000:1).

Validity is concerned with the meaningfulness of research components (Bollen, 1989). Joppe (2000) concurs that validity in qualitative research determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure. Seale (1999:468) states that to ensure credibility in qualitative research, examination of trustworthiness is crucial. To ensure trustworthiness of data and to reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation, various precautionary measures were applied.

The concept of confirmability, in Patton's (2002) opinion, is the qualitative researcher's concern to objectivity. Steps were thus taken to help ensure as far as possible that the study's findings are the result of the experiences and practise of the participants, rather than the preferences of the researcher. The researcher kept minimised subjective encroachment and was reflective throughout. The researcher wished to understand the support strategies teachers used by observing and recording the proceedings. The actual words of participants

were used when reporting since, in Joppe's (2000) view, this use of actual words comprises a way of ensuring that the researcher minimises subjectivity. Each visit in the classrooms began with an atmosphere of calm and assurance of trust. By proceeding in this way, mutual trust was established and data collection was successful.

Interview data were verified with the participants to ensure rigour (Ruben and Ruben, 2005). Through respondent validation, the researcher reduced the risk of bias. Ongoing participant checking during data collection and analysis added to the trustworthiness of data. Patton (2002) emphasises the credibility of the techniques and methods used to ensure integrity, and accuracy of the findings. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) contend that multi-method approaches enhance the credibility of the research. Briggs and Coleman (2007) add that using a combination of data collection methods increases trustworthiness, because strengths of one method can compensate for the weaknesses of another.

Interviews were conducted with three Foundation Phase teachers respectively. Prolonged and persistent field work took place over a period of three months for gaining insight into support strategies teachers used and the effectiveness of strategies the teachers used to develop CALP (Babbie and Mouton, 2004). Interviews, observations and sample documents were deployed during this data collection phase to add to the rigour of the study (Neuman, 2006). The HOD and CA were interviewed in order to triangulate the interview results. The findings were compared across these data sources: the results were triangulated to increase the trustworthiness of the study (Maxwell and Satake, 2006).

In order to avoid being biased, participants were asked to verify data collected before being processed. The researcher followed the same procedures for carrying out both the interview and observation rather than following personal opinion or experience. Collected data were perceived to be dependable and transferable. The researcher reported and analysed what participants said, what was seen in the documents and observed directly while teachers taught.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Permission was requested and granted from the Research Directorate: Western Cape Education Department (WCED) (Appendix A) as authorisation to conduct research at the selected primary school. This permission was sought in order to protect the participants' anonymity and the employer's, thus maintaining confidentiality (Henning *et al.,* 2007). The researcher applied for and was granted an ethical clearance certificate to conduct the study

from the Educational Research Committee of CPUT. The principal of the school (Appendix B), the WCED, the School Governing Body (SGB), teachers (Appendix C), the HOD and the CA was provided with a brief description of the intended study in order to gain permission to conduct research at the school.

Before interviews were conducted or teachers' lessons were observed in the classroom, the researcher assured respondents that the information which was needed for the research was confidential and would not be used for any other purpose. Furthermore, the researcher had access to the data and the content thereof will be available for cross-referencing by the participants. Anonymity was maintained throughout this research. Teachers received a letter of consent, ensuring their anonymity. This informed them that any data collected remained strictly confidential. The confidentiality of all interviewees' information was ensured as well as adherence to ethical principles (Creswell, 2009:89b).

The name of the participating school and identities of teachers were not disclosed in this study. Instead teachers are referred to as Teacher one, Teacher two and Teacher three. Teachers were assured that any information gathered was for research purposes and not for performance-based work. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time if they so wished. The participants were assured that generated data was stored safely with the researcher and the findings will be disposed of after the successful completion of the study.

3.7 Limitations of the investigation

This study has limitations. The sample from one school was not representative of all schools in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town, Western Cape. The strength of conducting the research at one school, however, was that the sample size was rich enough (drawn from three Foundation Phase teachers, the Head of Department and the Curriculum Advisor), to reflect important variations in the population but small enough to allow for intensive study methods (Patton, 2002).

Another limitation was the short period during which the investigation is conducted. Ideally it should be possible to study the classes and teachers over a long time, to ascertain the success or weakness of their methods, and whether they adjusted their methods over a longer period. The realities, however, of the time limits of a student's research, especially of a Master's student, with the university schedules and the set targets for completion, did not allow for prolonged study.

3.8   Data analysis

Creswell (2009b), Gal, Gal and Borg (2007) and Maxwell (2005) claim that data analysis in qualitative research runs in parallel with data collection. Burton and Bartlett (2005) add that an important aspect of data analysis in qualitative study is the search for meaning through direct interpretation of what is observed, what is experienced and what is reported by participants. Data were reflectively analysed; starting from the time they were collected while still in the classroom until completion three months later. This programme enabled the researcher to discover information that may have been overlooked in the design.

Johnson (1992:90), avers that 'the general approach to data analysis is to examine the data for meaningful themes, issues, or variables, to discover how these are patterned and to attempt to explain the patterns.' Creswell (2009:186b) adds that coding is 'the process of organizing the material into chunks or segments of texts before bringing meaning to information and segmenting sentences into different groups.'

Data from interviews, observation and document analysis were all sorted according to chunks which were sorted according to similarities and differences using coded boxes (Appendix H and I). Later these chunks were typed in word document and saved in topics, e.g. main topic, unique topic, leftovers and emerging themes. Last, preliminary analysis was undertaken using (Creswell, 2009:186b) data and the research question.

3.8.1   Analysing Interviews

Teachers' responses were intentionally analysed in light of the CALP theory of Cummins (2000). The researcher identified any gaps which might have become evident. Individual interviews were noted and audio-recorded. Multiple perceptions from different participants were obtained to clarify meaning and to verify the repeatability of an interpretation (Kelly, 2006). The content of the first interviews was examined to see what data were obtained and what information still needed to be found (Ruben and Ruben, 2005). Interviews were transcribed and typed *verbatim* according to the audio recordings. This procedure, as stated by Maxwell (2005), assures credibility. The researcher cross-checked all transcripts with the audio-recordings: to verify the accuracy of transcriptions.

The process of immersion then began. The researcher read and re-read all transcripts several times to become completely familiar with the data and immersed herself in the data collection and ongoing analysis. The researcher looked for concepts, themes, strategies and topical markers in the interviews and observations. These were drawn together to extract

consistent descriptions and strategies that related to the research question. This search for patterns took place in order to build a broader description of support strategies teachers used to develop CALP in the Foundation Phase.

3.8.2 Analysing Observations

Data from the observation schedule and the field notes were coded and analysed to determine themes and concepts, and to build a thick description of support strategies teachers used in the classroom.

These results were integrated with those from interviews where common themes and strategies emerged in order to obtain an in-depth understanding of language strategies teachers used in the Foundation Phase classroom.

3.8.3 Analysing Documents

Another data collection method in this study was to investigate how teachers used support strategies and planned for them in language lessons. Documents were analysed. The greatest strength of content analysis in Wellington's (2000) view is that it can be conducted without disturbing the setting in any way.

Gal, Gal and Borg (2007:291) defines documents as 'written communications that are prepared for personal rather than official reasons.' To the contrary, records are those meant for official use, according to Maxwell (2005). For the purposes of this study, the researcher applied these definitions in selection of documents, and used/studied both categories for document analysis. For example, the teacher's language lesson plans as documents were used although they were not meant for official use but for personal use by the teachers during teaching. Weekly and term lesson planning may be referred to as records, as they are officially a direct requirement of a teacher in all government schools in South Africa.

These documents as well as learner books, assessment tasks, assessment results and support strategies were analysed. In these documents, the researcher noted how teachers addressed the selection and differentiation of language tasks. An analysis was made of whether teachers evaluated and reflected on their teaching when planning in order to support the language difficulties, so creating meaning on a possible mediation process (Gal *et al.*, 2007).

A potential weakness, however, is that it can be time consuming to collect, review, and analyse many documents (Maxwell and Satake, 2005) and Flick (2009).

3.8.4   <u>Interpretation</u>

After collection of all data, information was interpreted and analysed, using the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework of the study. The three sets of content analysis were combined to search for main themes and to identify pervasive patterns in the information. A narrative content analysis was written of the development, using the same data.

3.9   Summary

This chapter introduced and discussed the purpose and approach of the study, methodology and research design. The sample, participants, data generation methods and analysis were described. Included in this chapter are issues of ethical consideration, reliability, validity, rigour and trustworthiness. The research was guided by the research question: support strategies used by Foundation Phase (FP) teachers to develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).

In Chapter four presentation and discussion of the generated data are presented thematically according to the research questions with reference to the interviews, observation and teaching documents collected.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1   Introduction

In this Chapter the findings of the study are presented and discussed, based on data generated during the interview, observations and document analysis. The discussion connects the results with the research question and sub-questions.

4.2   Presentation of data

4.2.1   Profile of the three teachers

The participants were three female Foundation Phase teachers, one teacher each from Grades one, two and three respectively. Participants were selected according to years of service at the school, years teaching in the grade, respective ages, home language and teacher qualification. These three teachers were deemed knowledgeable and experienced and selected due to their availability and disposition to take part (Bernard, 2002). The three female Foundation Phase teachers who participated in this study ranged in teaching experience from four, 21 to 43 years respectively. An average of 92% of the overall teaching time was spent at the participating school. Table 4.1 illustrates the teaching experience of these three teachers.

Table 4.1: **Teacher experience**

Teacher	Grade	Experience in years	The Participating School
1	1	43	43
2	3	21	18
3	2	4	2

This study focused predominantly on how three teachers, in English medium Foundation Phase classrooms at a public primary school, used support strategies to improve CALP in their learners whose home language is not English. It considered teachers' knowledge and understanding of, and attitude towards, improving language practices in the classroom environment. The researcher ascertained the current support strategies employed by the three Foundation Phase teachers.

During the process of coding the researched data transcripts, the following themes became clear:

(i)   Factors determining language teaching;

(ii)   Strategies used by teachers;

(iii)   Teachers' understanding of support strategies;

(iv)   Teachers' understanding of CALP;

(v)   Effectiveness of support strategies; and

(vi)   Gaps in the strategies teachers used in improving CALP.

4.2.2   Factors determining language teaching

The Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (DBE, 1997), defines the language curriculum as everything that influences the learner, from the teacher, lesson programmes, lesson planning, assessment programmes and context in which teaching and learning take place.

4.2.2.1   Classroom environment

The researcher observed one Grade one, two and three teacher while teaching language in the Foundation Phase classes. These three classroom environments were friendly, positive and caring. Classrooms were spacious, clean and neat.

In the Grades one and two class learners were seated at small Foundation Phase tables and chairs which were organised into groups of sixes. Throughout South Africa it is standard practice for learners to sit around grouped tables with four or six learners in each group. Group seating facilitates small group teaching and collaboration in learning within groups (Bornman and Rose, 2010). This seating arrangement was conducive to teaching and learning because learners had access to resources such as stationery and activity cards which the Grade one and two teachers placed in the centre of a group table, and which could be reached by all in the group. According to Putnam (2001), if Foundation Phase teachers work with groups of learners and move between these groups, learners are seated together in groups and apart from other groups. However, the researcher observed that the Grade three learners were all seated in rows facing in one direction.

One wall of the Grade one and two classes consisted entirely of pictures. A big mat was at the back in Teacher three's Grade two classroom. Teachers one and two in Grades one and three respectively had their mats in front of the class. The mat is an important part of all Foundation Phase classrooms because most of the explanation and teaching takes place when learners are seated on the mat. There was sufficient space for free movement during group activities and for the teacher and learners to access resource tables easily.

4.2.2.2   Classroom resources

Each class had a featured display set up with concrete apparatus and manipulatives for the use by the learners and teachers on the mat during group teaching. There was a variety of teaching aids such as the CAPS documents, readers, text books and pace setters for Mathematics and English home language in all three of the classes observed.

The reading corners in total had approximately 100 fiction and a few non-fiction books on shelves, of varying degrees of difficulty. There were mostly English books with about a tenth of the books in Afrikaans in all three classes. There were no books in isiXhosa. There was a display of between twelve and twenty books on a small Foundation Phase table. The learners could easily access them. Teachers indicated that the display changed according to the theme being covered at the time. When the researcher observed the classrooms, the theme was animals, so all the books were related in some way to animals. Teacher one's theme (Grade one) was farm animals while Teacher three's theme (Grade two) was mammals. Teacher two's theme (Grade three) was insects and reptiles.

Colourful English, Mathematics and Life Skills wall charts were observed in the classrooms which made the rooms appealing to learners and promoted print-rich classrooms which assisted in consolidating knowledge with the learners. Visual picture reminders are critical to the social and emotional development of learners (Putnam, 2001). Peregoy and Boyle (2005) advised that words should be placed next to any visual clue to help learners understand about print. The vocabulary on the walls in Grades one and two was overwhelmingly English, with a small display of two picture charts on the side in Afrikaans which is the first additional language of the school, as teachers reported when interviewed. No other language was evident in the classroom. The Grade three Teacher two's classroom was seen to have Afrikaans pictures and Afrikaans words on half of one wall.

When asked in the interview about the pace-setters that were in the classroom, Teacher two in Grade three indicated that the pace-setters provided by the WCED guided her in what she needed to achieve by the end of the year. All participants stressed that Foundation Phase classes should have enough resources for teaching and learning.

4.2.2.3   School and playground environment

Interview data revealed that teaching took place under difficult circumstances in the immediate school environment with continuous incidences of theft, gangsters in the area, low academic performance and learner absenteeism. All three teachers alluded to the fact that

most of the learners with language barriers had behaviour and attendance problems: Teacher one stated:

> *I have learners absent on a daily basis. Rainy days and the cold winter days are the worse.*

The researcher noted during class observation that 13% of the forty-three learners were absent. This information was confirmed by analysing the class attendance register. The data were triangulated by the reaction from Teacher two:

> *Some of the learners are expected to accompany their ailing parent to the clinic once a month or look after smaller siblings. Mondays and Fridays are also bad attendance days. These learners are missing teaching time, they do not understand the work and this results in poor behaviour.*

Absenteeism of learners was identified by teachers as a huge problem, as teachers had a planned assessment programme to follow and learners were either missing teaching time or assessments. Teacher three indicated that the completion of formal assessment tasks (FAT) by a few learners regularly not attending school caused her to group those who were absent together and allow them to complete the assessment. Teacher three highlighted that:

> *I don't know how to help them anymore because they stay absent so often and miss valuable teaching time.*

Besides learner absence, socio-economic status appeared to present barriers to learning as the HoD reported:

> *Each of the classes has a few learners with challenging behaviour that is exacerbated when they have academic challenges.*

Participants described their English home language classes as English additional language classes since less than a third of the learners in their classes were in fact English home language speakers. The HoD explained that the school was an English-medium school and offered Afrikaans as a first additional language from Grade one. The HoD explained the role of playground interactions:

> *We prefer them not to speak their home language so that they can learn English. It is really through play in a playground that they pick up lots of language.*

Teacher three reiterated by saying:

Our focus at the school is to enrich their English language, so we discourage the other languages on the playground, whatever the language is, other than English. Learners in fact continue speaking their home language, which is either, Afrikaans, IsiXhosa, French or Yoruba when they play.

From the interviews, it may be deduced that the three teachers assume that a lack of exposure to English at home is the primary cause of language problems in their classes. Teacher one commented:

Most of the learners have language problems due to the fact that they have not been brought up in an English-speaking environment and only hear Afrikaans, IsiXhosa or their foreign languages at home. The only English they encounter is at school.

Poor living conditions and poverty have a negative impact on all learners. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2005:16), poverty almost always determines whether or not a learner can attend school. Teachers face the difficulty of incorporating learners' unique cultural and language needs into the curriculum.

4.2.3   What happens in the Foundation Phase classroom during language teaching time

In this section, support strategies used by Teachers one, two and three are presented separately. Teacher one teaching a Grade one class is presented first; followed by Teacher three of Grade two and concluding with Teacher two of Grade three.

4.2.3.1   Teachers' strategies for teaching CALP

a) Teacher One

On the first day, the researcher arrived at the school at 09:45. The lessons to be observed were to start at 10:15 and the researcher spent an hour in the class. Upon arriving at Teacher one's class in Grade one after break, the teacher introduced the researcher and asked the learners to behave. She then settled them all on the mat for the shared reading lesson about farm animals. Thirty-eight learners were present that day. The researcher confirmed learner absenteeism which had been reported in the interviews. This was verified with the teacher document - the daily attendance register, for triangulation.

What the researcher observed was a consolidation shared reading lesson. The learners first chanted a rhyme using their five fingers while the teacher demonstrated. The rhyme went as follows:

Fingers one - five: Ears open, eyes on me. Legs are crossed and lips are zipped. Pay attention everyone.

As the teacher taught, I observed her using a big book and flash cards to support the lesson. The teacher told a story about farm animals with the aid of facial expressions and gestures which the teacher used to communicate effectively with the learners. She varied her tone of voice and asked questions that linked directly to the story.

The strategy that Teacher one was using is known as Balanced Language Approach (BLA). The CA explained this teaching support strategy as follows:

All CAs at the Metropole North Education District (MNED) are focused on improving language across the curriculum with specific focus on the Balanced Language Approach (BLA) strategy in all schools. BLA is a whole language approach teaching strategy. I have workshops after school and on Saturdays with the Foundation Phase teachers on these language strategies.

As far as the researcher could observe, Teacher one activated prior knowledge by linking what learners already knew with what was being taught, as in this example:

What is the title of the book?
What did you learn about the duck?
Who saw the horse first?
What happened next?

A few learners only answered the questions eagerly. Most of the learners did not answer or take part in the lesson. The observation revealed that the English additional language learners were not confident enough to speak. From the evidence received during the interview, the observation data affirmed the language ability of some of the learners because the level of questions was above that of some of the learners' comprehension levels. The teacher corrected the ones who made grammatical errors by repeating what they said correctly, as in the following example:

Learner: Sipho see the horse first.
Teacher: Sipho saw the horse first.

The teacher corrected the mistakes yet three learners persistently made grammatical errors, as one learner answered:

Me and my brother and my friend goes to the ducks.

While the researcher observed the teachers' lesson, the teacher spoke clearly with a controlled voice. She demonstrated correct English language use and made use of pictures when she explained unfamiliar concepts. The researcher observed that Teacher one constantly referred learners to the pictures on the walls and words on the word wall in the class during her lesson. Teacher one, however, posed questions to certain learners only. This selectivity contradicted the interview information provided by the teacher that she:

> *…endeavours to include all the learners in her teaching and make sure they understand her teaching, questioning and instructions.*

An important part of the shared reading lesson was that the teacher gave specific attention to different aspects of the language, such as listening and speaking, thinking and reasoning, sentence construction and vocabulary. Teacher one focused on the names of the farm animals, where the animals lived, what they fed on and the sounds they made. At the end of the visit, the researcher observed that the learners received a meal. When the researcher enquired, Teacher three's response was that the National School Nutritional Programme (NSNP) from the South African government provided a meal every day to the learners.

b) Teacher two

Teacher two in Grade three was visited in her class on the third day and the researcher spent an hour in the class. The researcher arrived after break in the classroom and a lively, uncontrolled atmosphere was observed. Learners were seated at their desks with no activity, and the teacher was seated at her table. The teacher moved and stood in front of the class, faced the learners and introduced the researcher. The teacher handed out an activity sheet to the whole class. It took her about ten minutes to settle all the learners.

Lesson planning observation indicated a new lesson, language structure and use, with the focus on past tense and a paragraph writing exercise. The lesson itself was based on an activity sheet. The researcher checked the class attendance register and confirmed that five of the 40 learners were absent. The teacher spent the next thirty minutes completing the activity with the learners and not teaching the new concept as indicated in the lesson planning. Teacher two was a prominent figure in the class who explained and talked most of the time; not giving learners sufficient opportunities to talk.

Despite the fact that the teacher explained the instructions as they went along, two learners constantly got up to ask the teacher what they needed to do. One called out his request from his seat. At times Teacher two code switched by explaining in Afrikaans so that a specific

learner, whose home language is Afrikaans, would understand. Teacher two did not inquire whether the IsiXhosa learners needed assistance, so they were left unattended. The language barriers observed contradicted the interview data when Teacher two stated that:

> *I have two IsiXhosa-speaking learners in my class whom I cannot assist as I cannot speak their language. I ask the learners who sit next to them in the class, to assist them.*

According to DBE (1997), where possible, a learner's home language should be supported actively in the classroom. Evidence from observations showed that, in the case of the IsiXhosa-speaking learners, Teacher two did not have the requisite language skills to do so. Many of the learners did not pay attention. Not all learners were working at the same pace: two faster workers walked around in class and spoke aloud and freely. The researcher observed that many of the learners had limited abilities and that the teacher struggled to accommodate them. This observation confirmed Teacher two's interview when she said:

> *A number of my learners progressed in the Phase according to age cohort although they have limited abilities in especially home language and Mathematics. According to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) a learner may only repeat once in a Phase even though they are not progressing on Grade level.*

There was little evidence of what Teacher two did to discover the root causes of difficulties faced by struggling learners. During the observation period in this class, Teacher two spent the entire lesson walking around the class shouting at, and reprimanding learners; commanding them to complete the written activity. Evidence showed that learners had to borrow erasers and sharpeners and that the state of most of the classwork books was bad. Observations showed Teacher two's frustration about the constant search for lost stationery. This lesson lacked a clear strategy of how the teacher taught in order to develop English language acquisition skills and at the cost of focusing on a group on the mat; as written in the lesson planning.

The teacher wrote sentences on the board and learners had to copy them into their books. Learners were not given any individual or graded tasks of the language lesson so that their understanding could be determined. Only the copying and writing skills were expected from the learners. No paragraph writing was taught either even though that was planned. The investigation of this teacher's reported beliefs and her classroom practice indicated a contradiction. This teacher claimed in the interview that her own teachers were rigid and authoritarian but she was not, yet during the observation she displayed the same authoritarian characteristics. Learners had to complete the teachers' words and sentences

on the activity sheet and were not given an opportunity to do their work independently. Teacher two reported on her learners' limited vocabulary when she said that:

> *I know most of my learners do not understand the meaning of the vocabulary therefore I give them the words and sentences to complete in the classwork books.*

While observing the learners' exercise books, the researcher noted that all the learners completed similar activities with no individual activities. Learners' lack of proficiency in the LoLT could be regarded as the result of the teacher not applying appropriate language strategies. Her reaction was revealing when she admitted:

> *I am struggling. I lack differentiated teaching strategy skills to teach the concepts of language like phonics, reading and writing.*

Teacher two in Grade three had her learners complete a text book language task. No 'teaching' occurred and the teacher's lesson planning observed indicated 'past tense'. On the researcher's third visit teachers were engaged in formal assessment tasks.

c) Teacher three

On the second day at 11:30 the researcher observed Teacher three in Grade two and spent an hour in the class. Teacher three made use of flashcards, the chalkboard and a cd player with a recording of sounds and rhymes. The learners who were seated at their tables were called to the mat which was at the back of the classroom. They counted in fives as they walked to the mat and were seated in rows. By counting the learners and observing the class attendance register, the researcher saw that one of the 41 learners was absent. Four of the learners were directly asked to be seated near the teacher who took her seat on a small chair in front of them. Later it was clear that the four learners had irregular behaviour and needed to be seated near the teacher.

The learners listened to a recording of two rhymes on a cd player and chanted the rhymes. Then the teacher began listening activities which lasted three minutes. This interaction was followed by revision of the "*oo*" sound. Learners could give examples of the sound: "*book, foot, room*". The teacher asked learners to identify oo-words on the word wall and use the given words in sentences. The researcher observed that the teacher involved different learners and encouraged them to participate. Individual learners were asked to write the word on the chalkboard while the rest of the group listened to a song with oo-word repetition. She promoted speaking in her lesson and actively involved learners.

Next the new sound (ee) was introduced where learners listened to a recording of the sound being repeated in a rhyme and the teacher pointed to the flash card on which the new sound was written. Learners repeated the sound and words:

…deep, keep, sleep, need, feel

After the phonic lesson, which lasted longer than the allocated time on the document analysed (the class time table), Teacher three explained the task to the first group. According to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2012:9), the suggested minimum time for Grade two Phonics is fifteen minutes per day for five days. She gave the learners each an envelope with different single sounds. They had to build six words with the sounds on their tables and had to write the words in their books and draw a picture next to each word. That first group went to their tables and started their activity. This procedure confirmed the interview data of Teacher three where she indicated:

My aim is to have the learners practice and use the particular skills verbally before they write in their books.

The second group was sent to the reading corner to read quietly. The third group was sent to the game corner to build puzzles and a reading quest, while one group stayed behind on the mat to read. The researcher analysed Teacher three's documents, lesson planning, time table and ability group charts for reading. This information afforded the researcher the opportunity to see the thorough planning of the teacher and observe the actual execution of the lesson.

One ability group remained with the teacher to do individual focused reading. Group teaching for reading consisted of various listening exercises and flashcards with individual words that focused on developing vocabulary and word recognition skills. Each group had a reader, based on the appropriate level of competence. A learner read a section of his/her own reader aloud. The teacher focused the learner's attention on punctuation and asked the following questions about the reading when they had finished reading:

Teacher: *What do you think will happen if Biff does not find his house?*
Learner one: *I think a bad man will catch him.*
Learner two: *His mom will worry and phone the police.*
Learner three: *He will be hungry and he will be cold and he will cry and be sad.*

The groups rotated after twenty minutes. The observation in this teacher's class and her interview responses were closely related and data revealed no new information. The teacher managed to scaffold activities for each group of learners so that they could attain the skills and knowledge.

The researcher visited the teachers' classes a second time specifically to observe a language lesson but it was observed that the Grade one and two respondents dealt with a language concept 'incidentally' and not specifically. Teacher one in Grade one had a large picture of different animals with two and more of a kind. She led a ten-minute oral discussion of the picture and posed questions about the picture. She incidentally mentioned '*more than one'* when she referred to the animals. The lesson was not specifically on plural formation, sentence construction or adjectives. The lesson plan observed by the researcher did not indicate the language concept to be taught for the week either. Learners then moved to their tables to draw a picture of the animal or animals they liked best.

Teacher three in Grade two was engaged with a reading group on the mat. The teacher gave each learner a chance to read. The researcher observed that no phonic or word level work occurred prior to the reading lesson as written in the teacher's lesson planning. Learners were incidentally reminded to 'stop' at the full-stops. The rest of the class was busy with an activity at their tables. Learners had to complete simple sentences by filling in the punctuation. The researcher observed the lesson planning where punctuation was written as the language lesson for the day but the concept was dealt with incidentally.

4.2.4 "If it worked for me, it will work for my learners"

The three teachers reported a number of strategies that they used. First, teachers indicated that they sit together as a Grade once a week to plan the following week's lessons. At such a meeting, according to the teachers and HoD interviewed, attention is given to 'what' concepts need to be taught, upcoming assessments, learner behaviour and school matters. Phonics, reading, writing and sentence construction form an important part of this planning, as illustrated by the CA below:

> *This level of language learning is essential for learners to succeed in schools. Teachers should follow CAPS and plan thoroughly for home language and discuss intervention strategies due to the huge amount of learners struggling with English home language. CAPS have structured content for listening and speaking, phonics, reading, writing, language and comprehension per grade per term.*

The National Education Evaluation and development Unit (NEEDU) in the 2012 National Report (NEEDU, 2013), states that a minimum of four writing activities should be completed

four times a week, including one extended piece of writing. In order for teachers to teach writing effectively, they need to have subject knowledge, knowledge of CAPS and knowledge of how to teach language. The interviews revealed that the teachers' lesson planning was aimed at what language concept to teach for listening and speaking in Grade one and Grade two. Teachers one and three claimed:

> *…the use of 'big books' and shared reading is planned for to reinforce the learners' listening and speaking skills, and possibly their language use.*

These two respondents indicated that they were using different strategies. Teacher one explained:

> *I particularly use storytelling as well as questions and answers. When doing shared reading I mostly make use of a big story book or a picture. I find that the learners are able to participate when they have visual cues, although not all of the learners participate yet.*

From what the researcher observed, Teacher one used the Balanced Language Approach (BLA) methodological strategies. Teacher three revealed that she taught the sounds, and then let her learners build words which were confirmed while the researcher observed her teaching in the classroom. The researcher observed a group of learners that was sent to the game corner to build puzzles and complete a quest game while one group stayed behind on the mat to read in Teacher three's class: something which was confirmed when she stated that:

> *I use play like word puzzles or games like Snap or Quest as a method too as I find my learners grasped a lot more as they played.*

On the other hand, Teacher two indicated that,

> *I prefer to teach and the learners sit and listen, and sometimes I make use of a picture chart.*

While observing Teacher two in her class teaching, the researcher observed that this was true. This teacher approached her teaching as a whole class activity (teacher standing in front of the classroom) as the only method of teaching rather than using differentiated teaching strategies to teach language skills to the Grade three class. Teacher two explained:

> *My learners need assistance on their pronunciation, but especially language enrichment, but there was no time in the school day to teach them that.*

Teacher two indicated:

> *I tell the learners the rules of language and believe it was important for learners to know the rules but they struggle to apply the rules.*

Teacher two is a young teacher who explained:

> *I only remember my high school teachers who were rigid and authoritarian and taught through the lecture method. Our classes were teacher-centred so we used to remain passive listeners but my teachers were encouraging and supportive. I was aware of this, and thus purposefully planned my lessons in order to involve the learners and not 'lecture' to them.*

The investigation of Teacher two's reported beliefs and her classroom practice indicated a contradiction. Teacher two claimed in the interview that her own teachers were rigid and authoritarian but that she was not, yet during the observation she displayed the same characteristics. This statement showed the researcher that Teacher two's teaching strategy is more based on how she was taught as a child herself. She revealed in her interview that learners had to copy sentences from the board because they could not construct them independently. She emphasised:

> *I have been teaching this way since I started teaching and have produced some successful learners.*

Teacher one indicated that she often made use of one of the learners in a higher grade to explain to the immigrants in her class what was being said in the LoLT. Her response was that:

> *The Afrikaans and IsiXhosa learners as well as the foreign speaking learners have a poor vocabulary therefore I use gestures, facial expression and visible colourful pictures as a strategy.*

The investigation of Teacher one's reported beliefs confirmed her classroom practice. During observations she interacted with her learners in a firm but relaxed manner and demonstrated awareness of particular learning needs of particular learners. After 43 years of teaching, Teacher one reported that she still enjoyed going to school and planning interesting tasks for her learners. In her own words, she said:

> *I am very strict and expect the learners to work hard and be disciplined, but I was not authoritarian.*

Teacher one highlighted her own teachers' actions as role models for the way she is as a teacher. In the interview Teacher one explained about her teachers when she said that:

> *I had a very strict teacher and was very scared of her. I vowed to be more   approachable with my learners. Nevertheless, she was a good teacher and kind towards me.*

Similarly, Teacher three gave her opinion about her teachers and stated that,

> *My teachers were very strict but kind and helpful. I benefitted from their teaching and follow in their footsteps.*

Teacher one explained that textbooks, blackboard, chalk and exercise books were the main teaching aids of that time. Teacher one added that they were expected to memorise all the work in their exercise books and had to write it exactly as it was in the books when writing tests. Teacher one recalled her class time and remembered that:

> *In class we had to copy work from the chalkboard or textbook into our exercise   books. Neatness was emphasised.*

The researcher found out that the Foundation Phase teachers have weekly meetings at which learners needing support are mentioned and their names recorded. The HoD mentioned in the interview that:

> *Learners needing support are listed on a Friday with the School Based Support Team (SBST). The Foundation Phase HoD, the Learning Support Teacher, one Grade two and one Grade three teachers are on the SBST. This particular school's Learning Support Teacher comes to the school thrice a week. A maximum of eight Grade one learners are accommodated for 30 minutes a day three days a week. This small group of learners are then removed from the classroom and language support is given in this teachers' class. Co-teaching by the one SBST teacher though, occurs in the Grade R classes.*

The HoD reported further:

> *The focus of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) is currently on Grade R and Grade one learners therefore the SBST teacher can unfortunately not assist all the Foundation Phase learners.*

Results revealed that two different NGOs are supporting the school. The HoD indicated this information and Teacher one confirmed:

> *The NGOs provided invaluable support to our school as we are in a poverty stricken working class community with parents paying no school fees.*

The teacher explained that the projects are intervention initiatives that supply the school with learning support material for development of home language and Mathematics in all Phases. NGO's supplied the school with donations of vegetables and furniture.

The DBE (2005a:67) states that in applying teaching strategies, teachers should bear in mind that there is no single classroom in which all learners will be exactly the same or learn in the same way and at the same pace. It is important that teachers understand their learners' abilities from the start of the year. Teachers should pay attention to learners' individual needs and be able to employ developmentally appropriate strategies to assist learners to do well.

The language teaching task of the teacher became overwhelming, though, as learners moved along the Foundation Phase at different rates. It is important to consider individual learning needs and take account of these when planning language lessons in order to reinforce language concepts. As Hornberger and Corson (1997) claim, learners need time and support to become proficient in home language and teachers are to provide the support.

4.2.5   <u>Teach happily for the love of education</u>

During the process of coding the observation transcripts, it became evident that responses were significantly different. Data from interviews were markedly different from the observation transcript as well as the documents analysed. The Grade teachers sit together and plan the content of their lessons each week. CAPS documents are used. Yet, each teacher was largely on her own to implement programmes and strategies of her choosing. Teachers one, two and three as well as the HoD revealed in the interview that the CA render support and hold workshops regarding language strategies. The researcher observed a limited number of three language lessons in a three month period but concluded that teachers relied on the School Based Assessment Team (SBST) teacher to support learners who were in need of language support. The HoD ensured the planning was completed but found it challenging to assist different teachers in the classes.

The Foundation Phase HoD is a prominent figure in guiding Foundation Phase teachers in meetings and lesson planning, as well as in sharing what the CA introduced. The results revealed that the HoD was aware of the classroom challenges but that she could not go to the different Foundation Phase classes to support teachers during teaching time. Her explanation was:

> *I have a Grade three class of 47 learners and am in my own class the whole day. The school cannot afford an assistant to relieve me and afford me time to visit the Foundation Phase classes. Nevertheless, the teachers received alternative support. Our CA visits us in our classes once a term and gives us guidance.*

The Foundation Phase CA confirmed Teacher one's statement, maintaining:

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I visit the school once a term to monitor and support teachers on teaching strategies and curriculum challenges. The school is just a few kilometres away from the district office. I visit the school any time on request too.

Specific attention was paid to teacher interaction with the learners, posters and pictures on the walls, language usage, and quality and quantity of written tasks. Teachers were planning their lessons using CAPS. According to CAPS (DBE, 2011) the core role and duties of teachers are the delivery of the curriculum. The lesson planning documents which were analysed revealed that specific aims were embedded. Teacher one's documents corroborate her interview data: there was evidence of differentiated groups on lists, lesson planning and intervention. Despite the fact that there was proof of this data, Teacher one demonstrated whole class teaching. In a follow-up interview this teacher explained that she varies her teaching between whole class and differentiated group teaching, depending on the lesson. The lesson planning of Teacher one and Teacher three was observed: it covered the activities and tasks to be completed by learners. Teacher three recorded CALP support strategies in her lesson planning and scaffolded her support in her differentiated teaching. Teacher three provided support of a new skill and the new language information to be learnt when she taught learners in smaller groups. She adjusted the amount of support required to suit each individual learner's level of ability. The teacher let go as the learners showed progress, then removed scaffolding strategies once the lesson objective had been reached.

English language content to be taught is written in the lesson planning but the plan lacked detail about a clear strategy for developing English language acquisition and support for those learners needing particular assistance. The researcher observed this limitation in Teacher two's documents as analysed, her lesson planning, assessment file and learner classwork books. Data showed that Teacher two struggled to deploy appropriate strategies to support language skills to her Grade three class. During the interview, this teacher mentioned that she approached teaching as a whole class activity rather than in a small group. The reason Teacher two cited was:

I need to know more about how to teach English in my challenging language class of diverse learners and with behaviour problems.

The observations of the assessment files and mark schedules were analysed together with the teacher lesson planning and learner books. Learner books were analysed to establish the content covered and to establish whether the activities complied with grade level work as determined by CAPS. This assessment and mark schedule were analysed and revealed that a great number of learners struggled academically in language. The researcher compared the assessment task with the lesson plans and learner classwork books. Low learner codes

on the mark schedules showed that learners were assessed on concepts that were not covered in the teachers' lesson planning or completed in the learner classwork exercise books.

Analysis of the learner classwork books revealed a number of issues. First, few activities were completed. None of the activities in Grade three of Teacher two's class, and Grade one of Teacher one's class revealed independent work because all the classwork books observed had similar activities. There was no evidence in the learner documents that learners had acquired academic language skills such as creative writing, reading with comprehension or language structure and use. These are important aspects in CAPS and learners need to demonstrate the skills on a weekly basis.

During the interview, the CA explained how home language should be done when she stated that:

> *Learners should be taught first and have sufficient time to interact with the teacher before a formal assessment. Weekly written language, phonics, dictation, sentence construction, creative writing and comprehension activities are required in order to improve language competency. Assessment is administered after the teacher taught and revised new concepts for approximately four weeks.*

Third, the display tables and charts on the walls served to illustrate how the three teachers constructed the work that they taught in supporting language acquisition. The focus of the artifacts collected, was on English language-related work, Mathematics and Life Skills. The CAPS language content consists of Listening and Speaking, Phonics and Spelling, Reading and Comprehension, Language Structure and Use and Creative Writing. Of the above, only Phonics, Language and Reading were reflected in the posters on the walls. This can negatively affect the progress of home language in this Phase.

The three teachers, Teachers one, two and three, had their lesson planning ready when the researcher visited the school. These three teachers were aware of the content they were to teach, yet not all three teachers were prepared for the learners' particular learning needs in language and with their expectations of these learners. Teacher three came prepared with her lesson planning that indicated differentiated group teaching as stipulated in CAPS. Her learners were undertaking meaningful differentiated activities and engaged in the lesson as well. Although Teacher one taught her class as a whole, she, as well as Teacher one gave opportunities for the learners to work with the content language (CALP). This tuition is beneficial because learners are more likely to retain and remember what they are learning if they are engaged and doing meaningful work. Cummins (1986) claims that if learners

achieve CALP in their home language, this competence can be transferred to the additional language, permitting them to participate successfully in academic learning in the language of teaching.

The researcher can deduce that Teachers one and three demonstrated some understanding of language development as they grouped the learners according to their similar strengths and weaknesses based on their language performance. Evidence from observations of how learner contact time is spent with the teacher in language lessons indicated that small group teaching was not used much.

Teachers one, two and three were positive, mentioning that the Principal and Foundation Phase HoD, with the help of WCED and the NGOs, provided them with most of the resources needed in their classrooms. The CA assisted with teaching approaches. Teachers reported that they required support strategies aimed at improving teacher pedagogy, performance and overall accountability at the Foundation Phase level.

4.2.6   Gaps in the strategies teachers used in improving CALP

A learner's success at school and throughout life depends largely on the ability to read and understand language texts. Foundation Phase teachers have the important challenge of making English language a reality for all the learners in their classes. The findings revealed a wide gap between what teachers plan to teach, what they say they are teaching and what they actually teach. These gaps are presented under learner, teacher, policy and context-related challenges.

4.2.6.1   Learner related challenges

Teachers face new challenges due to the continuously increasing numbers of linguistically diverse learners in their classes. The three teachers indicated that they had learners with English widely different language difficulties. Teacher two complained about learners in her class who could not complete tasks on their own and she stated:

> *The learners cannot cope independently therefore I find it best to complete tasks with them. They need assistance on their pronunciation, but especially language enrichment, but there is no time in the school day to teach them that.*

This conclusion matched Teacher two's responses during interviews as well as during lesson observation. Phonics were taught by rote: learners were drilled to memorise sounds because some of them spoke a local, Black or foreign language whose sounds are different from the

English language through which they learn. Learners who spoke English at home were not taught in a different way: Teacher three mentioned that:

> *I have to drill the sounds as the learners forget them and cannot apply the phonic knowledge when they read or have to write.*

When Teacher two was asked whether she had any learners in her class who needed support in language, her response was that:

> *I can say that the big group of learners in my class struggle specifically in reading but find writing and comprehension extremely problematic. I have to add that this is the same group I have behaviour problems with.*

Teacher two reported that on average about 14 of her 43 learners experienced difficulties with English language: she stated in the interview that:

> *The foreign language speaking learners and two of my IsiXhosa learners do not understand me.*

It was evident in the class observations that Teacher two predominantly used teacher-controlled strategies and focused on asking questions. Teachers discussed what they wished to teach but did not discuss strategies on how they would teach the lessons in order to improve learner proficiency. Teachers three expressed concern about her learners' low academic performance when she stated that:

I feel pressured to complete the curriculum because of the amount of learners struggling with language.

It became obvious that these three Foundation Phase teachers were struggling to teach academic language proficiency to learners whose home language was not English: as shown in Teacher one's comment when she claimed that:

> *Most of my learners speak Afrikaans and IsiXhosa therefore I make use of a lot of pictures, expressions and gestures when I teach. The only problem is that lots of time is spent before these learners grasp the concepts and can use it satisfactorily.*

Lack of language proficiency amongst learners appeared to be a considerable challenge and to have serious implications for the three Foundation Phase teachers. They were holding low expectations of learners on the achievement of English, as indicated by Teacher two:

> *Three of my learners did not even attempt to carry out a single assessment activity. About half of my class score below the expected grade level in assessments.*

Many learners were struggling academically yet they progressed to the next grade due to their age. This forced progression caused more frustration and a burden for the teachers, as noted when Teacher three stated that:

> *Eleven of the learners in my class already repeated in either Grade one or in my class and they are still struggling with English home language, First additional language and Mathematics. Their home language particularly has an influence on their academic performance.*

Each of the teachers indicated during the interviews that they felt pressured to produce results. Teacher one is an experienced teacher and English is her home language. After teaching for 43 years, she was passionately enthusiastic and viewed teaching as her calling, but was concerned about her Grade one learners' language performance. The reason Teacher one cited was that:

> *The department does not want learners to be retained in Grade one. They may only be retained if they, the learners, will benefit academically. A big group of learners started in my class in January with no knowledge of English and did not attend Grade R last year.*

Teachers voiced their concern regarding different components of language in which learners were not progressing. Observations showed that teachers were giving learners opportunities to interact with language and use the four components of the language: listening and speaking, phonics, reading and writing: yet teachers felt limited in terms of the actual content that they could use in reading and writing texts, due to learners' lack of general knowledge. Learners tended to shy away from formal language embedded discussions, as the HoD reported:

> *Some learners are street-smart. Conversations about gangs, neighbourhood fights, home-made weapons and the latest music trends often derail oral lessons.*

Learners needed language assistance. Interview data was collected which revealed that the three teachers agree, but could not give learners adequate support. Teacher one estimated that eight of the forty learners in her class were not meeting the minimum outcomes for the grade in English home language. They explained that:

> *It is very, very bad! I am very concerned about their reading and writing barriers.*

Data collected from the three teachers identified diverse cultures in their classes as a major obstacle. Teachers highlighted aspects of language barriers and cultural differences. At this participating public school, it was clear that different home languages were spoken which can be broken down as depicted in Table 4.2:

Table 4.2: **Learner demographics**

Teacher	English	Afrikaans	IsiXhosa	Immigrant / refugee	Total in class
1	8	15	13	4	40
2	4	19	17	3	43
3	2	24	12	3	41
%	11.3%	46.8%	33.9%	8%	124

The study revealed that the highest percentage of learners in these English Foundation Phase classes were Afrikaans and IsiXhosa speakers. These are ironic statistics, considering that the three classes are English medium. Cummins (2000) suggests that differences in the ways in which learner's home language has been developed by their linguistic experiences prior to school contribute to the differential outcomes of the switch from IsiXhosa or Afrikaans to the LoLT of the school, which is English. The Foundation Phase teacher faces the daunting task of developing the home language abilities of IsiXhosa, Afrikaans and the few foreign language speakers to an advanced level in order to allow for a transfer of language knowledge and skills to English. The demographic and observation data highlighted the fact that these three teachers on the whole interacted more with English additional language speakers than English home language speakers.

Teacher one and Teacher two taught different size classes over the years, but claimed that challenges in the classroom were escalating due to poor learner academic performance, poor behaviour and absenteeism. Besides learner absence, interviewed teachers highlighted learners' mobility. Learner mobility denotes the condition when parents transfer their children from one school and enrol them at another school. Teachers reported that parents move around and transfer their children to a school in the area to which they move. Transferred learners often return to their original school within the year. This is a problem for the teachers at the participating school in general since some learners stay away for long periods at a time without attending any school, as shown in the HoD's statement:

> *One of the learners was absent for a month. The school have no contact details of the parents. He came back for two days and never again. The school social worker was contacted to follow up.*

There were orphaned children who lived in a children's home attending school. These orphans come from all over the Western Cape and are at times moved to a family which might not be in the immediate school area. Teachers' mark schedules and class attendance registers confirmed the tendency to absenteeism and learner mobility.

At this public school under scrutiny, more than three languages are spoken as a home language, although the LoLT is English. Most of the Foundation Phase learners have language difficulty when they have to complete formal assessment tasks. Learners come from homes with diverse cultural backgrounds and different economic circumstances. Poor behaviour, absenteeism and mobility tendency were common difficulties Social and home difficulties posed challenges in the classroom for Foundation Phase teachers.

4.2.6.2   Teacher related challenges

The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) as well as the Department of Education (DBE) expect teachers to assist all learners with limited abilities. The results of this research project show the attitude of two of the three teachers studied was positive and that they remained motivated towards teaching. By comparison, the teachers' attitude was limited concerning language abilities of learners in the classrooms. All three of the Foundation Phase teachers mentioned during the interviews that they were struggling. Teacher two stated, '*I am frustrated!'*

Teachers complained that they were overloaded with work in their classrooms, especially from learners who needed continuous language support and intervention. There remained, however, significant English language benchmarks required for the Foundation Phase learner. Teachers one, two and three defined the concepts to be taught poorly in their lesson planning. Learner classwork books showed language inconsistently implemented and lacking detail.   When the researcher probed the teachers' approach about the language support strategies given, Teacher two revealed that:

> *I tell the learners the rules of language. Furthermore I put the chart up on the wall for them to refer to.*

Teachers' lesson planning and the learners' classwork exercise books did not correspond. Teachers' lesson planning was observed and indicated written language activities and a longer piece of topic writing each week, but the learner classwork books did not reflect the activities. The most serious concern for this study was that reading was developed, but it seemed that reading with comprehension, writing and language were not taught with the aim

of generating and improving knowledge. Teacher two only *told* her learners what to do and what the language rule is but she did not focus on language structure and use specifically to ensure that learners understood and could apply the knowledge independently. In her 20 years of experience she could have developed some pedagogical strategies though they might not work as expected; but they existed. The researcher observed that Teacher two in Grade three struggled with differentiated teaching or was unable to scaffold the work with smaller groups: she confirmed that:

> *I find it problematic to manage my big class and know I should work in groups but I can't.*

In another case, phonic words were chanted when the researcher observed lessons of Teacher one and three: charts were observed on the walls, but no attention was paid to phonemic awareness in Grades one and two: while the researcher observed the lessons. Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds (or phonemes) in spoken words (DBE, 2005). Teachers should teach learners that the smallest parts of a sound in a spoken word make a difference in a word's meaning. Teacher two's reaction after the researcher inquired about her strategy was that:

> *I have been teaching this way since I started teaching and have produced some successful learners.*

The teachers were teaching phonics but there was no clear and uniform strategy on 'how' to do that effectively so that learners could apply the knowledge.

Teachers were overwhelmed by the large number of learners within the one classroom. Teachers reported that class size was a big challenge and had an effect on language acquisition. Teacher one in Grade one stated that:

> *I was responsible for forty learners thus resulting in a reduced one-on-one or effective small group contact time between the learners with phonics, reading or language difficulties. Therefore I vary my teaching between group- and whole class teaching.*

Studies by MacBeth and Mortimore (2001) and Townsend (2001) reveal that the greatest influence teachers have upon learners is in relation to how they manage their classrooms. Each Foundation Phase class at this particular primary school had between 40 and 47 learners. Two respondents indicated class size to be a major impediment to learning. Another respondent indicated that an ideal class size should be a ratio of 1:30. The challenge of class size was explained well by Teacher one when she cited that:

It is difficult to teach a class of 43 learners as some of these learners' behaviour make teaching extremely difficult.

Teacher two added that it was a problem marking all the learners' books every day because they write in three books on average per day and she was told that she was not doing enough written activities every day. Class size illuminated some realities in the classes observed. Teachers were frustrated. It must be noted that if one considers that the expected teacher: learner ratio at this level is 1:30, a ratio of 1:40 may not warrant such an outcry. However, it is the teachers' reported sense of frustration and as such is relevant in this study as how the teaching is experienced by the selected participants.

The researcher discerned a sense of urgency among the three Foundation Phase teachers about improving the CALP of the learners in their classes. The reaction from the CA was:

Teachers at this public school will be supported in classroom management skills. The size of the class should not prevent teachers from being prepared daily to teach the learners in the necessary language skills.

Teachers revealed in the interviews that they spoke either English or Afrikaans as a home language. These teachers are monolingual or bilingual, and speak none of the African languages of many of their learners: their linguistic restriction comprises a difficulty in the teaching situation of today. Learners are not ready for the school and the school was not ready for the learners.

4.2.6.3 Policy related challenges

The participating public school makes use of and refers to the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (DBE, 1997), with the emphasis on developing multilingualism within a framework of additive bi/multilingualism and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). The school has both a school policy and goals supporting equitable access to the curriculum and differentiated teaching for all learners. In the interview, the HoD asserted that the school has a formal policy in place regarding language use in the school and a copy was observed in the teacher documents. Despite the fact that teachers had a copy of the school policy and an extract of LiEP in their teacher documents, some of them did not familiarise themselves with the content: as Teacher two mentioned:

Our Principal and HoD read all the policies and tell us a copy is kept in the office and we may request to read it any time, but I never have time.

Interviews revealed that only one of the three teachers interviewed, Teacher one, had read a small part of the 1997 Language in Education Policy (LiEP) and no other policies pertaining to languages. The other two teachers did not recall seeing the 1997 Language in Education Policy document. Teacher three went on to say:

> *We are an English-medium school. That is all I need to know concerning the language policy. I do know about CAPS and that policy is more important.*

Teachers two and three relied on the HoD to inform them regarding policy. The only policy that all three interviewed teachers appeared to know was the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). CAPS ensure that there is clear guidance and consistency for teachers when teaching and it was revealed during the interviews that the three Foundation Phase teachers in the study refer to the CAPS document when they sit together and plan for lessons. Teachers and the HoD indicated that the CA played an important role in promoting and implementing CAPS at the school. This was confirmed when the CA mentioned that:

> *Part of my work is to ensure teachers know what was expected of them in the implementation process of the curriculum policy. I have workshops with them on language and Mathematics strategies.*

As mentioned in Chapter three, each subject in CAPS has an inclusive and concise policy document that provides details on what teachers need to teach and assess (DBE, 2012). Assessment emerged as a theme during the interviews, therefore the issue was pursued. One respondent, Teacher one, complained that the number of formal assessments was a hindrance against teaching time. She explained that they struggle to consolidate concepts and language content due to the time limit between formal assessments. Teacher one complained vehemently as follows:

> *In all my 43 years of teaching I never 'tested' the children so many times like I am forced to do now. Valuable teaching time, especially in the Foundation Phase is wasted on assessment tasks.*

The HoD explained in the interview that each Foundation Phase teacher at the school administered a Baseline Assessment at the beginning of the year. Teacher three explained that:

> *The Baseline Assessment allows me to get to know my learners very early in the first term and know their abilities.*

After the Baseline Assessment, revealed by the CA in the interview, teachers should teach and follow the notional time daily per subject as stipulated in CAPS with attention to all the components of each subject before the next formal assessment. The HoD affirmed that:

> *The assessment is a measuring tool to establish further teaching needs in language or specific components of language, like reading, phonics, writing or language use.*

In spite of policy clarity, teachers found the number of assessments a considerable difficulty. Each teacher interviewed, as well as the HoD, had strong views regarding the assessments, but Teacher two reiterated Teacher one's comment that:

> *The teaching time I have to set aside for assessments is simply ridiculous! The Foundation Phase learners have far too many formal assessment tasks per term. This is a grave concern as far more time is needed for teaching that is currently used for assessment.*

Table 4.3 illustrates assessment tasks expected to be completed at the Foundation Phase level.

Table 4.3: **Formal Assessment Timetable**

Grade	Subject	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Total
1	Home Language	1	2	2	2	7
2	Home Language	1	2	2	2	7
3	Home Language	1	3	3	2	9

According to the CA, Home language formal assessment tasks (FAT) are based on the bench marks of CAPS in listening and speaking, phonics, reading, reading with comprehension, language and writing. Foundation Phase teachers teach these components of English and formally assess learners once towards the end of the first term. Notably, the FATs increase from terms two to four when the three grades are expected to complete more tasks, and the Grade threes are expected to complete the most.

A larger challenge aggravating the situation that Teachers one, two, three and the HoD identified was that learners were often absent during an assessment. The CA explained that assessments should inform the teaching needs of the learners: teachers should not teach the class to *prepare all the learners for the tasks.* Teachers should focus on developing all aspects of the language.

According to the teachers, all the learners have to do the same assessment task regardless of their ability level, as revealed in the interview with Teacher two:

> *I am in trouble because I do not spend enough time on differentiated teaching, but I am ignored if I complain about all my learners having to complete the same formal assessment tasks.*

Grade one teachers assessed the proficiency level of the English language learners by assessing oral language skills. The language that all Foundation Phase learners need to succeed in school is quite different from the oral language they use in social contexts. Academic tasks and activities require learners to use language to list, order, compare, predict, explain, discuss, write, comprehend, etc. Learners must perform these CALP activities in listening, speaking, phonics, reading and writing.

Although the Language in Education Policy (DBE, 1997) gives parents the right to exercise a language right on behalf of minor learners, teachers' face rapidly increasing numbers of linguistic diverse learners in their classes and context-related problems.

4.2.6.4   Context related challenges

As revealed by interview data collected, poor living conditions, undernourishment, lack of proper housing and unemployment have a negative effect on the learners. This particular public school is classified as Quintile one. As mentioned in Chapter one, the school is located in a working-class community and the children who are found in these classes are from low-income to no-income households and families.

Data obtained through the interviews revealed that some parents were leaving the responsibility in the hands of teachers to supply stationery such as scissors, pencils, sharpeners and erasers. As a Quintile one school it receives government funding and parents are exempted from paying school fees: learners receive free books. It was observed during class visits that not all of the learners have stationery: they constantly borrow from their peers which results in behaviour problems. Teachers waste valuable teaching time tending to these logistical problems.

Teachers one, two and three stated that poor socio-economic backgrounds of all the learners in the area posed specific challenges to teaching. Teachers two and three identified poverty as a major obstacle that had a direct effect on learners' learning, reading and writing , as well as on all the different subjects taught at school.Teachers noted, and the researcher observed, that the school provided learners with one meal and some fruit a day by means of

government-subsidised feeding programmes and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). These meals were often the only daily meal that the children had and it was often this nutritional incentive, rather than the urge to learn, which accounted for their attendance at school. All three of the teachers interviewed expressed concern that, due to their domestic plight, learners were often absent. Most of the learners' families depended on their grandparents' pension grant because the adults in the family did not work.

In addition to the fact that learners come from poor homes and significantly different cultural backgrounds, they are continually in fights in which older siblings or even parents become involved, as one respondent stated:

> *The learners are continuously in fights and even involve older siblings. Some parents even get involved in the learners' fights. This result in valuable teaching time spent to solve socio-cultural and socio-economic issues.*

The socio-economic plight of learners presents an issue for the teachers at this Quintile one school and directly affects teaching time.

Data which were collected revealed that the school suffered burglaries and vandalism. Teacher two claimed that substance abuse was to blame for the spate of thefts and incidences of vandalism. Teacher apparatus, the school's telephone and electrical cords, and computer were items that Teacher one mentioned as stolen. Teachers reported that gang violence in the immediate area threatened day-to-day teaching. The HOD claimed that a day before the researcher's visit to the school, gang shooting occurred: parents ran into the classes to fetch their children. On the whole, it is challenging for teachers to remain positive about teaching when the social context poses such severe obstacles to learning.

Education policies articulate critical issues but in practice the issues remain unresolved. At this public school the reality is that classes are overcrowded, with more than four different home language groups other than English in the English home language Foundation Phase classes.

Besides lingering hunger, cold weather presented another physical difficulty to learners and teachers. The classroom observation was conducted during winter and learners could be observed coming to school without warm clothing. Learner attendance was poor and teachers were dealing with undisciplined learners. Astatement in UNESCO (2005:16) claims that poverty often determines whether or not a child can attend school.

Most learners had little to no support structures at home: they lacked any access to English in a written or oral form other than offered by the teacher. Their academic performance problems were exacerbated by the fact that many did not receive help at home because their parents spoke only Afrikaans, IsiXhosa, a foreign language or Cape 'informal local dialect'. This impediment added to the existing language teaching problems for the teacher. All children deserve better preparation by their teachers in the Foundation Phase to read, write and think critically.

4.3 Summary

In this chapter the researcher has discussed and presented the findings of the qualitative study in relation to the research questions of qualitative data garnered through interviews and observations. A description of the sample was presented in terms of the selected public school and teachers who participated in the study. Document analysis was conducted on the teachers' portfolios, teaching resources and learners' books. Data collected was classified into patterns, categories and themes. The themes that emerged from the data were discussed. The researcher located the theory of Cummins (2000) within, and in relation to, cognition in South Africa, particularly in the Western Cape. The literature consulted for this study contributed to the understanding of the research question and assisted Foundation Phase teachers with strategies used to improve CALP in the class.

The next chapter draws an analysis, concludes the thesis, and makes recommendations arising from the study.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1　　　Introduction

In this chapter, an analysis is presented and conclusions are drawn according to the research questions and sub-questions and reference to the literature reviewed and the Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) theories of the study. The limitations and recommendations for future research are made. The chapter ends with a summary of the conclusion drawn from the findings.

This study answers the research questions within a qualitative approach. The procedures used in conducting this study were thorough and methodical following the recommendations of Stake (1995) and Yin (2003) for case study research. The study used multiple methods to collect data: interviews, observation and analysis of documents. The main research question for this research project was:

> *What support strategies do teachers in one school's Foundation Phase use to develop CALP in their classes?*

In order to answer the question, the following sub-questions were asked:

1. What challenges do teachers encounter in improving CALP?

2. What are the actual support strategies that Foundation Phase teachers use and that they report they are using?

3. Which further strategies could Foundation Phase teachers use to improve CALP among their learners?

Content analysis, which involved coding data, categorising, comparing and concluding from the text, was used to analyse the data. The data were transcribed and the transcripts were returned to the three teachers to check their accuracy and to ensure that data were reliable and trustworthy (Creswell, 2012). Appropriate protocols were followed in the interviews, observations of the lessons and analysis of the teaching documents.

5.2　　　Analysis of factors affecting Language Teaching

The Foundation Phase teachers participating in this study are not teaching the language well in their lessons. This shortcoming of teachers in their pedagogical aspects is the main reason

for learners' poor performance, which could have been different if there was effective teaching, despite the fact that the school is an English-medium school. A huge concern is that of no lesson time focussing specifically on language teaching. Teachers are struggling with the implementation of an integrated approach that is required by CAPS.

The language of learning and teaching (LoLT), which is English, was seen as a barrier to learning to 40% of the learners in the Foundation Phase classes under study. Every year teachers are faced with new challenges due to the continuously increasing numbers of linguistically diverse learners in their classes. Data analysed indicated that a total of 74% of learners in the three Foundation Phase classes are in fact Afrikaans, IsiXhosa and foreign language speakers, or Cape Coloureds who combine English and Afrikaans in a unique, informal local dialect, in the same English classroom. Analysed interview data with the three teachers highlighted the crisis of the learners' language. These three Foundation Phase teachers' central concern was learners' cognitive needs, language deficiencies and consequent scholastic underperformance.

Teachers attribute this problem to the use of English as a medium of instruction in the Foundation Phase because English is so seldom the learners' home language. Soudien (2012) states that the switch to English as LoLT may occur too early for CALP to be established: children start Grade one in English medium classes, but with Afrikaans, IsiXhosa or one of the African or foreign languages as a home language. Learners need to master grade-level academic content while simultaneously developing English language proficiency.

Learners that the teachers taught did not meet the 'threshold levels' (Cummins, 1984) required to engage in meaningful interactions with English home language speakers. Only 29.7% of the Grades one, two and three learners' home language was English. Biber (1996:391) states that the persisting learning problems throughout the learner's schooling can be traced to the main disruption that occurred with the start of receiving teaching in a language other than the home language. Teachers blame the Department of Basic Education (DBE) for neglecting to enforce the teaching of home language in the Foundation Phase where language acquisition plays a critical role in how children learn in schools.

Language is the foundation for learning (Motshekga in DBE, 2010), and is an integral part of the Foundation Phase curriculum. Cummins and Swain (1986) suggest that language-related skills should be taught in one language only, home language. Schooling, in Walton's (2002) view, has posed a challenge for learners and teachers in the learning and teaching of English

which is an additional language for many. The language teaching task of the three teachers' interviewed was overwhelming. They expressed frustration: and they were unable to speak IsiXhosa or the language of the African foreigners themselves, so could not converse with learners. These teachers were faced with more and more demands and the language issue placed a considerable burden on them (DBE, 2002).

As discussed in chapter two, the difficulties experienced by English additional language speakers can be explained in terms of the psycholinguistic theory of Cummins (1986). This theory describes the relation between home language and additional language in education, and distinguishes between BICS and CALP. BICS, as explained by Cummins (2000), refers to conversational fluency in a language and CALP to the academic language. (Cummins 2000, 2011) explains that higher order thinking skills such as hypothesizing, evaluating, inferring, generalizing, predicting, or classifying are required in CALP. Cummins (2000) refers CALP to the teaching of phonics, key vocabulary, reading, writing and sentence structures by Foundation Phase teachers. As Cummins (2011) concurs, these are the language functions which are related to learning and development of cognition. CALP is essential for learners to succeed in schools. Cummins (1986) argues that if learners have achieved CALP in their home language, this competence can be transferred to the additional language, permitting them to participate successfully in academic learning in the language of teaching. Learning a content subject at the level of an additional language may support BICS but impedes the achievement of CALP.

Cummins (1986, 2000) claims that, in a cognitively demanding situation, the level of CALP in the additional language depends on its stage of development in the home language. A failure in the development of CALP in the home language inhibits the acquisition of academic language skills in the additional language. Learners have difficulty mastering English and access to CALP is even slower if they have no-one to supervise their reading and writing. Such difficulties occur in all areas of the curriculum and hamper a child's potential in academic areas. Cummins (2011) states that it takes many years to achieve CALP in an additional language.

5.3   Support strategies to develop CALP

This interpretative paradigm granted the researcher greater scope to assess teachers' perceptions of support strategies used to develop learners' CALP.

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5.3.1   <u>Analysis of the support strategies teachers used in their classrooms</u>

In the Foundation Phase, reading and writing should take place in reading and writing focus time. Focussed lessons allow children to be taught to be effective readers and writers (DBE, 2012). Analysis of data indicated that the three teachers are not consistent in their teaching. Data of Teacher three were analysed and showed that she gave her learners opportunities to work with content language (CALP), but that she, as well as the other two teachers, did not focus on language structure and use specifically. Teachers guided learners through the completion of worksheet activities instead of teaching a skill or concept. Teachers taught to a task and their lessons lacked linguistic structure.

The strategies are not taught well enough in all the classes - something which explained the poor performance of learners. Teacher two answered her own questions and learners were not given time to explain, justify or discuss. This teacher allowed learners to copy language sentences instead of teaching them the concept, scaffold support and allow learners to apply concepts independently.

After a Baseline Assessment at the beginning of the year, the three teachers identified the learners who were in need of support in home language. Teachers identified the learners needing support after every formal assessment. Learners chanted sounds as a whole class instead of in differentiated small focused group teaching. Data analysed by the researcher brought to light that only Grades one and two teachers divided learners into ability groups based on these facts and taught them accordingly. Good strategies were used for listening and sound recognition.

These Foundation Phase teachers had, in a single class, increasing numbers of learners whose home language was other than the LoLT. The Language-in-Education Policy (LiEP) (DBE, 1997) determines that parents exercise their language right on behalf of the minor learner and have a choice to enrol their children in English language classes although the LoLT in those classes is not the children's home language. According to Heugh (2000), despite the government's commitment for the promotion of language rights, the education sector does not totally reflect the multilingual nature of South Africa. Data were analysed and revealed that many refugees from African countries such as Nigeria and the Congo immigrated to South Africa and that their children spoke French and Yoruba but are taught through the medium of English. Article 21 (1) of the Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution (1996) commits governments to make special provision for refugee children who must have the right to education. Government has an obligation to take active steps to ensure that every child has access to educational facilities and enjoys the right to education.

Section five (1) of the South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996 declares that public schools must admit all learners and teach them without unfairly discriminating against them in any way.

As noted previously, according to Cummins (2000, 2011) English additional language learners generally develop conversational fluency (BICS) within two years of studying an additional language whereas developing fluency in grade-appropriate academic language (CALP) can take from five to seven years; depending on the learner's age and level of home language ability. Failure to understand the distinction between these two types of language proficiency can lead to false assumptions about a learner's language ability according to Cummins (2011).

Learners in these English home language classrooms need support. Interview data, after analysis, revealed that all three teachers devised strategies to support learners. A significant contradiction was evident in Teacher two's class. This teacher used only one strategy of teaching language which could not, necessarily, suit the learning style of all her learners. The following are strategies these three teachers indicated they use: this finding is in line with CALP as well as CAPS:

- Small group teaching (one of the three teachers observed, Teacher three);
- Word wall. The teachers keep a running list of new vocabulary on a word wall. This visual cue helps learners with word recognition, decoding and spelling.
- Visuals whenever possible to reinforce the teaching, e.g. big books, charts, flash cards;
- Definition of unknown words and activation of the learners' prior knowledge and
- Stronger learners' assistance of the weaker ones (Teacher one);
- Quality time spent on listening exercises.

Relating these strategies to Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978), where the Foundation Phase classroom is the social context for learning and where learners acquire knowledge and skills through interaction with the teachers, Teacher one used stronger learners to explain to those who did not understand the LoLT.

Teachers planned their lessons to be taught when the Grade group sat together once a week. The shortcomings of these strategies, however, are that they planned the content to be covered in new topics, new sounds, story, reading and writing for the week, but not the

strategies or the visual cues to be used. The limitations of these strategies were that they did not specifically plan strategies to support those learners who had language difficulties. Cummins (2000) refers CALP to formal academic learning where learners watch what a teacher does, listens to what the teacher says and sometimes asks questions for clarity. This phenomenon was clear when the researcher observed one of the three lessons of Teachers one and three teaching language: although no questions were posed to these two teachers by the learners. Teacher three, however, provided active language learning opportunities for language production, allowing learners to engage with the language. McCarthy (2001:8) uses the term 'mediator' where the teacher mediates her knowledge of the language to the learners. The observed data, after analysis, revealed that in Teachers one and three's classes, reading and writing took place in reading and writing focus time. Through clear, focussed lessons children in these two teachers' classes were taught to be effective readers and writers.

With regards to the components of language, it became clear that the teachers' focus was on quantity rather than quality. A considerable number of phonic, handwriting and news tasks were completed in Grades one and two. Learners in Grade three completed a variety of tasks on the same level but not enough components were covered to meet the number stipulated by CAPS. The three grades lacked quality sentence construction and independent writing tasks since no text-based writing and language improvement tasks were given. Teaching aims of the lesson planning were not covered in all the classes weekly. The researcher could not find evidence of recorded CALP support strategies in the lesson planning of the three participating teachers.

5.3.2   Analysis of teachers' attitude

The teachers do not have the communicative competence of isiXhosa – the home language of the majority of the learners and there is a lack of clear evidence that they are doing something to re-skill themselves regarding moving towards multilingualism; this might be showing certain attitudes teachers have towards these learners most of whom come from a particular class of society.

The expected teacher class size; i.e. learner ratio of 1:30 and class sizes currently are about 40+ - an average of about 10 learners warrants a huge outcry from teachers. Secondly, the expected formal assessment tasks range from two to three per term – a huge requirement that warrants a further outcry from teachers.

5.3.3   Analysis of teachers' understanding of CALP

Cognition refers to mental processes and proficiency but only one of the three teachers assumed Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) had to do with learners' performance in language. Two of the three teachers were not familiar with the term CALP and could not give a clear answer when the researcher asked what they thought the best support strategies for CALP were.

CALP in an additional language: as is the case for learners at the participating public school. CALP is developed through listening, phonics and reading. CALP is the basis for a child's ability to cope with the academic demands placed upon him/her in the English language classroom. Data indicated that all three teachers had their differentiated reading group teaching lessons in their teachers' files but only Teacher three used the strategy when she taught language. Her group teaching for reading consisted of various listening exercises and flashcards with individual words that focused on developing vocabulary and word recognition skills. Each group had a reader based on their level of competence. A learner read a section of his/her own reader aloud. The teacher focused the learner's attention upon punctuation and asked questions about the reading after they had finished. The teacher tried to include all the learners with attention to their competency level.

Teacher three taught Shared Reading with the focus on comprehending what was read. She merely touched on thinking and reasoning but speaking and language use formed part of the strategy. On the third day, the process was repeated but the emphasis changed to vocabulary and language structure; with the teacher guiding learners through the content on which she wanted to focus. As prescribed by CAPS, vocabulary was reinforced and learners wrote independently. This strategy ensured all aspects of the language were covered. This in Cummins' (2000) view is the preferred method to lead learners through transitional stages along the way to academic proficiency. Tharp and Gallimore (1990) believe teachers should assist learners through the language zone and the content zone. In spite of Konishi and Tarone (2004)'s belief that cognitive processes are not influenced by teaching, Cummins (2000) concludes that the preferred method is to lead learners through transitional stages along the way to academic proficiency.

5.4   Recommended support strategies to improve CALP in the Foundation Phase

There is a fundamental need to improve the present state of language teaching and teachers' support strategies in order to improve CALP in schools. Teachers in these

Foundation Phase classes face great difficulties because the English language has an inconsistent sound/letter correspondence. For example, the sound of '*ough*' in *cough, enough, though and through.* Achieving academic fluency is a long process that is strengthened with effective instructional strategies (Cummins, 2011).

The researcher recommends the following strategies that the Foundation Phase teacher can use to improve the CALP of all learners to bring learners into the instructional mainstream and improve their general academic performance:

- During phonics and language teaching time, learners may be able to participate in class discussions and in oral lessons using new vocabulary. If learners do not attend to the written form of new vocabulary in classroom activities, they may not be prepared to decode or understand the word in written form. With daily activities that integrate reading and writing, learners can be exposed to all forms of key vocabulary in language in the classroom. The researcher recommends that lesson revisions should integrate sentence structures previously taught.

- Giving learners key vocabulary in each lesson and giving learners opportunities to use the words. The teacher can say the words as she writes them. The teacher models the form of writing and show the interaction of writing and reading in a natural way. Teachers can teach English vocabulary that goes with the concept taught and pay attention to spelling and pronunciation. Words become clearer when they are embedded in a background environment that serves to assist comprehension and writing.

Teachers spent sufficient time on listening and phonics in Grade one, which is good, but writing, reading, reading with comprehension and language structure and use did not receive sufficient attention. No evidence could be found that learners were writing their own independent sentences without the teacher's assistance. The result was that Grade two and three teachers had considerable language content to complete. The researcher recommends that:

- Time every day must be set aside for focussed lessons covering reading (Shared Reading, Group Guided Reading, Paired and Independent Reading, Phonics) and writing (Shared Writing, Group Writing and Individual Writing, grammar and spelling activities). During this time the teacher should conduct group guided reading with two groups while other children undertake consolidation activities such as written

comprehension, phonics, spelling, grammar and writing. Paired / independent reading can take place at the same time.

- Since it is difficult for children to absorb grammatical rules and remember the structure being presented, the researcher recommends that repetition of such activities be encouraged. Sequencing is part of grammatical learning. Learners need to be exposed to various kinds of sequencing activities: reading simple stories then presenting pictures that represent the actions observed. Teacher two, and to a lesser extent Teacher one, could adjust teaching to the needs of the individual learners within small groups to a greater extent, than working with the class as a whole. This strategy may ensure that all learners have a reasonable amount of direct contact with the teacher.

Teachers spend too much time on task completion with the learners by teaching to a task and not using appropriate strategies to improve language. Teacher two based her teaching strategy on how she was taught as a child herself. In another case, analysed data shows that teachers taught the work over and over in the same way to different groups or the whole class, without applying a different strategy. The preferred method, as mentioned previously, is where teachers lead learners through transitional stages along the way to academic proficiency (Cummins, 2000). Teachers need to understand learners' abilities, capabilities and challenges in order to assist them. Differentiated teaching in the Foundation Phase is not negotiable. When planning a differentiated teaching lesson, the content of the instruction should include the same broad concept, principles and skills for all learners (Bornman and Rose, 2010). When the teacher teaches a sound, the content is taught at the level of the ability group at a given time on the mat. Learners are given different levelled activities but the main content is the sound. The researcher recommends that:

- Teachers gradually increase the cognitive demand of a lesson as s/he already established the language proficiency of the learners. Scaffolding requires the teacher to decrease the language demands, provide temporary contextual support and maintain high cognitive development. When asking questions, learners need time to process the question and then formulate an answer. Such a strategy by teachers gives additional language learners a better chance to check their answers. Such scaffolding builds on concept development and allows for learning to take place. Use of manipulatives is a reading and writing strategy to scaffold instruction.

According to CAPS (DBE, 2011) the core role and duties of teachers are the delivering of the curriculum. The HOD needs to conduct a workshop with teachers to describe the importance of all components in CAPS in order to accommodate all learners in English classes although English is an additional or in some cases a second additional language. Teachers need to realise that most additional language learners bring a plethora of content knowledge and thinking skills to the classroom that transfer from their language to English (Cummins, 2000). Learners may know the answer in their own language; however they may not command sufficient vocabulary to answer the teacher coherently in English.

In conclusion, specific attention was given to teacher interaction with learners: posters and pictures on the walls, language usage and quality and quantity of written tasks. Analysis of observations in the classroom revealed that teachers created environments that enabled the learners' engagement with the language. Teachers in Grades one and two arranged small tables and chairs into groups of six or eight and in Grade three in three rows facing the front. Analysis revealed although that the way the teachers arranged their classrooms did not guarantee that learners worked co-operatively together, such arrangements did allow stationery to be shared freely.

Teachers at the subject school function under severely trying conditions. Learner enrolment is high, the majority of learners in the so-called English class are in fact English additional language speakers whose socio-economic situation is parlous.

5.5   Summary of findings

The research study shows that there have been some improvements in the classroom, but it is difficult to celebrate any improvement when language strategies are not taught daily as required by CAPS. Although a few good practices were observed, it was found that teachers do not seem to know which support strategies are helpful in developing learners' CALP. As a result teachers provided sub-standard language education. Participants indicated that the in-service training they had, did not provide them with enough knowledge to develop the home language abilities of IsiXhosa, Afrikaans and the few foreign language speakers to an advanced level in order to allow for a transfer of language knowledge and skills to English. The provincial educational departments and the Department of Basic Education, for example, acknowledge the true severity of the language problem in the Foundation Phase, so it is imperative that DBE offer language support in the form of in-service workshops and follow up implementation of knowledge and skills associated with language. The results have indicated the importance of providing teachers with formal training as an initial step to introduce CALP

support strategies. In other words, it is evident that teachers' development is absolutely necessary for an improvement to take place.

The study may be a preamble to a more detailed qualitative study in one of the areas which have been identified. This study highlights the need for Foundation Phase teacher assistance in identifying, planning, developing and teaching support strategies. Furthermore, this study was conducted as a result of the researcher's own experience in the classroom as well as her role as Head of Department (HOD) in the Foundation Phase (FP). Teachers often indicated the difficulty they experience due to the lack of language proficiency, especially among learners whose home language was not English, and who struggled to develop phonics, reading and writing.

The research design was descriptive, explanatory and had an ethnographic orientation. It had primary interpretive purposes that were analysed through qualitative methods because the research project as a whole interpreted teaching strategies used by three Foundation Phase teachers. This chapter discusses the results of the analysed data and presents recommendations.

The need for Foundation Phase teacher assistance was highlighted in the planning and development of language support strategies. Future research may be devoted to exploring CALP support strategies which teachers are using in other types of settings.

This research project is born out of a concern to assist teachers who face severe difficulties in their language classes as a direct result of the under-developed cognitive and language proficiency levels of many learners whose home language is other than English, which is the LoLT. The findings of the research have shown that the Foundation Phase teachers who participated in this study have limited understanding of CALP support strategies.

5.6 Limitations

This study has limitations. Two lessons only of each Foundation Phase teacher were observed which was not enough to conclude as to which strategies were used or not used. It would be useful to have a tracking study, or at least to follow up in three months. The sample from one school is not representative of all Quintile one schools in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town, Western Cape. Due to the small sample size, this study cannot be generalised to other school contexts. Time factors and contact with participants could only be arranged at

the end of the teaching and learning time. In spite of its limitations, the study brought to light a number of support strategies used by Foundation Phase teachers in developing CALP.

5.7 Conclusion

Two main conclusions are drawn with regard to support strategies that teachers deploy and how these interventions affect teaching of language support by teachers. As to strategies used by teachers, the finding is that the strategies teachers use are ineffective. Teachers have to reconsider the way they had taught language in the past, evaluate their past teaching strategies and implement more effective CALP support strategies. The teachers' strategies do not address the diverse home languages of learners. Since it is the learner's right to receive education in the official language of choice in a public school, the teachers and the schools cannot turn away the learners who choose the school with English as LoLT, even though the learners are struggling to cope with the language, and the teachers not trained to teach such classes. The implication, undeniably, is that the system is failing learners, as well as the teachers, who are struggling with diverse language learners in their Foundation Phase classes.

This research has contributed immensely to my academic knowledge and awareness of effective CALP strategies. Furthermore, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in the area of CALP support strategies. The study helps curriculum planners and the Department of Basic Education (DBE) by highlighting areas to be re-visited regarding teacher needs in the classroom. This study benefits curriculum advisors as they interact with teachers and make recommendations for implementation by teachers.

Last, and most important, is the fact that this chapter provides an overview of the entire study in relation to research questions. It has acknowledged some of the limitations and suggested recommendations for future research. Therefore, planning for teaching language is essential for the success of learner improvement in CALP and the intended improvement in teacher support strategies. 'A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination. But when you add to that a literate tongue or pen, then you have something very special,' Nelson Mandela.

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APPENDIX A: PERMISSION LETTER FROM WCDE

Education

Audrey.wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za
tel: +27 021 467 9272
Fax: 0865902282
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 20150218-43705
ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mrs Malinda Gardener
5 Goudwilger Street
Amandelsig
Kuilsriver
7580

Dear Mrs Malinda Gardener

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: SUPPORT STRATEGIES FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHERS NEED TO DEVELOP COGNITIVE ACADEMIC LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY (CALP)

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:
1.   Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2.   Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3.   You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4.   Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5.   The Study is to be conducted from 26 January 2015 till 26 March 2015
6.   No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7.   Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8.   A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9.   Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10.   A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11.   The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
        The Director: Research Services
        Western Cape Education Department
        Private Bag X9114
        CAPE TOWN
        8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.
Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard
Directorate: Research
DATE: 19 February 2015

APPENDIX B: LETTER TO WCED REQUESTING PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH

9 February 2015

The Principal

Dear Mr. Hops

This letter serves to confirm our recent telephone conversation. I am completing a Master's thesis at Cape Peninsula University of Technology entitled "Support strategies Foundation Phase teachers need to develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency".

Participation is voluntary. It will involve interviews and lesson observations with one teacher in Grade one to three respectively. The interviews will take place after school. All information gathered is considered completely confidential. Your name, the name of the school or any teacher's name will not appear in any report resulting from this study however, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used.

If these arrangements meet with your approval, please sign this letter where indicated below and return it to me via fax at 0864570814.

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Review Board at CPUT as well as the WCED. However, the final decision about participation is yours.

I trust that the results of my study will be of benefit to your Foundation Phase teachers, all Foundation Phase teachers in the province as well as the broader research community.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this research.

Sincerely

Malinda Gardener

PERMISSION GRANTED FOR THE RESEARCH SITE: _____

Mr. P. Hops

APPENDIX C: LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

Kuilsriver

7580

9 February 2015

The Teacher

Dear Ms _____

I am completing a Master's thesis at Cape Peninsula University of Technology entitled "Support strategies Foundation Phase teachers need to develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency".

Participation is voluntary. It will involve interviews and lesson observations. The interviews will take place after school in your classroom. All information gathered is considered completely confidential. Your name or the name of the school will not appear in any report resulting from this study however, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used.

If these arrangements meet with your approval, please sign this letter where indicated below and return it to me via fax at 0864570814.

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Review Board at CPUT as well as the WCED. However, the final decision about participation is yours.

I trust that the results of my study will be of benefit to you in your Foundation Phase class as well as the broader research community.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this research.

Sincerely

Malinda Gardener

I _____, hereby consent to participate in the MEd study conducted by Malinda Gardener. I understand the nature of this research and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Participant: _____   Date: _____

APPENDIX D: TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Teacher Interview:

1. Why did you become a teacher?
2. Where have you done your training?
3. When did you qualify?
4. In what language did you study/train?
5. Have you done training courses since your initial qualification?
6. How long have you been teaching?
7. How long have you been in your current Grade/post?
8. At how many different schools were you teaching?
9. How long at each school?
10. How long at this school?
11. Why are you teaching this grade?
12. What is the best thing about being a teacher?
13. What is the worst thing?
14. What do you find most challenging about teaching?
15. How many learners do you have in your class this year?
16. How many of them already repeated the grade?
17. How many of them are in need of language support and of which area of the language do they need the most support?
18. How many refugees, immigrants, ALoLT or African home Language learners do you have in your class?
19. Do you think the particular mother-tongue (e.g. Afrikaans/African Language) of the child has an influence on their academic performance?
20. What language support strategies are you currently using in class?
21. Does it work/of any help?
22. How often, if any, do you get professional support to assist the diverse language needs in your class?
23. What do you know about the 1997 LiEP (Language in Education Policy)?
24. What do you know about Language Policies in general?
25. Have you had any formal training on how to teach ELoLT?
26. What do you think are the best support strategies for CALP? Why?
27. What sort of learner do you hope to produce?

APPENDIX E: HOD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Head of Department Interview:

1. What do you find most challenging about being a Foundation Phase Head of Department?

2. What is your role as a Foundation Phase Head of Department?

3. Are Foundation Phase teachers using support strategies to develop learners' CALP?

4. How do you assist and support the Foundation Phase teachers who struggle with the diverse language needs in their classes?

APPENDIX F: CURRICULUM ADVISOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Curriculum Advisor Interview:

1. What do you find most challenging about being a Foundation Phase Curriculum Advisor in the district?

2. What is your role as a Foundation Phase Curriculum Advisor at Sampson Primary?

3. Are Foundation Phase teachers using support strategies to develop learners' CALP?

4. How do you assist and support the Foundation Phase teachers who struggle with the diverse language needs in their classes?

5. What support strategies could teachers use to develop learners' CALP?

APPENDIX G: OBSERVATION GUIDE

Observation:

1. Grade 1, 2 & 3 teachers respectively teaching phonics, reading, language & writing.
2. Teacher's language usage.
3. Teacher's instructions to the learners.
4. Teachers managing the different language speaking learners in the classroom.
5. Teacher's inter-action with the learners.
6. Learner's inter-action with the teacher.
7. How the teacher deals with language challenges in the classroom, e.g. incorrect language use, mother-tongue interference, etc.
8. Teacher's language support & strategies used in lessons.
9. The extent to which teachers support learners tackle the meaning of new language concepts and words.
10. Teacher's weekly and termly language lesson planning.
11. Teacher assessment tasks, assessment results and recorded mark schedules.
12. Learner's classwork books, language written activities, observing especially support strategies.
13. Classroom: pictures and teacher apparatus used in the language lessons.
14. Observe whether what was revealed in the interviews is applied in practice.

APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW CODING

Interview Coding: Teacher….. Grade…..

1. Main topic:
(a) Similarities
(b) Differences
2. Unique topic
3. Left over
4. Emerging theme

Why did you become a teacher?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

Where have you done your training?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

When did you qualify?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

In what language did you study/train?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

Have you done training courses since your initial qualification?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

How long have you been teaching?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

How long have you been in your current Grade/post?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

At how many different schools were you teaching?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

How long at each school?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

How long at this school?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

Why are you teaching this grade?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

What is the best thing about being a teacher?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

What is the worst thing?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

What do you find most challenging about teaching?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

How many learners do you have in your class this year?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

How many of them already repeated the grade?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

How many of them are in need of language support and of which area of the language do they need the most support?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

How many refugees, immigrants, ALoLT or African home Language learners do you have in your class?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

Do you think the particular mother-tongue (e.g. Afrikaans/African Language) of the child has an influence on their academic performance?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

What language support strategies are you currently using in class?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

Does it work/of any help?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

How often, if any, do you get professional support to assist the diverse language needs in your class?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

What do you know about the 1997 LiEP (Language in Education Policy)?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

What do you know about Language Policies in general?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

Have you had any formal training on how to teach ELoLT?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

What do you think are the best support strategies for CALP? Why?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

What sort of learner do you hope to produce?

	1(a)	1(b)	2	3	4

APPENDIX I: OBSERVATION CODING

Observation Coding: Teacher….. Grade…..

Area observed	Main topic		Unique topic	Left over	Emerging theme
	Similarities	Differences			
Lesson:					
Lesson:					
Lesson:					

Observe the teacher's:

Language					
Instructions					
Managing different languages					
Inter-action with Learners					

Managing language challenges					
Language support & strategies					
Managing new words/ concepts					
Learner's inter-action with teacher					

Analyse documents:

Lesson planning					
Assessment tasks					
Assessment results					
Mark schedule					
Learner classwork					

books					
Language activities					
Support strategies					

Observe teacher's classroom:

language pictures					
Lesson Apparatus used					

Observe whether what was revealed in the interviews is applied in practice.