

**THE INFLUENCE OF POLICY ON CLASSROOM LITERACY INSTRUCTION:
THE CASE OF THE FOUNDATIONS FOR LEARNING CAMPAIGN IN THE
MOPANI DISTRICT IN LIMPOPO,**

SOUTH AFRICA

by

NKHENSANI BRENDA MBHALATI

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION-WITH SPECIALISATION IN CURRICULUM STUDIES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR : PROF L C JITA

CO-SUPERVISOR: DR T V MANYIKE

JUNE 2012

DECLARATION

I declare that:

The influence of policy on classroom literacy Instruction: The Case of the Foundations for Learning Campaign in the Mopani District in Limpopo, South Africa

is my own work, that the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and that neither I nor anyone else at the University of South Africa or any other institution has previously submitted this study for degree purposes.

NKHENSANI BRENDA MBHALATI

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late parents Mrs Tsatsawane Luceth and Yingwane John Sondag Chauke, and to my siblings Emelinah, Sannie, Sarah, Sophy, Salphinah and Lawrence for their love and constant support, both financially and emotionally. My husband Joe, my mother-in-law Nyabane, and my three daughters, Violet, Nkabelo and Ubuntu; you are really a blessing in my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the following people whose contributions made it easier for me to complete this study:

- My very supportive supervisor, Professor Loyiso C. Jita, for his resilience, professional and friendly guidance, mentoring and unconditional support throughout this study. What could I have done without you? Your caring and understanding has brought me to where I am today. May the Almighty God richly bless you!
- My husband Joe and my three daughters, Violet, Nkabelo and Ubuntu, for your love, understanding and patience throughout this long and sometimes lonely journey.
- My only brother, Dr Lawrence Chauke, and my sister's son Climus Makhubele, for your constant support, encouragement and motivation.
- A special word of appreciation goes to my study mates, Lawrence Mudau, Mzonke Matshona and Mrs Magudulela. Your trust in me gave me the courage and confidence to complete this study
- My acknowledgements further go to Dr Rex Baloyi. For the assistance you provided to me, I thank you very much.
- How can I forget my senior at work, Tinyiko Ngwenyama? For your love and support during this study.
- I cannot forget my mother-in-law, Nyabane, for your love and your support. You took care of my kids while I was busy with my studies. You are such a wonderful mother. May the Almighty God give you many more years full of health and happiness.
- Above all, glory be to the Lord God Almighty who has brought me this far!

SUMMARY

In response to local and international findings which reflected over a number of years that South African learners cannot read and write at their expected levels, the Department of Education (DoE) launched the Foundations for Learning Campaign (FFLC) in March 2008 as an intervention strategy.

It is against this background that a research project was initiated to investigate the impact of the FFLC on teachers' classroom instruction and the reading culture of foundation phase learners. Qualitative interviews and observations were used to collect data from the participants.

While many of the participating teachers had found creative ways to make the new policy work in their own literacy classrooms, the study found that there was no sufficient training of teachers and other stakeholders prior to the launch of the FFLC. The lack of monitoring and support by the DoE was also seen as a hindrance to the success of the initiative.

I concluded the study by recommending that the time is ripe for a more detailed and introspective reflection and review of the FFLC policy.

KEY WORDS

Foundations for Learning Campaign, literacy, reading, classroom instruction, foundation phase, policy implementation, Annual National Assessment, literacy skills

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration	i
Dedication	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Summary	iv
Table of contents	iv-viii
Acronyms	ix

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND, FORMULATION OF PROBLEM AND AIMS OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction and background	1-3
1.2 Motivation of the research	3-4
1.3 Statement of the problem	4-5
1.4 Aims of the research	5-6
1.5 Outline of the research chapters	6-7

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction	8
2.1.1 What is literacy?	8-9
2.1.2 What is reading?	9
2.2 Reading in the early grades	10-13
2.3 Policy and classroom instruction	13-15
2.4 Making sense of policy	15-16

2.5 Reading policy change	15-16
2.5.1 Reading policy change in America	18-18
2.5.2 Reading policy change in South Africa	18
2.6 The Foundations for Learning Campaign	19-21

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction	22
3.2 The research design	22-23
3.3 Research population and sample	23-24
3.4 Amendment of sample size	24
3.5 Data collection methods	25
3.6 The instrument used	25-29
3.6.1. Pilot test	25
3.6.2. Interviews	25-27
3.6.3. Observations	27
3.6.4. Document analysis	27-28
3.6.5. Data analysis process	28-29
3.7 Verification	29
3.8 Trustworthiness	30
3.9. Ethical issues	30-31
3.9.1 Privacy	30
3.9.2 Confidentiality	30-31

3.9.3 Harm to respondents	31
3.10 Limitation of the study	31-32

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction	33
4.2 School A case study	34-48
4.3 School B case study	49-64
4.4 Observations and other challenges facing the FFLC	64-65

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction	66-75
5.2 Summary of the findings	66
5.2.1 Perceptions of teachers	67-68
5.2.2 Perceptions of principals	69-71
5.2.3 Perceptions from the FFLC cluster committee members	71-73
5.3 Perceptions of the circuit FFLC committee member	74-75
5.4 Making sense of the research findings in the context of the available literature	75
5.4.1 Training and support in preparation for the implementation of the FFL	75-77
5.4.2 Impact of the FFLC on educators' instructional methods	77-78
5.4.3 Impact of the FFLC on the reading culture of the learners	78
5.4.4 Supporting resources	79

5.4.5 Implementation and monitoring	79-80
5.4.6 The Annual National Assessments	81
5.4.7 Parental involvement	81-82
5.4.8 Reading time	82
5.4.9 Teachers as key role players in decision-making in the classroom	82-83
5.5 Continuous evaluation of the programme	83
5.6 Conclusions, weaknesses of the study and recommendations	83-86
5.6. Conclusion	83-84
5.6.2 Weaknesses of the study	84-85
5.6.3 Recommendations	85-86
6. REFERENCES	87-97
7. APPENDICES	
Appendix A: Interview guide questions	98-101
Appendix B: ANA question papers, English	102-109
Appendix C: ANA question paper, Xitsonga home language	110-117
Appendix D: Letter to the circuit	118
Appendix E: Letter of approval from the circuit	119
Appendix F: Letter to schools	120
Appendix G: Consent form	121

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANA	Annual National Assessment
DoE	Department of Education
FFLC	Foundations for Learning Campaign
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
IRA	International Reading Association
NAEPA	National Assessment of Education Progress
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NCTE	National Council of Teachers of English
NGO	Non-Government Organisations
NHRPAC	National Human Research Protection Advisory Committee
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literature
SANLI	South African National Literacy Initiative
SGB	School Governmental Body
SMT	Senior Management Team

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND, FORMULATION OF PROBLEM AND AIMS OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction and Background

Education reformers increasingly seek to influence policies regarding instruction (Cohen & Hill, 2001). Furthermore, education reformers assume that manipulating the elements of instructional policy will change teachers' practice, which will then improve learner performance. The present study sought, as one of its main aims, to explore whether and how the current policy, the Foundations for Learning Campaign (FFLC), has impacted on teachers' classroom literacy practice and thus on the reading culture of the foundation phase learners in the country.

A growing body of research has emphasised the social processes by which teachers adapt and transform policy as they enact it in their classrooms (Coburn, 2005:476-509). The cognitive approach to policy implementation has tended to focus primarily on the micro-processes that characterise teachers' implementation of instructional policy (Vaughan, 1996 and Weick, 2001). Coburn (2001) argues that teachers draw on their existing knowledge to interpret new instructional approaches which are also influenced by patterns of social interaction with colleagues, the condition of learning in the school and the local workplace norms that shape the range of appropriate responses and structure priorities.

This study seeks to explore whether the FFLC is helping to shape literacy instruction, especially reading instruction in the foundation phase, and if so, in what ways. It further seeks to understand the relations between policy and classroom instruction by examining the policy provision with respect to literacy in the foundation phase and how teachers make sense of these in their construction of classroom instructions. Furthermore, it seeks to explore how teachers interpret the FFLC policy, how they adopt it and how their implementation assists in improving the reading culture and skills of the foundation phase learners, if at all. This was done through an investigation of the reasons behind the launch of the FFLC in South Africa and the establishment of the vision of the reading instruction which is described by the FFLC as well as how the vision of instruction is understood and translated into classroom instruction by foundation phase teachers.

National performance in reading is often seen as an indicator of the effectiveness of an education system (Pretorius, 2008:60-88). Pretorius argues that all academic achievements depend largely on reading literacy and learners who fail to become proficient readers are unlikely to do well in school. In fact, a large body of research shows a robust relationship between reading and academic performance; see for example, Elley & Irvyin (2003; Krashen (2004); Pretorius (2002a: 33:179-208); Wells (2001) and Eivers (2011).

Since the democratic breakthrough in 1994, South Africa has undergone a steady decline in reading competency which has drawn the attention of many researchers and the media. According to Prinsloo (2008a,6(4):7-8), many studies that have been undertaken nationally and provincially, including international comparative studies, all seem to point towards a national crisis in reading. This is supported by Bohlman & Pretorius (2008:67, 42-55). From these studies, South African learners appear to be unable to read and write using their mother tongue, let alone using the first additional language of English. The reading problem has also been highlighted in the mass media in South Africa (see for example, newspaper reports (City Press, 2007:1; and Daily Sun 2008: 6).

The manifesto on values, education and democracy has as one of its aims to ensure that every South African is able to read, write, count and think (DoE, 2008c). However, the systemic evaluation results conducted by the DoE in 2006/2007 seem to reflect problems with movement towards achieving these goals. Specifically, learners in South African schools performed poorly when tested for their ability to read at the age-appropriate levels (DoE, 2008a).

Heaugh (2001,19(1):116-126) also supports the view that recent international studies show that South African pupils compare most unfavourably with other countries with regard to literacy and numeracy. The current levels of school dropouts, repeating of grades and failure rate in the National Senior School Certificate examination taken in Grade 12 at approximately 18 years of age, all indicate considerable underachievement among black scholars in particular (Cosgrove, , Perkins, Moran, & Shield, 2011).

Roe and Ross (2006) postulates that children from homes where reading and writing is a priority develop literacy skills more readily than those from homes where reading literacy is not valued. They also argue that parents can support emerging literacy during the pre-school phase by reading to their children.

It is against this background of declining reading levels and the local interest in the problem that I became interested in understanding DoE interventions and their potential impact in the classroom. This study sought to understand one recent intervention strategy designed to improve reading in primary school, namely The Foundations for Learning Campaign (FFLC).

Dudley-Marling (2005, 40 (1):127-130), argues that there is a need to explore the implications of the literacy research and policy for classroom practice. He contends that there usually appears to be little alignment between policies being proposed by the DoE and what really happens in the classroom and that this leaves teachers feeling marginalised and disenchanted by the top-down imposition of policies. The present study sought to explore the impact of the implementation of this one policy, the FFLC, on classroom literacy instruction.

With the introduction of the FFLC policy in South Africa, I had observed that sometimes schools and educators were given conflicting information from different government officials. This left many educators frustrated. For example, in one workshop I attended that was conducted by provincial curriculum advisors, teachers were told that the thirty minutes “reading for enjoyment” which is indicated in the policy must be fitted into the normal day periods, while in another workshop they were told that it must come before or after the normal periods. Whitehead (1993) reminds one that educators draw on their personal learning experience when teaching, particularly if they do not understand the theory behind the teaching practice. Pearson (2003:152-208) maintains that the relationship between education research, policy and practice is complex and one in which the teacher’s professional judgements are critical. If educators’ judgements are indeed critical as they are the people who are the implementers of these policies in the classroom, then it is important to understand what decisions and actions the teachers make in trying to implement the directives of the FFLC.

1.2. Motivation for the research

The context of the study is the Foundations for Learning Campaign which is a new programme that was launched in 2008 by the then minister of education, Naledi Pandor. The FFLC was launched with the aim of, among other things, improving the reading culture and skills of learners in the foundation phase. I have found it worthwhile to explore whether this

policy has led to any changes in the reading culture of learners in the foundation phase, or on classroom instruction.

Although government in general, and the Department of Education in particular, seems to be doing its best to develop strategies for improving classroom literacy instruction, especially in reading, at this stage we still know very little about what it will be necessary for these initiatives to succeed and/or to have the desired effects. There appears to be a gap between the policy developers and the teachers who are the implementers of these policies.

I believe that this gap is sometimes made even wider because of flawed assumptions by the policy developers as to what really goes on in the classroom situation.

It was hoped that the findings of this research would assist the DoE or developers of the FFLC policy document to reflect on the programme and establish if and how it has impacted on classroom instruction. From this study, I also sought to learn how to develop future policies that could have a significant impact on classroom instruction and to bring awareness of the need to understand the relationship between policy and practice every time a new policy is developed. This research sets out to contribute to the perceptions and practices surrounding the FFLC in Limpopo, South Africa.

The present research was further designed to provide essential information to the Department of Education about the successes and/or failures of the FFLC policy in Limpopo. Participating educators were afforded the space to reflect on and make inputs and recommendations as the end receivers of the FFLC.

1.3. Statement of the problem

As a teacher with 18 years of teaching experience in the foundation phase, I have noticed an apparent decline in the reading levels of many foundation phase learners over the years. Studies have also shown that South African learners are unable to read and write at the expected levels (Reeves *et al.*, 2008). In response to the local and international findings showing poor performance by South African learners, the DoE launched the Foundations for Learning Campaign on 14 March 2008.

The FFLC has, among others, the following objectives: first, to create a national focus on improving reading, writing and numeracy abilities of all South African learners; and second,

to provide energy as well as direction and inspiration across all levels of the education system and in the homes and public domain to ensure that by 2011 all learners are able to demonstrate age-appropriate levels of numeracy and literacy.

While many policies have been developed in the past, it seems that very few sustained investigations of these policies and their effects on classroom instruction have been carried out. This is especially so in the South African context, where such policy changes seem to occur too rapidly for sustained investigations to be contemplated and conducted. As a veteran educator, I have often noticed that educators are also not given enough training before the implementation of these new policies. It was therefore important for me to explore the factors that led to the launch of the FFLC policy in South Africa. Determining the vision of the reading instruction that is described by the FFLC and how it is translated into classroom instruction by the foundation phase teachers became the focus of the study. It was also important to explore how effective the campaign has been in a number of dimensions so far. For example, has it made a difference to the learning culture of reading for learners and their communities? Has the campaign led to any significant improvement in the achievement of the reading levels of the children in schools? Has the campaign influenced classroom instruction in literacy for example? Or has the teaching and learning of literacy changed in the foundation phase classrooms since the launch of the FFLC in 2008? Based on these questions, the following research problem was formulated: to investigate the influence of policy on classroom literacy instruction: the case of the Foundations for Learning Campaign in the Mopani District in Limpopo, South Africa.

The Annual National Assessment (ANA) results of 2011 in numeracy and literacy conducted among 6 million grade 3 learners in the foundation phase revealed that numeracy and literacy are still a problem in South Africa. The ANA results showed that nationally, grade 3 learners performed at an average of 35% in literacy and 28% in numeracy, while the provincial performances stand between 19% and 43% with the highest being the Western Cape (DoE, 2011).

1.4 Aims and objectives of the research

It is now approximately five years since the FFLC was launched and also because it was supposed to have ended in 2011, this seems to be the most appropriate time to undertake research with a view of establishing the possible implications and consequences of the campaign. This research was aimed at understanding if and how the campaign has influenced literacy instruction and specifically reading instruction in foundation phase classrooms.

The research sought to provide insights into whether the FFLC is helping to shape literacy instruction, especially reading instruction in the foundation phase, and if so, in what ways. Where there were effects, I also sought to explore the reasons for particular kinds of effects on classroom instruction. In general, the research sought to understand the relations between policy and classroom instruction, by examining the policy provision with respect to literacy in the foundation phase and how teachers make sense of them in their construction of classroom instruction. In order to obtain relevant answers to the research questions, the following objectives were pursued:

1. To investigate what some of the factors are that led to the launch of the FFLC policy in South Africa;
2. To establish what the vision of the reading instruction which is described by the FFLC is;
3. To determine how the vision of instruction is understood and translated into classroom instruction by the foundation phase teachers.

1.5 Outline of the chapters

The topics addressed in the following chapters are given below.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 examines the literature germane to the study and the policy change in reading, as well as exploring the relationship between policy and practice.

Chapter 3

In this chapter, I present the methodology that I used to carry out the research, discussing the data-gathering methods, instruments used, sampling, and how data was collected and analysed.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 explores the findings of the investigation. This chapter presents an analysis of the data collected in the selected schools in the Mopani district in Limpopo, South Africa, by means of a detailed case study. It also outlines the major themes emerging from the analysis.

Chapter 5

In Chapter 5 I discuss the implications of the findings. Meanings of the findings are also explored, and recommendations and conclusions are presented in this final chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section reviews literature on reading problems in general and also explores the South African government's interventions to address such problems, for example through the formation of several campaigns until the time when the FFLC was launched. I begin the chapter by exploring the definitions of "literacy" and "reading", since these are the most important concepts for the present study. The FFLC policy document is also examined briefly as one of the major drivers of the present study.

2.1.1 What is literacy?

The definition of literacy is something dynamic, evolving and reflecting continuous changes in a society. In broad terms literacy can be defined as the ability to make and communicate meaning from, and by using, a variety of socially contextual symbols (Moll, 1994:179-207). Moll further states that within various levels of developmental ability, a literate person can derive and convey meaning, and use his/her knowledge to achieve desired purposes or goals that require the use of language skills, whether spoken or written. According to Cunningham (2000), a literate person can mediate his/her world by deliberately and flexibly orchestrating meaning from one linguistic knowledge base and apply or connect it to another knowledge base. Pretorius and Ribbens (2005) define literacy as the ability to read and write, while literacy is defined by the Merriam-Webster's College Dictionary online as the quality or state of being literate. These two definitions emphasise the importance of literacy skills in enabling people to interact with each other and also in equipping them with the knowledge needed to manipulate the world through the use of written or spoken language. Literacy skills allow people to achieve their set goals and purposes.

The Literacy Development Council of Newfoundland Labrador defines literacy as not only evolving competency in reading and writing, but going beyond this to include the critical and effective use of language (oral and written) for all purposes. (Clinton, 1996). The definition involves critical thinking about what one reads, as well as expanding the term to encompass

oral forms of literacy. The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 defines literacy as an individual's ability to read, write and speak in English, compute and solve problems at the levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual and the society (Clinton 1996,) These definitions bring to the fore the fact that it is not only the reading of words which counts, but also the reader's ability to utilise the language skills to engage in critical thinking, and applying the learnt language skills in daily life situations.

2.1.2 What is reading?

For many years, literacy programmes have been driven by three basic definitions of reading in the United States of America (Foertsch, 1998). In the first definition, learning to read means learning to pronounce words, while in the second definition, learning to read means learning to identify words and get their meaning. The last definition refers to learning to read as the ability to bring meaning to a text in order to derive meaning from it. Although these definitions reflect long-standing views of reading, current literacy research supports a more comprehensive definition of reading (Foertsch, 1998). According to Allington and Cunningham (1996) this new definition includes all the above definitions, and places learning skills in the context of authentic reading and writing activities. These writers postulate that this definition recognises the importance of skill instruction as one part of the reading process. The views reflected above indicate that as we focus on the learner's ability to read and write, the attainment of this skill must be accompanied by the ability to clearly understand what they are reading about. This implies that they must be able to utilise their language skills in their daily lives.

In addition to the above-mentioned definitions, Grabe (2002, 25:375-406) and Alderson (2000) define reading as an "interactive", meaning a construction process that is rapid, accurate, strategic and motivated. This means that as the learners are engaged in the reading activity, they develop other competences and skills, such as being able to relate words to each other and also to apply them to their daily experiences. According to Elley and Iryvin (2003) reading is a powerful means of improving language proficiency; through reading, learners also develop language and cognitive skills as shown in several studies. All these definitions are embraced in the first three definitions and for the purpose of this study; I will be referring to these three definitions.

2.2 Reading in the early grades

According to Machet and Pretorius (2003), the ability to read refers to more than just being able to recognise letters and decode words, but includes the ability to construct meaning from written words, and to be familiar with various forms and functions of texts. Similarly, Graves and Juel (1998) indicate that reading is both a cognitive-linguistic ability and a socially constructed form of human behaviour.

Both these definitions of reading emphasise the social meaning of reading, that is, the fact that reading is tied to the ability to make sense of our own and other people's (written) utterances and behaviours. This is the conception that most teachers would want learners to have from the early grades.

The goal of every classroom practitioner, administrator and reading specialist is to provide the love of life-long reading; they all agree that attitude plays a vital role in establishing the reading habit. For that reason, Prinsloo (2009) contends that the early years are critical in the development of a child's reading, writing and thinking skills. Accordingly the national policy focus on reading in the foundation phase is justified in the South African context. Local findings reflect that literacy is still a problem in the foundation phase (DoE, 2008c). The national DoE's (2008c) report provided provincial results from the 2007 Grade 3 National Assessment, which revealed that there was hardly any improvement in the achievement levels from 30% in 2001 to 36% in 2007. A similar study by an HSRC team, led by Reeves, Heugh and Prinsloo (2008) evaluated literacy teaching at 20 schools in Limpopo during 2007/2008, and found that learners in Grades R to 4 did not read and write nearly enough at and after school (Reeves et al., 2008). To underscore the importance of reading in the early grades, another HSRC study which assessed 78 000 grade 8 learners in the Western Cape suggested that the foundation phase literacy teaching and learning problems might have far-reaching effects on secondary school performance.

The reading problems identified in many of the local reports are not only experienced in the First Additional language, English, for most learners in South Africa, but also in the mother tongue. In a pilot study conducted by Matjila and Pretorius (2004) which examined reading in Setswana and English, the findings revealed that many South African learners struggle with their reading in both home language and English. Similar results have been reported from other studies in the country (Smith, 2002). The national systematic evaluation report of the foundation phase by the DoE (2002) revealed that learners' performance in their home

language averaged 34%. This rather low average seems to persist throughout primary schooling, leading learners to enter high school without the kind of literacy that will enable them to use reading as a powerful learning tool.

Research worldwide consistently shows a strong relationship between academic performance and reading ability (Matjila & Pretorius, 2004:20(1)1-21. Similarly, in a study undertaken jointly by the Department of Linguistics and Mathematics at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in 2000, the findings revealed that students who failed mathematics had considerably poorer reading skills than those who passed it (Bohlman & Pretorius, 2002: 16(3) 196-206).

Newspaper reports in the, daily Sun (2008:5) and City Press (2007:6), posited that the majority of pupils in South Africa are unable to read and write as a result of insufficient training among educators in the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). This journalistic analysis was made following the evaluation by the national DoE of the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) by the foundation phase educators. Desperate attempts to understand and explain the reading and literacy problems in South Africa further support the need for systematic research on the issues, as proposed in the present research project. The reading problem in South Africa was also revealed in the findings by Progress in an international reading literature study which was conducted in the year 2006. This study evaluated the performance of grade 4 learners from 40 countries, including South Africa. The results revealed that South Africa achieved the lowest score (Prinsloo, 2008a, 6(4):7-8). Furthermore, in 2008 the DoE released provincial findings from 2007 of the Grade 3 National Assessment. Although the results showed some minor improvements from 30% in 2001 to 36% in 2007, the reading problem still continued to manifest itself. In 2008 the national media also picked up the issue. The Daily Sun (2008) commented on the inability of South African learners to read. According to that report, nine-year-olds in the public school system were battling to read and do their sums. The newspaper based its claims on an evaluation report from a study conducted in September and October 2007 by the DoE through systematic evaluation. This study was led by Reeves, Heaugh and Prinsloo.

In 2002, an investigation was conducted by Pretorius and Naude among children under the age of five-and-a-half and seven years from six daycare facilities in the informal settlement of Themba of the Gauteng Province in South Africa (Pretorius & Naude, 2002). The results

showed that the children were ill-prepared for formal education. Inadequate sound development and poor knowledge of the alphabets characterised the findings. It was also seen that those children had poor knowledge of sound pertaining to prefixes and suffixes, and transportation of sound within a word by another, which can be summarised as a lack of visual-motor integrative skills and poor fine-motor skill development. The findings further reflected that these children had been inadequately exposed to mediated reading and writing experiences owing to non-parental involvement. My argument is that if children are ill-prepared for formal reading and writing in their pre-schooling, they are unlikely to read and write at the expected level when they go to school. This may be one of the root causes of the current situation in South Africa, the inability of learners to read and write at their expected levels. I believe that the findings of this study will assist the DoE to explore ways of solving this problem.

Heald-Taylor (2001) is of the opinion that if parents discuss stories with their children, ask questions about books and stories, and respond to the children's comments, it may help to develop children's enthusiasm for reading and a love for literature, providing the foundation for learning to read. He adds that reading readiness seems to be a function of family and environmental variables.

My observation is that most of the parents in South Africa, especially in rural areas, are still illiterate despite the government's intervention programmes to improve literacy. Thus it becomes difficult for them to follow Heald-Taylor's suggestions of being involved in their children's reading, because they themselves cannot read (Heald-Taylor, 2001). Some of them cannot even write their own names. In another investigation conducted by Naude in 1999, about the enrichment of senior toddlers in an environmentally deprived Griqua community in South Africa, the results showed that language development and enrichment are in essence a socially mediated process. The findings suggested that the inadequate linguistic example set by both the family and the community resulted in inadequate language development and enrichment. The senior toddlers revealed their impoverished, undifferentiated world of language and their deficiencies in mastering language. The research revealed that the senior toddlers' conceptualisation was deficient, and that in their language usage they were concrete-bound rather than analytic-abstract (Naude, 1999). My argument is that when a child grows up in an environment where the family and the community set an inadequate linguistic example, it is likely to affect his/her reading and writing ability. The situation in Griqualand is the situation in which most of the rural communities find themselves, where the

community and the family have deficient language use, which results in the inability of South African learners to read and write at the expected levels, as revealed in research.

In 2001, Wadsworth, Corley, Hewitt, & Defris conducted a study, the findings of which revealed that both biological and environmental factors are independent determinants of a child's ability to process linguistic information (Wadsworth et al., 2001, 36(4):353-359). These scholars argue the importance of non-shared environmental factors (for example, instructional methods, teachers and peers) for individual differences in reading performance between children of 7 and 16 years of age. In their study of 11-year-old children, it appeared that both the environment and biological variables predict phonological development. This indicated a linear association between cerebral organisation and phonological skill in socio-economic groups. My common observation as a teacher thus far would seem to align somewhat with the above view that the environment may influence the phonological skill in socio-economic groups. For example, in June 2010, we had the circuit FFLC reading and writing competitions, and to my astonishment, children who took positions one and two came from schools that fell within the same area.

On 14 March 2008 the then minister of education, Naledi Pandor, launched the Foundations for Learning Campaign as a response to the findings of the national, provincial and international studies, all of which made it clear over a number of years that South African children are unable to read, write and count at specific levels and cannot demonstrate key skills in literacy and numeracy. This campaign was aimed at improving learner performance in reading, writing and numeracy in all South African schools (DoE, 2008b)

2.3 Policy and classroom instruction

Since 1990, researchers have highlighted the ways in which educational policies are reconstructed and re-shaped as they are put into place in schools and classrooms (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). In a research conducted in two elementary schools in California, the findings revealed that principals influence sense-making by shaping access to policy ideas, participating in the social process of meaning-making and creating substantively different conditions for teacher learning. These actions are seen as being influenced by the principal's knowledge of both instruction and teacher knowledge. Could this be the case in the South African context? Could the South African principals also be influencing sense-making by shaping access to policy ideas? I believe this research will provide answers to these questions. Cohen & Hill (2000) are of the opinion that education reformers increasingly seek

to manipulate policies regarding assessment, curriculum and professional development in order to improve instruction.

According to Langer & Allington (1995:687-725) changing curricula have failed to broadly influence teaching and learning, at least partly because teachers have few opportunities to learn to improve practice. These writers further indicate that countless efforts to change teachers' practices in various types of professional development have been unrelated to the central features of the curriculum that students would study, and have shown no evidence of their effect on students' learning. Similarly, many efforts to drive instruction by using high-stake tests for students have failed to either link the tests to student curricula or to offer teachers substantial learning opportunities. The FFLC was launched in March 2008, as a new policy to change reading instruction in South Africa. In brief, one objective of this research is to investigate if, and how, the FFLC policy is improving classroom literacy instruction, and also to make recommendations for future successes of policies for educational change.

Langer and Allington (1995) have estimated that every 30 years or so, it seems, a very public debate about the nature of appropriate reading instruction emerges in the media and in the policy talk in legislative venues. At present, literacy instructional policies are replacing older policies with little serious attention to the potential impact of the policies being replaced or documentation of the impact of the new policy-making processes (Allington, 1999:31,457-482). The central issue is that no-one seems to be concerned about finding out whether all these policies have the intended effects on classroom practice. Paterson (1998) indicated that there were very few policy makers who were interested in tracking the impact of the policies they created, and there was also little educational legislation that provided funds for rigorous study of the effects of the policy being promoted. This is more the case in the South African context, where such policy changes seem to occur more frequently during this transformation period in the society. Paterson also contends that many bills have been passed, in the USA, that mandate that all teachers pass tests on knowledge of phonics terms and principles, but there are no studies that suggest that such legislation will affect teachers to teach differently, or that a different sort of teaching that was imagined by advocates of the policy produces improved reading achievements. This, once more, is largely because this legislation typically provides no funding to examine the potential relationship between policy and its practice in the classroom. In the case of the FFLC, which was launched in 2008 with the aim of improving the counting and reading ability of all South African learners, I have also observed that no funding seems to be provided to examine the relationship between this policy and its

practice in the classroom. My observation as a foundation phase educator is that the implementation of this policy is not always monitored by the advocates of the policy. It appears that no-one seems to care about finding out what the relationship is between this policy and its practice in the classroom. An important research question therefore is whether this FFLC policy is making a difference in the practical classroom situation?

In the FFLC, learners are expected to write the Annual National Assessment (ANA) to find out if their literacy ability is improving. What is the verdict in terms of learner assessment scores at this stage? The need for systematic research into the classroom changes, if any, is further underscored by some disturbing observations regarding the assessment scores. Out of frustration and the need to appear effective, some teachers have opted to drill learners before the writing of the ANA tasks, which produces fake results and false positives in terms of policy effectiveness. According to Allington (1999), the policy logic for shaping beginning reading instruction seems to be: if certain forms of pedagogical knowledge, instructional methods and curriculum materials are mandated by policy, then teachers will offer a particular type of beginning reading instruction that will positively enhance students' reading achievements in both short and long term. His argument is that there is no support for this logic, yet it is the one being used repeatedly by policy reformers. Part of the purpose of this study was to test this policy logic by examining what happens in selected foundation phase classrooms in South Africa. What kind of changes, if any, seem to have been affected by the new FFLC policy in the country?

2.4 Making sense of policy

Coburn (2004:77,211-244) and Hill (2001, 38(2):289-318) posit that teachers' capacity to make sense of policy is influenced by the nature of their connections to policy messages, their degree of depth, pervasiveness, specificity and volition. Sense-making theories suggest that school and classroom culture, structure and routines, result in part from micro-momentary actions by teachers and actors in school; (see for example, Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, (2011). A large body of researchers are of the opinion that action is based on how people notice or select information from the environment, and make meaning of that information or event. They do so by placing new information into pre-existing cognitive frameworks – also called world-views or working knowledge by some theories (Vaughan, 1996). Vaughan (1996) further reflects that teachers draw on their existing working knowledge to interpret

new instructional approaches, often reconstructing policy messages in ways that either re-enforce pre-existing practices or lead to incremental change. According to Coburn (2001) teacher sense-making about instructional reforms is not solely a personal matter, it is influenced by patterns of social interaction with colleagues, the conditions of learning in school, and local workplace norms that shape the range of appropriate responses and structure priorities. Spillane (2000,18(2) :149-179) states that putting sense-making at the centre in the implementation process illuminates how district policy-makers and teachers construct messages about changing their practices from policies that often misconstrue the intention of policy-makers. Spillane, Reiser and Reimer (2002, 72(3):387-431) maintain that to better understand the effects of the implementation of policy, we must explore the mechanism by which implementing agents understand policy and attempt to connect understanding with practice. Coburn (2001) maintains that many researchers now suggest that rather than policy influencing teacher practice, it is more likely that teacher's influence and shape policy. That is, teachers interpret, adapt and even transform policies as they put them into practice. Mantere (2000) hypothesises that although successful policy implementation is a goal and a challenge for an organisation, it has not been a topic of active research.

In view of the information above, this research also aims at providing insight into whether the FFLC is helping to shape literacy instruction, especially reading instruction, in the foundation phase. Quinn (2009) contends that policy implementation studies have focused primarily on planning-centred points of view and neglected the important roles of cognition, social interaction and community play. He indicates that researchers all conclude that studying teacher sense-making of policy is greatly needed and long overdue since there is little research on the topic. He adds that gaining an understanding of how implementers reconstruct policy messages in their practice (i.e. making sense of policy) is crucial if policy implementation is to be understood.

2.5 Comparison of the Reading policy change between America and South Africa

2.5.1 Reading policy change in America

Mazzoni (1995) notes that a few decades ago there were few disagreements about the value of public education in America, and only a few professional organisations and policy-makers dominated the national and state policy arenas. Mazzoni (1995) further reflects that this dominance of the national and state policy arena by a few professional organisations and policy makers continued until the advent of the education reform movement in the early

1980s, when new interest groups entered, which led education to move towards the top of the policy agenda, and disagreement increased. In educational policy, reading reflects this changed environment. In 1994, the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) released reading results which indicated that 40% of American fourth graders read below a basic level (Clinton, 1996). This startled many policy-makers, parents and other citizens. These findings led many policy-makers and citizens to conclude that America was in the midst of a reading crisis (MacDaniel, Miskel & Sims, 2000). The findings aroused intense debates about the solutions to the problem. Various interest groups and policy-makers entered into the so called “reading war” as they all wanted to influence the policy agenda and the outcomes. The International Reading Association (IRA), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and the Business Roundtable all began to traverse the reading-policy domain. Based on the NAEP results, President Clinton urged all citizens in 1996 to join him in supporting the critical national goal that all American children should be able to read on their own by the third grade. This led to the launch of a tutoring programme called “America Reads”, which was intended to have each American child reading at grade level by the fourth grade (Clinton, 1996). In 1997, during his state of the Union address, President Clinton emphasised his America Reads programme and proposed a voluntary national test in reading. This attracted much opposition from several education interests (e.g. Association of Elementary School Principals and Association of School Administrators) arguing that a better approach would have been to provide funding towards altering the reading instruction which learners received, and the training of teachers to improve their reading instruction (Sims, 1999). This led policy-makers and interest groups to engage in debate about what approach could be the best to remedy the problem. Ultimately, the implementation of the research-based classroom instructional practices led to the promulgation of the Reading Excellence Act of 1998. Through this programme the government funded state and local agencies, with the aim of engaging them in activities based upon scientific research which aimed at altering the reading instructions with a view to improve learners’ reading abilities (Heinz, Laumann, Nelson & Salisbury, 1993)

Subsequently, several reading programmes have been introduced, all of which were aimed at improving the reading ability of those American learners who were below the expected levels, but each of these programmes came with its own challenges. The reading problems faced by the American learners are similar to the ones we have to grapple with in the South African context. In the following paragraphs I will explore the background to the reading

policy changes in South Africa up to the launch of the FFLC, which is the central focus of this study.

2.4.2 Reading policy change in South Africa

Since 1995 the DoE has launched three literacy reading campaigns, namely: The Ithuteng (Ready to Learn) Campaign in 1996; the South African National Literacy Initiative (SANLI) in 1999, and Masifunde Sonke (Let us Read Together) campaign in 2000. The Ithuteng and SANLI campaigns were targeted at adult learners while Masifunde Sonke was a national campaign targeting the whole nation. In spite of all the enthusiasm at their launch, the results of these campaigns have not been spectacular, to say the least. Some of the problems surrounding the Ithuteng campaign, for example, were poor organisation with no national plan, limited capacity within the provincial departments to plan and run the campaign, absence of well-developed advocacy and social mobilisation strategy, poor training of educators, and lack of reading materials, especially in the mother tongue (Aitchison, Houghton & Baaties, Douglas, Dlamini, and Seid & Sted, 2000). Similarly, the SANLI campaign has achieved very little and has been reduced to a poorly funded provincial project (Aitchison et al., 2000). Baartjies, Land, Harley, Thomson, Sader & Aitchison (2002) contend that Masifunde Sonke campaign proved to have been an even bigger disaster. While the year 2000 was declared “A Decade of Reading” by the then minister of education, Prof Asmal, and later amended in 2001 and declared “The Year of Reading” aimed at mobilising the whole nation to read, research done on the Masifunde Sonke campaign also suggests that the campaign was less successful (Asmal, 1999). Some of the problems included that this campaign was originally located within SANLI, which experienced competition for scarce resources. As with other literacy campaigns, Masifunde Sonke was bedevilled by the lack of capacity and funding, with only one senior official with secretarial support being appointed at the height of the campaign in May 2001 (Baartjies et al., 2002). It is against the background of the failure of all these reading campaigns that in 2008, the DoE launched yet another programme called “The Foundations for Learning Campaign (FFLC)”.

2. 6. The Foundations for Learning Campaign

Aims

The FFLC is a four-year programme which was launched in 2008 by the then minister of education. The aims of the FFLC as outlined in the Government Gazette No 30880 of 2008 (pp. 4, 5, 6, 22 and 26) are, among others, to

- Create a national focus to improve reading, writing and numeracy abilities of all South African children;
- Provide energy as well as direction and inspiration across all levels of the education system as well as homes and public domain to ensure that by 2011 all learners are able to demonstrate age appropriate levels of literacy and numeracy (DoE, 2008).

The FFLC is a national response to nation-wide, regional and international studies that have shown over a number of years that South African learners are not able to read, write and count at expected levels, and are unable to execute tasks that demonstrate key skills associated with literacy and numeracy.

The initial focus of the FFLC is on primary schooling, starting with the foundation and intermediate phases, with the intention of ensuring that ultimately learners and students across the system acquire and sustain a solid foundation for learning.

The FFLC is to be managed by a national steering committee comprising key educationalists from universities, research institutions and NGOs with expertise and experience in literacy and numeracy, working with senior education officials from the national and provincial departments of education. Provincial level steering committees similarly are to be established to oversee, monitor and report on the implementation of the campaign.

Expectations

The expectations of the FFLC are, among others:

- Teaching of literacy and numeracy (languages and mathematics) to be improved by ensuring that all teachers in Grades 1 to 3 indeed teach reading numeracy skills every day;
- Every teacher in the foundation and intermediate phases must spend 30 minutes daily on reading for enjoyment and at least one hour on extended writing every week.

- Every teacher in the foundation and intermediate phases must also teach numeracy (mathematics) for at least one hour every day including ten minutes of stimulation mathematics (arithmetic) exercise at the appropriate level in all grades;
- Every teacher must have sufficient resources to ensure the effective teaching and learning of literacy, e.g. charts, number and phonic freezes, writing materials, suitable apparatus for teaching concepts, textbooks, reading series and workbooks;
- Every school must assess, track and record learner progress and achievement in key areas of reading, writing and numeracy. This must be done monthly for class records, and quarterly for submission to the district office which will report to the head office;
- Learner progress in literacy and numeracy will be reflected in the individual record of each learner from grade R to 6;
- All primary schools will undergo annual national assessments in literacy and numeracy, using standardised tests to measure progress towards achievement of set targets.

Monitoring and support

Monitoring and support is to be conducted at two levels, namely by the Department of Education jointly with the education districts. The Department of Education and the nine provincial departments of education must jointly monitor the overall implementation of the campaign activities and outcomes. District officials will provide support to ensure success of the campaign in the following ways:

- Always be available to assist principals and teachers as well as be accessible to parents;
- Visit all schools within the district at least once per term, with more frequent visits to schools that require stronger support, for monitoring and guidance.;
- Ensure that all schools procure and receive the necessary resources in time for teaching and learning to commence, in line with national norms and determined standards;
- Assist all schools to improve their performance by working towards agreed targets, ensuring that regular tests are conducted and the results are reported to parents. A framework for quarterly tests is to be provided to all schools for all grades.

Advocacy

The primary focus is to highlight the importance of numeracy and literacy as basis for achieving quality education for all. A national communication strategy is to be directed to all South Africans, emphasising the role that all can play to support young South Africans in literacy and numeracy. Support materials were to be developed and provided to parents/guardians with home-based assessment and support for their children's learning. Enhanced support was to be provided to Grade R teachers, parents and care-givers to stimulate emergent literacy and numeracy in pre-school children. The campaign should create awareness that it takes a village to raise a child, and therefore all South Africans, whoever they are and wherever they are, have a role to play in providing quality education for every South African child.

However, after four years of the implementation of the FFLC, The ANA results of 2011 in numeracy and literacy conducted among 6 million grade 3 learners in the foundation phase revealed that numeracy and literacy is still a problem in South Africa. The ANA results showed that nationally, grade 3 learners performed at an average of 35% in literacy and 28% in literacy while the provincial performance stood between 19% and 43% with the highest being the Western Cape. (DoE, 2011).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study is intended to research, explore, describe and analyse the influence of policy on classroom literacy instruction with special reference to the case of the Foundations for Learning Campaign. Research data was collected through observations and semi-structured interviews and document analysis. This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the methodology used in investigating the influence of policy on classroom literacy instruction with special reference to the case of the FFLC in Mopani district in Limpopo, South Africa.

3.2 The research design

Gay and Airasian (2003) define “research design” as a general strategy or plan for concluding any research. Ismail (2002), on the other hand, refers to a research design as a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing a research problem. He points out that research design also includes the aim of the research, the selection and design of a particular method, a selection of participants, and consideration trustworthiness.

To explore the research questions, I used qualitative research approach methods as they are more suited to understanding and experiencing human behaviour, especially the more complex systems and integrated life processes (Macmillan and Schumacher, 2001). Through this approach, I attempted to understand how educators interpret and understand the FFLC policy and with what consequences to learners in the Mopani district in South Africa. To collect the required data for this study, I visited the participants at least once a week to observe and to conduct interviews (See Annexure A). I spent a total of three months in the field, collecting the required data.

Patton (2002) points out that the choice of research must be appropriate to the subject under investigation. As a result, the research questions for this study were explored through a case study design. A case study research design strategy of an empirical nature was used to observe whether the FFLC is really influencing the classroom literacy instruction and if so, how, in a practical classroom situation. Cresswell (1998) defines a case study as a unit of human activity embedded in the real world, which can only be studied or be understood in context, which exists in the here and now, and that emerges within its context so that precise

boundaries are not easy to draw between the case and its context. Creswell adds that a case study design involves a wide array of data collection instruments as the researcher attempts to build an in-depth picture of the case.

A case study design was chosen because it enabled me to investigate and document the personal stories and experiences of the respondents with great depth, to obtain perspectives of the subjects. A case study design also allowed for greater emphasis to be placed on detail, context and nuance of the policy interpretation and implementation by the teachers. This design was chosen, with the aim of observing and drawing conclusions through the study of teachers and learners in the foundation phase (grade 3) in the natural setting of their classroom while the FFLC policy was being implemented.

The case study also allowed me to explore the different opinions on how the FFLC influences classroom literacy instruction, how teachers interpret and implement this policy in Mopani district, and to suggest, as argued by Smith (2003) how differences of opinion in the interpretation and implementation of the FFLC have affected different results. The case study design assisted me in exploring insights, discovery and descriptions regarding the FFLC policy, as well as the ways in which teachers interpret and understand it as well as implementing it.

3.3 Research population and sample

Graziano and Raulin (2000) emphasise the importance of understanding the concept of representativeness and its relationship to generalisability before selecting a population sample. Gay (1992) defines sampling as the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that they represent the larger group from which they are selected. The population of the present study comprised educators teaching grade 3 in schools' foundation phase. A purposeful sampling approach was used.

Bryman (2004) defines purposeful sampling as the term often used in qualitative research to refer to sampling that is done deliberately, with some purpose or focus in mind. Purposeful sampling assisted me to develop a set of criteria and to select the subjects based on the cases meeting my criteria as argued by Cooper and Schindler (2003).

When dealing with purposeful sampling, the participants in the study conform to certain criteria (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). These researchers add that the size, criteria and specific cases selected depend on the purpose of the study. For this study, the participants were

selected based on the following criteria: foundation phase educators, teaching grade 3, teaching in school in the Nkowankowa circuit, Mopani district in South Africa. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) point out that many qualitative researchers employ purposive and not random sampling methods as they seek out groups, settings and individuals where the processes being studied are most likely to occur. When sampling for this study, I initially chose two primary schools in the Nkowankowa circuit, having three teachers each, two principals from the participating schools, two FFLC cluster committee members and two FFLC circuit committee members from the same Nkowankowa circuit. The cluster committee was chosen because they are the overseers of the smooth implementation of the FFLC in schools around the Nkowankowa circuit. The circuit committee are the mediators between the circuit manager and the schools, while the principals monitor the implementation in schools. After the study participants were identified, I wrote a letter to the circuit manager of the Nkowankowa circuit, requesting permission to conduct the research in the identified schools. After receiving an approval, I wrote letters to the principals of the identified schools to request permission to conduct the research in their schools. A letter of approval from the circuit was attached. After receiving approval from the schools, I visited the schools to have a meeting with the grade 3 educators and learners prior to the observations and interviews. The aims and intentions of the research were explained. These visits helped the learners to relax during the observation period, as they were already used to my presence.

3.4 Amendment of sample size

The sample size was reduced because an educator in one of the identified schools had serious psychological problems and could no longer participate. Since the principals of the schools appeared to be the FFLC circuit committee members, I ended up with five teachers, two principals, one FFLC circuit committee member and two cluster FFLC committee members. My sample size ultimately involved 10 participants.

3.5 Data collection methods

Mooney (2003) indicates that there is a danger in looking at only one method of data collection during research, as bias or over-generalisation can compromise the results of the process. For this reason, three methods of data collection were used, namely interviews, observations and document analysis.

3.6 The instrument used

The instrument that was used in this study was a qualitative semi-structured interview guide containing questions which were posed to the participants (see Appendix A)

3.6.1 Pilot test

The above-mentioned instrument was piloted with two educators, and was found to be effective in enabling discussion around the points of interest for the present study. After some refinement, the instrument was then used with a larger sample of participants from the selected schools and circuits.

3.6.2 Interviews

Seldman (1991) states that interviewing is very important if the researcher's goal is to understand the meaning that people involved in education make of their own experiences. He contends that interviewing people provides a necessary, if not always completely sufficient, avenue of inquiry. A semi-structured, one-on-one interview was conducted with the selected foundation phase teachers from the two identified schools in the Nkowankowa circuit, focusing on grade 3 teachers, the principals of the identified schools, the cluster FFLC committee members and the circuit FFLC committee members over a period of three months.

An unstructured interview is an open-ended in-depth interview designed to obtain rich and detailed data from participants using follow-up questions in the form of conversations (Bryman, 2004). On the other hand, a semi-structured interview provides only the major themes or talking points to guide the conversation or interviews. The semi-structured interviews helped me to understand the complex behaviour of the teachers, principals and FFLC committee members without imposing any prior categorisation that could have limited the field of inquiry (Punch, 2005). The use of semi-structured interviews was more suitable for my study as they are appropriate for research into feelings, attitudes, intentions and motivations of behaviour (Bryman, 2004 & Smith, 2001). The semi-structured interviews

helped me to understand how teachers in this circuit made sense of the FFLC policy. I first interviewed the Circuit FFLC committee members to gain an understanding of how the circuit monitors and offers support to the cluster committees and the teachers to ensure success of the policy. After that the cluster committee members were interviewed to find out how they understood their roles in ensuring the success of the FFLC. The principals of the two schools were also interviewed to explore their understanding of the expectations of the FFLC in schools as well as to find out if they understood their roles in the achievement of the FFLC goals.

Teachers as implementers of the FFLC policy were interviewed so that I could gain a sense of how they understood and interpreted the FFLC policy and also to get a clear sense of the impact of their understanding and interpretation of the FFLC document on classroom literacy instruction and therefore, on the reading skills, culture and abilities of learners. I chose the foundation phase educators because they are usually the ones who first experience the effect of every new policy on classroom literacy. The semi-structured interviews allowed the selected educators the opportunity to tell their stories (De Vos, 2002). De Vos adds that a semi-structured interview involves formally recruiting a member from a setting for the specific purpose of conducting an interview. In this study, I allowed each participant to choose a place where he/she would like to be interviewed. An interview guide was used to provide me with predetermined questions which were used as an appropriate instrument to engage participants and designate the narrative terrain (De Vos, 2002).

Prior to the interview, I drew up a list of pre-determined questions so that each interviewee would respond to a similar series of questions (see Appendix A). The questions were of an open-ended nature, which helped to get as many details and meanings from the interviewees as possible. The educators were interviewed about their feelings about the FFLC policy as well as their observations regarding its influence on the classroom literacy instruction, thus on the reading culture, abilities and skills of learners. I pursued other topics as they emerged during the interviews. The selected educators were interviewed for 30 to 45 minutes each, once a week, while being recorded electronically. The interviews consisted of semi-structured questions to ensure that the same information was requested from each participant without it being pre-programmed. This approach provided room to probe further for deeper understanding of each interviewee's experience and views (Patton, 2002). Patton (2002) describes the general interview guide approach as an outline or checklist that the researcher creates to ensure that he/she covers all relevant issues in the interview. The interview guide in

this study assisted me to use the limited time with the study participants wisely and also to remain focused and maintain control while the individual participants were responding to questions. It also helped me to solicit responses in the following areas: factors that led to the launch of the FFLC policy, how the vision was understood and translated into classroom instruction by the foundation phase educators in selected Limpopo schools. The main task was to understand the meaning of what the interviewees said (Kvale & Steinar, 1996).

3.6.3 Observations

Observational research findings are considered strong in validity because the researcher is able to collect in-depth information about a particular behaviour (De Vos, 2002). This author identifies two types of observations, namely direct observations where people know that you are working with them and un-obstructive observations where people may not know that they are being observed. For the purpose of this study, I used direct observation as I wanted the participants to know that they were being observed. I observed and recorded teachers and their learners continuously and recorded their behaviours manually. I noted how the grade 3 teachers implemented the FFLC policy in their classrooms and also observed whether it was bringing about change in the classroom literacy instruction. An observation guide was used, focusing on the interaction between teachers and their learners in the classroom, as well as teaching methods used and their relationship and fidelity with the FFLC objectives and milestones. I conducted one hour of observation per week because of the huge amount of work in doing the observations and the time available to me for such observations while working full-time. I gathered live data during the weekly visits as outlined by Cohen and Manion (2007). During these observations, I looked directly at the reality in the classroom without relying on second-hand information.

3.6.4 Document analysis

According to Macmillan and Schumacher (2001) documents are records of past events or plans that are written or printed which provide the background of a topic. Punch, (2005) refers to documents as “rich, important sources of data for social research”. I used this approach of document analysis to explore how the FFLC policy has been designed and developed to bring about change to the literacy classroom instruction and thus to the reading abilities, skills and culture of the foundation phase learners. I collected all official documents relating to the FFLC policy, such as the FFLC policy document and Milestones manual. I also collected the literacy learning programme, the scheme of work, lesson plans, records of

learners' reading progress, in order to establish the educators' understandings and interpretations of the FFLC policy. These documents were examined and integrated with data obtained from the interviews in an attempt to add nuances from these sources during my analysis and interpretations. Heywood (2002) contends that public policy can be better understood as the linkage between intentions (what government will do), actions (what the government actually does) and results (impact of government actions). The FFLC document was analysed to give a description of the expectations, the context and the background surrounding the issues which led to its launch.

3.6.5 Data analysis process

Merriam (1998) defines data analysis as the process of making sense out of data. According to Cresswell (2002), the researcher interprets data when using a qualitative research design. Data analysis is further defined by Marshall and Rossman (1999) as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. As indicated in the previous discussions, a qualitative research approach was followed in this study. Data analysis commenced during the data collection processes in order to reduce the problem of data overload. This was done by selecting significant features for future focusing during the study (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2002). The data analysis began with organising and preparing the data collected and transcribed during the interviews with the participants. I read through the data to obtain a sense of the information while looking for word patterns and common themes that existed in the text. I counted how many times a pattern or theme occurred in the interviewees' responses, and when a pattern or theme was found, I did the coding. All interviews with the FFLC cluster committee members, FFLC circuit committee members, principals of the participating schools and the participating teachers were recorded electronically and each interview transcribed to provide written texts of the interviews. The entire tape recordings were listened to several times during the analysis period, and the transcripts were read a number of times in order to provide a context for the emergence of specific units of meaning or themes. The identified themes from the entire data were coded, clustered and categorised.

Themes that were common to most or all interviews were looked at, and themes that were unique to a single interview were also noted. Data in this study was analysed using the approach of Rubin and Rubin (1995) in which data analysis is described as something which

begins while the collection of data is still under way. I did a preliminary analysis each week to guide me on how to redesign the questions to focus on the central themes as the observations and interviews continued. After the observations and interviews, I began with a more detailed analysis of what my conversation partners had told me. In this final analysis I discovered additional themes and concepts which contributed towards an overall explanation for the research questions in the study.

Cresswell (2001) postulates that coding is the process of organising the materials into chunks, before bringing meaning to those chunks. Meaning in this study was extracted based on the results of the coded data frequently counted. In the final data analysis I put all the materials from the observations and interviews that spoke to one theme or concept, and compared them across the categories as well, in order to discover connections between the themes and to integrate themes and concepts into a theory that offered a plausible, detailed interpretation of the findings of the research. In the end, a summary of each individual interview was written, and themes that had been elicited were incorporated into the data.

The collected FFLC documents were reviewed in order to understand the interpretations and the implementation of these policies by educators and their impact on classroom literacy instruction, therefore on the reading abilities, skills and culture of the foundation phase learners.

3.7 Verification

I ensured verification by reviewing the data and having frequent meetings with the participants to evaluate the transcribed interview document. I also had inspection meetings to ensure the correctness of the data (see for example Scott, Stevenson, and Gombas, 2006) In these meetings I presented the document to the participants and gave them room for comments and to reject the information if they did not support it or felt that it was not a true reflection of what was happening in the practical sense. I also used peer-member checking by having constant referrals with my colleagues to ensure that the results were plausible.

3.8. Trustworthiness

Maree (2008) posits that trustworthiness is of utmost importance in qualitative research, and adds that assessing trustworthiness is the acid test of the data analysis, findings and conclusions. I therefore used the ongoing methods of data collection, namely observations, interviews and data analysis.

Marre (2008) also states that following several investigations or peer researchers to assist with the interpretation of data can also enhance trustworthiness. In the light of the above information, a peer educator who was a doing a Masters of Education was invited as a co-observer in one of the observation sessions in this study and also to assist in the interpretation of data. The two sets of data that were recorded were compared for consistency and agreement.

3.9 Ethical consideration

I considered a number of ethical principles during the study.

3.9.1 Privacy

Shade (2008:80-91) describes privacy as the ability of an individual or group to seclude themselves or information about themselves and thereby reveal the information selectively. Shade (2008) further reflects that privacy is sometimes related to anonymity, the wish to remain unnoticed in the public realm. I assured the participants that their names would not be revealed in the research, unless they requested it and gave permission for this. While anonymity was not assured in this case, the respondents and their privacy were protected through confidentiality.

3.9.2 Confidentiality

The National Human Research Protection Advisory Committee (NHRPAC) (2002) indicates that protecting confidentiality of information collected about individuals is vital to fulfilling ethical responsibilities. I ensured that I considered confidentiality issues at every stage of the research process, such as the initial design, identification, recruitment and consent processes for the study population, security, analysis and final disposition of data, and even in the publication or dissemination of data results. I assured the participants that if any name were

to be used in this research, it would not be the real name of a participant, unless he/she gave their consent. A consent form was presented and explained to the participants, assuring them of confidentiality and informing them about their rights in the study, including the right to withdraw from the study without negative consequences at any time should they wish to do so. This is what Anderson and Kanuka (2003) describe as voluntary consent.

3.9.3 Harm to respondents

During research, subjects can be harmed in a physical or emotional manner. In this study, no physical harm was involved, and data was collected in such a way that it did not cause emotional distress to the teachers who were grappling with the challenges and dictates of the FFLC policy. I informed the respondents beforehand about the potential impact of the investigation; for example, they sometimes had to sacrifice time after work for interview purposes, or for observation during their teaching at least once a week. Ismail (2002) argues that honesty is the key issue as it will be of no use if the researcher fabricates results, because such data would not offer any help to people who are looking forward to using the outcomes of the study. I also informed the research subjects about the overall purpose of the investigation and the main features of the design, as well as potential risks and benefits from participating in the research study as explained by Steiner (1994). In an effort to encourage teachers to participate voluntarily in this study, I first wrote a letter to the circuit manager of the Nkowankowa circuit in Limpopo province to request permission to conduct the research at the selected primary schools (see Annexure D)

After permission was granted, I wrote letters to the selected primary schools and attached a letter of permission from the circuit (see Annexures D and F). I delivered the letters to the principals personally in order to give them a detailed explanation of the research and to assure them that ethical issues would be strictly adhered to. I also sought consent from the participants in writing and assured them that the ethical principles would be observed (see Annexure G)

3.10 Limitation of the study

The study was limited to two primary schools in the Nkowankowa circuit, Mopani district in Limpopo. Five grade 3 teachers from the selected primary schools, two principals of the identified schools, two FFLC cluster committee members and two FFLC circuit committee members were chosen as the sample because of their involvement in the implementation of

the FFLC. Although this was a relatively small group of participants which precluded generalisability, enough detailed information was gathered, as all the participants were involved in the implementation of the FFLC policy. This detailed description is what Geertz (2000) calls “thick” descriptions allow for lessons and comparison with other sites and cases.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This study was aimed at understanding if and how the Foundations for Learning Campaign (FFLC) has influenced literacy instruction, and specifically reading instruction in the foundation phase classrooms. It aimed at providing insights into whether the FFLC is helping to shape classroom instruction in the foundation phase, and if so, in what ways. It also aimed at understanding the relations between policy and classroom instruction by examining the policy provisions with respect to literacy in the foundation phase, and how the teachers make sense of these provisions in the construction of classroom instruction. Classroom observations, interviews and document analysis were used to collect data in this study.

This chapter presents the research findings obtained from interview data with the grade 3 educators of the two participating schools, the two principals, the cluster FFLC committee members for the area within which the two participating schools fall, and the circuit FFLC committee member for the area in which these schools are located. These findings are also based on the researcher's observations of classroom instruction in the two schools and observation of cluster meetings during the period of the study. The findings are presented in narrative form, as part of the qualitative approach adopted for this study. I present case studies of the two primary schools. **(NB the names that are used in this section are not the real names of the participants.)**

In this chapter, I commence by giving the background of the two participating schools. In the presentation of these findings through the case study reports, I sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are some of the factors which led to the launch of the FFLC in South Africa?
2. What is the vision of instruction which is described by the FFLC?
3. How is the vision of reading instruction understood and translated into classroom instruction by the foundation phase educators in the selected Limpopo school?

4.2 School A case study

Location

School A is located in the Nkowankowa circuit of the Mopani district in the Limpopo province. It is located in the Greater Tzaneen municipality. The school is situated in a township area where most of the parents are well educated and working. The school has an enrolment of about ±900 learners, a principal, one deputy principal, four heads of department (HODs) and 30 educators. The medium of instruction in this school is Xitsonga in the foundation phase and English in the intermediate phase.

The culture of teaching and learning

The school starts at 7:20 with a morning devotion which lasts for ten minutes. Often, the learners sing choruses and at the end of the chorus they read Bible texts as a way of encouragement to read. Each week is assigned to a particular grade, and the learners choose their representative with the assistance of their teachers. The school day ends at 13:00 for the foundation phase learners and at 13:30 for the intermediate learners, both in summer and in winter. This school has grade R to grade 7 classes. When the bell rings, every teacher goes straight to class and all learners run to their respective classes. The school has a beautiful fence, a tennis court, and a beautiful administration block and communication signs. All the learners are accommodated in classes; no learners are taught under the trees, as is sometimes the case in the rural public schools of South Africa.

Maintenance staff members are employed by the school governing body (SGB) and these workers are responsible for keeping the school buildings and the surroundings clean. Unlike other schools in the neighbourhood where one finds that learners are responsible for keeping their classes and school surroundings clean, the upkeep of the school is not the responsibility of learners. There are also security personnel at the gate to monitor the arrival and departure of visitors, learners and educators.

The school allocates an extra 30 minutes for reading for enjoyment. This is the one time of the day when the classes are very noisy.

The professionalism of teachers and their relationship with the school management team (SMT).

Most teachers at this school talk about how much they love to read and improve their own qualifications. There is some evidence of this when one considers that out of the 30 teachers, 26 have BA degree qualifications, and the remaining 4 are busy with the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE). The principal is a proud holder of a Master of Education (MEd) degree and her deputy has a Bachelor of Education (Honours) degree. This is quite rare in primary schools across the country. The relationship between the teachers and the SMT is characterised by mutual respect and appreciation. In trying to solicit the views of teachers about the way they interact and relate with each other and with the members of the SMT, I interviewed Ms Hlungwani, one of the grade 3 teachers who remarked:

Our principal is very strict, but one thing I like about her is that she leads by example. When she motivates us about being dedicated and committed to our work one has no choice but to support her by working hard to realise the vision of the school. In fact all our SMT members are very friendly and supportive. They are practising an open door policy. We are very free to talk to them about anything. Even if you need personal assistance or you confide with them on sensitive matters you are sure that your issues are safe. I am very blessed to be part of this school.

Duty allocation (curricular)

When I entered the principal's office my eyes were attracted by very colourful charts on the wall. Upon closer inspection, I noticed that they represented the allocation of curricular responsibilities for all educators. These charts showed the names of educators, classes, learning areas and the number of periods each teacher had per week. My attention was further drawn to the reflection on the type of activities which were to be undertaken in each learning area. I became more interested when I noted that reading was allocated time on the school timetable. This represented part of the school's interpretation of the FFLC's prescriptions, where each school is expected to set aside time for such reading.

It was necessary for me to try and understand how the school developed its interpretation of the FFLC's requirements in order to arrive at this allocation of time for reading in the school's timetable. This is one of the issues I pursued during the interviews with the participants at this school. In the corner of the office were a computer and a photocopier. On

the principal's table there were two time registers, one for teachers and one for the non-teaching staff members. I began my discussion with the principal by raising the issue of her interpretation of the FFLC documents.

The principal, a mature woman in her 50s, began her story with the history of the school, and coupled that with a description of the learners and how she had seen a trend of learners getting younger and less prepared for schooling in grade 1 over the past 10 years. As she put it:

The issue of learners' dominant age at a particular time or period is ever changing and challenging. In the early 80s and early 90s, the age requirement for admission to schools in grade 1, was seven years; some learners were even far older than the required age of admission. A dominant factor of those crops of learners was that they were more prepared for schooling. Contrary to the above experience, learners admitted to school nowadays are becoming younger. A further startling observation is that they are also less prepared for schooling. Another observation is that in grade R and grade 1 the issue of reading is not taken very seriously, as it used to be. Maybe it's time for the Department to consider introducing reading as early as grade R. Reconsidering age requirement for admission can maybe resolve the problem.

Her description in this quote points to other strong views about the need to introduce reading early in the schooling system. She is a believer in the need for children to read. It is not surprising to learn that she was one of the most forceful advocates of "reading time" at this school. As she argued:

To me the most effective way to teach a young learner is through consistent lessons on reading. Over the years I always hammered the importance of reading practice for learners to my teachers. The outcome of this is that our school has a good reputation in reading because our learners won in many reading competitions. Sometimes if we get newspapers we bring them to school for use during the reading time, because the Department doesn't provide us with sufficient reading material. Any book that we come across e.g. in grade 3 the medium of instruction is Xitsonga, so any material that is written in Xitsonga we come with those materials to school so that the learners can read during the 30 minutes reading for enjoyment time.

Indeed, her views as expressed in this interview appear to be in line with the expectations of the FFLC guidelines. She clearly did not need to be convinced about the need for children to read.

With such strong views from the principal, it was quite possible that the staff at the school might not have had any choice in the matter. In my discussions with the grade 3 teachers at the school, one of the issues I wanted to pursue was their own views and understanding of the expectations of the FFLC guides. I also wanted to understand how the principal might have taken the teachers along and/or how the school as a whole arrived at their approach to setting aside the time for reading.

I began my teacher conversations and observations with Ms Mavundza. During the classroom observations, I had noted that she was very concerned to get learners into a reading routine as the very first thing in the morning.

In each of Ms Mavundza's lessons I observed, the very first activity was reading. As I observed more of her lessons, I found that this was how her lessons started each morning. In the following paragraph I present a short segment of the daily morning greetings that were conducted in Xitsonga:

Ms M: Good morning class! Are you happy this morning?

Learners: (In chorus) Morning mom, yes we are happy.

Ms M: Let us close our eyes and pray.

Learners: (Eyes closed) Here we are dear Lord..... (Saying the prayer in Xitsonga)

Ms M: All right, thank you class. Now take out your newspapers and read them for 10 minutes. Choose any story which is about a family. Be serious because each of you will tell the whole class what you have read about.

It is clear from the foregoing segment of the lesson that Ms Mavundza was very concerned to get learners into a reading routine as the very first thing in the morning. Ms Mavundza was also careful to involve learners in some kind of reading that would bear relevance to their own daily lives. She wanted them to bring contemporary materials such as newspapers for

reading. At other times, the learners were asked to read magazines during this reading period. I was intrigued by this observation and pursued it during my interview discussion with Ms Mavundza. She confirmed that she wanted her learners to be “relevant” and understand that reading is linked to their daily lives. This is how she described it during the interview:

...I want my learners to love reading. I also want them to be able to read for their parents and grandparents. I also want them to apply what they read to their daily lives.

The theme of reading as a form of conveying knowledge about contemporary events was prevalent in Ms Mavundza’s lessons and general approach to reading. In another example of a lesson I observed she again picked up on this theme.

A segment from that lesson is reproduced below:

The lesson was about the importance of water during Conservation Water week. The learners had just read a passage about water conservation.

Ms Mavundza: Now, I want you in your groups to choose a scribe and a reporter.

Learners: (Choose their scribes and group leaders)

Ms Mavundza: Group 1, discuss why you think conserving water is important, and write it down

Group 2, discuss what will happen if we don’t conserve water, and write it down

Group 3, discuss about the uses of water and also write it down, and the last group, you must write a short story about any sickness you heard or know of which is caused by dirty water.

Learners: (Start doing what they were told to do)

Ms Mavundza : (Moving around and encouraging them) You only have 10 minutes left.

In this segment we observe Ms Mavundza again returning to the theme of reading for knowledge. She was very keen to involve learners in reading that would bear relevance to their daily lives. This is how she confirmed it during our interview:

I want my learners not just to be fluent readers, but I also want them to be conscious about the environment in which they live. I want them to grow up to become responsible adults. Learners need to be taught about taking care of their environment while they are still young, and how negligence about this can affect their health.

In another lesson, I noted Ms Mavundza actually using the reading time to encourage her learners to read with understanding and to gain knowledge.

Here is another example of her lesson that involved reading. Learners were just coming back from break.

Ms Mavundza: Good day class.

Learners: (In chorus) Good day mom.

Ms Mavundza: Go to the reading corner and pick up a book that you can read for 10 minutes, then you will tell the class one by one what you were reading about. Go in twos and pick up the book you want.

What this segment of the lesson illustrates is how Ms Mavundza used her expertise as a reading specialist to set up reading corners for her learners.

For her, it was not just about asking children to read, but setting up the conditions to enable such reading. The creation of four reading corners in her class, which corresponded with four reading ability groups that she had created, emphasised the point about the need to create good conditions for reading.

The issue of conditions for reading also came up in my discussion with Ms Hlungwani, who mentioned that despite her class being overcrowded and that the department does not provide sufficient reading materials, she tries by all means to improvise as a teacher and she also tries to have at least one reading corner. She pointed out:

Being a dedicated teacher is sometimes very demanding. You sometimes have to sacrifice your own time and resources for the sake of the learners. This class is overcrowded as you can see, but I tried to squeeze a small reading corner so that I motivate my learners to read. Other reading books are kept in my cabinet because of shortage of space. It's hard because the Department doesn't provide us with sufficient reading materials. I sometimes have to be creative and create short stories, type them

and put them at the reading corner. I also make sure that I buy newspapers and magazines because I don't want my learners to become bored by reading the same things every day.

The statement above was supported by the cluster FFLC committee member Ms Nkanyana in one of our discussions, when she said:

The government doesn't provide us with sufficient reading materials. It is hard to teach learners without teaching materials. If the department can at least supply us with reading materials maybe it can be better. Some teachers resort to borrowing reading books from the library. It's not easy for some of us because there's only one library around here which is in town. You need money to get there, and the Department doesn't pay for our transport. They will tell you a teacher remains a teacher for 24 hours a day.

In another discussion with Mr Manyike, another member of the cluster FFLC committee, the issue of insufficient supply of resources also came up. This is how he characterised it during the interview:

Really you can't understand how our department works. They will promise you that you are going to get the resource materials for the following year before the school closes for the December holidays. You will be surprised to find that those materials are delivered to school around February of the following year. And the worst part; you receive five books per each learning area. What can you do with five books in a class of more than 40 learners? They're not fair to us as teachers, and also to our learners. In the past, parents used to buy reading materials and text books for their learners. I wish they could have left it like that. Despite all these challenges, teachers in most of our schools are doing their best to ensure that learners are engaged in reading practice as prescribed in the FFLC policy.

As with Ms Mavundza, Ms Hlungwani was adamant that she wanted reading to be meaningful for her learners and that she wanted them to link the knowledge they acquire in reading to their daily lives.

Unlike Ms Mavundza, though, her operationalisation of this view in the classroom was slightly different. Instead of having reading groups as in Ms Mavundza's class, her class arrangement was based on the learner's abilities.

This was to pave the way for guided reading, as she put it:

The FFLC policy number 308809 of 2008 allows us to group learners according to their abilities to make it easier for us to do guided reading with them. I know that there is this policy of inclusive education which encourages us to mix learners and not to group them according to their abilities, because they say those slow learners can feel inferior, but that's not practical because if you grouped the fast learners with the slow learners, it would be difficult to assist those who have learning barriers.

A segment from her lesson is reproduced below:

Ms Hlungwani: Good morning class.

Learners: (In chorus) Good morning mom.

Ms Hlungwani: Is it still morning?

Learners: (In chorus) yes mom.

Ms H: Why do you say so?

Learners: (Raise their hands)

Ms H: Yes, Lethabo?

Lethabo: Because it's not yet 12 o'clock.

Ms H: Good, Lethabo. How many of you ate healthy food yesterday?

Learners: All raise their hands.

Ms H: Before we start our reading lesson I want each group to create one sentence about healthy food. Choose a group representative who'll come and read for the whole class, and one who'll write it on the chalkboard.

Learners: (Create sentences in their groups, and when the group has finished writing, they raise their hands and each group representative reads.)

*Group 1 Rep: Lamula i muhandzu lowu engetelelaka Vitamin C
(an orange add vitamin C to the body)*

*Group 2 Rep: Xiphinichi i xinwana xa swakudya
leswi Akaka mirhi, kudya miroho
swi sivela mavabye. (Spinach is one example
of healthy food. Eating vegetables prevents diseases.)*

Two key features of Ms Hlungwani's approach were exemplified in the foregoing segment of the lesson, namely creative writing and meaningful reading.

In another lesson we again observed Ms Hlungwani picking up the issue of meaningful reading. Below is a segment from that lesson:

The learners had just read a passage about healthy living.

Ms Hlungwani: Can you please list seven examples of healthy food?

Learners: (Raise their hands as Ms Hlungwani calls their names and they give the examples of healthy food -- eggs, polony, carrots ...)

Ms Hlungwani: When you name the food, you must also quickly write it on the chalkboard.

Learners: (Write on the chalkboard as they name the food: spinach, cabbage, milk, cheese....)

Ms Hlungwani: Let's all read the words on the chalkboard.

Learners: Eggs, polony, carrots, spinach... (The learners continue reading the long list of words on the chalkboard.)

We note from the foregoing segment that meaningful reading is one of the features that occurred persistently in Ms Hlungwani's lessons. She was very consistent in conveying knowledge to her learners in such a way that they could link it to their everyday lives.

The issue of healthy living was again brought into context in one of Ms Hlungwani's lessons. The learners continued to read a passage about healthy living. Below follows a segment from that lesson:

Ms Hlungwani: Who can tell me, what must we do to keep healthy?

Learners: (Raise their hands)

Ms Hlungwani: Yes, Ntwanano?

Ntwanano: We must exercise by playing games.

Ms Hlungwani: Good, Ntwanano, clap hands for her. What else?

Learners: (Raise their hands)

Ms Hlungwani: Yes, Ndzalama?

Ndzalama: We must always eat healthy food.

Ms Hlungwani: Now, each of you, write a short story about healthy living; it must not be longer than a page.

The issue of creative writing never left Ms Hlungwani's lessons; in all her lessons that I observed she tried in every way to reinforce creative writing in her learners. I was intrigued by this idea and pursued it during our interview discussion with her. This is how she characterised it during the interview:

I don't just want to produce learners who are proficient readers, but learners who take responsibility about their health and the environment in which they live.

She added:

Often we complain about learners who cause health hazards to our environment, meanwhile we don't develop them to be responsible citizens. If they grow up like that, what type of parents are they going to be? I also want my learners to develop a skill of creative writing; I would be proud one day if they become book authors and story writers.

From Ms Hlungwani's statement one can deduce that she is the type of teacher who does not just want to teach, but who also wants to have an impact on the lives of her learners. She is very keen on developing responsible adults who will contribute to the well-being of the society. Ms Hlungwani's statement was supported by Ms Mavundza's version during one of our interviews. In commented:

Usually we teachers are only concerned about the pass and fail results of our learners. We don't care about what will happen in their future, but in my case, yes I do want my learners to read fluently, but my long-term goal is to develop creative writers, who will contribute in the education of future generations. I want them to be able to use the skills they have got through reading, to make a living.

I picked up the similarities between these two teachers on the issue of inculcating to their learners a habit of reading with understanding. They were both keen to make an impact in the lives of the learners. They both wanted to produce learners who are independent in their thinking and who will be able to make an impact in their communities. In all my lesson observations with the grade 3 teachers in this school, I noted some similarities in their presentations and the themes of their lessons.

The third teacher I observed in this school was Ms Lebea, a tall and shy-looking woman in her 40s. It was on Wednesday, the cold month of May, when I visited the school. Ms Lebea, one of the grade 3 class teachers, was already in class when I came in. The tables and chairs were already arranged for children to sit in groups of four. As in Ms Mavundza and Ms Hlungwani's classes, the walls of this class were covered with colourful wall charts showing birthdays, calendars, class lists, weather charts, flash cards, number charts, class rules, class time table, cleaning time table and other things.

The learners came streaming in, in a line, just after the bell rang for the first period at 8a.m. Ms Lebea began with a set of greetings to learners. Like Ms Mavundza and Ms Hlungwani, I noted that she always started her lessons in this fashion:

Ms Lebea: Good morning class!

Learners: (In chorus) Good morning maam!

Ms Lebea: Let us close our eyes and say a prayer.

Learners: (Eyes closed) Here we have arrived at school, dear Lord...

(Prays in Xitsonga)

Ms Lebea: Yesterday I told you to go and look for any book

which talks about environmental pollution, like

water pollution, littering etc. Did you

come with the book? I want you to take out your

book and read for 15 minutes.

Girl 1: I didn't get the book, mam.

Ms Lebea: Ok, sit down; I have some few

books to give to those who failed to get them

from home. Raise your hand if you don't have the book.

Like Ms Mavundza, it was clear that Ms Lebea wanted her learners to engage in reading as the very first activity in the morning. These similarities in the lesson presentations of the grade 3 educators in this school caught my interest and I pursued it during my interviews with Ms Lebea. I wanted to find out more about these similarities in their teaching methods. This is how she described it during the interviews:

We attended a workshop, but it was organised by the booksellers, and it only lasted for an hour. The workshop was very useful although it was very short. It equipped us with basic skills needed for the implementation for the FFLC.

At the beginning it was difficult for me to teach the grade 3.

If I had a choice I couldn't have chosen this grade as I was trained to teach in the senior phase, but because the principal chose this grade for me I had to accept. Not that I'm complaining, no, now I enjoy teaching this grade. We support each other as the grade 3 teachers. We meet and prepare lessons together and share any useful information we come across. We have come to realise that team work is very important. I'm sure you have noticed that even the resources in our classes are the same. It's because we develop them together.

Ms Lebea's statement was supported by Ms Mavundza during our interview session:

I didn't choose to teach in grade 3, the principal told me to join the grade 3 teachers because there was a shortage of teachers. At first I was very angry, but now I enjoy teaching this grade, although I have experienced so many policy changes imposed by the Department of Education. But this FFLC which has just been introduced is very good. Since the introduction of outcomes based education (OBE), our learners became worse readers. But this policy is making an impact. We sat together as the grade 3 teachers, trying to interpret the FFLC policy documents and do our best to teach learners. If the Department could do us a favour and provide us with sufficient training and resources, there could be serious improvement in the reading skills and levels of these learners. I wish the Department of Education can become serious about this. At least this policy gives us clear instructions on what to do during the reading time, unlike the OBE policy. The FFLC is a syllabus in itself and it is easier to understand, but this doesn't mean that the Department must do what they are doing, throwing this policy to us without training.

The issue of insufficient training also featured during my conversation with Ms Hlungwani. This is how she expressed her views:

I enjoy teaching in grade 3 although it wasn't my choice to teach in this grade. The principal always dictates in which grade one must teach, not even taking into consideration our level of training. For example, I was trained during that time of former homelands where you could pass grade 8, then called JC, and go straight to the teachers college for two years. It's difficult for us to interpret the policies which the government expects us to implement without training. We are doing our best, but I

think if the government provides sufficient training for us we can do better than what we are doing. What surprises me most is that it's very rare to see a governmental official coming to our schools for monitoring. We have to rely on our own interpretations.

From the quotes above one can see that there is a problem with teacher capacity and training, as well as a problem of non-consultation with them by the school principal. The teachers felt that they should be allowed to make choices about the grades they wanted to teach, which not the case at their school was. Another concern was that they were allocated their grades without due consideration of their levels of capacity and training.

With Ms Mavundza, reading was used as an instrument for conveying knowledge and the later application of that knowledge, while Ms Hlungwani's emphasis was on creativity. However, all three teachers agreed on one thing – they all wanted their learners to use the knowledge they acquired through reading in their daily lives, and to become responsible adults even though this goal was expressed in slightly different ways in their class teaching.

In one of Ms Mavundza's lessons, highlighted earlier, we saw her teaching the learners about water conservation, while in one of Ms Hlungwani's lessons we observed her teaching learners about healthy food; in other words, she wanted them to take care of their bodies. In the foregoing segment we observed Ms Lebea teaching learners about environmental pollution. Ms Mavundza, Ms Lebea and Ms Hlungwani's lessons all seemed to have one long-term goal of producing responsible learners who will be of assistance to the society.

Throughout my observations and interviews with the participants at this school, I noticed that the issues of motivation and teamwork were a key aspect in assisting learners to improve their reading skills and levels. Earlier Ms Lebea indicated that they met as the grade 3 teachers to assist one another in the preparation of lessons and so on. This was confirmed in one of my conversations with the principal, where she said:

It's not easy at all; the teachers are expected to interpret the FFLC documents on their own since the Department doesn't conduct sufficient workshops. But one thing I like about my teachers is that they meet every Wednesday, for instance to share information and experiences and assist one another in lesson preparations. Learners are also motivated by reading during assembly. Most of our learners now want to

participate; they want to read for others, so there is an improvement in their reading levels and skills as every learner wants to impress.

The principal of this school seems to be a self-motivated person who also leads by example. My observation was confirmed during one of our interview sessions where she said:

If you want teachers to work hard, you must lead by example. For instance in our timetable, the teacher who is having the last period in that class is the one who monitors learners during the 30 minutes reading for enjoyment. During our drawing up of the class timetables, I make sure that I also have the last periods on some days so that I can also become an active participant in the realisation of the goals of the FFLC documents. For example, I am offering life orientation in grade 4. On Mondays I have the last period, so I bring along reading books, newspapers or anything that they can read for that 30 minutes reading for enjoyment time.

The foregoing discussion seems to suggest that with such a principal as Ms Chauke, the educators at School A may not have any choice but to follow their leader in the implementation of the FFLC policy. Fortunately for the teachers, they all seem to embrace a broader vision of the policy, and seem to have found ways of making it meaningful for their own teaching.

4.3 School B case study

Location

This school is also located within the Nkowankowa circuit of the Mopani district in Limpopo Province, in the Greater Tzaneen municipality. In contrast to School A, it is situated in a village where there is a high level of illiteracy and unemployment among parents. This school has a high percentage of orphans and vulnerable children. It was declared as a Full Inclusive¹ school by the Department of Education as from 2008. It consists of a principal, a deputy principal, two HoDs, 19 educators and a learner enrolment of 685 at the time of observations and interviews. It has grade R to grade 4 classes. The medium of instruction is Xitsonga in the foundation phase and English in the intermediate phase. Ninety-eight per cent of the educators are more than 50 years old, and many will be going on retirement in the next five years.

The culture of teaching and learning

The school starts at 7:20 every day, with 10 minutes allocated to morning devotions. The school day ends at 13:00 for the foundation phase learners and 13:30 for the grade 4s, both in winter and in summer. On most days when I came to do my observations, after morning devotions, teachers stood in groups to chat for nearly 30 minutes. The first period was usually wasted. Learners seemed to copy their educators; after morning devotions they did not appear to be in a hurry to go to class. Teachers in this school appeared to be less enthusiastic about their work.

As in School A, this school is also fenced, and has security personnel at the gate to ensure the safety of learners and educators. The 30 minutes for reading for enjoyment is allocated in the last hours of the school day. During this time educators engage learners in reading activities. A striking observation is that the educators seemed to be dragging themselves through many of the classroom tasks. Learners were given reading materials with no close support and monitoring. On entering the school premises, one is greeted by instructions which indicate the time at which visitors are allowed into the school premises, so as not to interfere with

¹ A Full inclusive school is defined as a national strategy of accepting and respecting that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs which are equally valued and an ordinary part of human experience, and also enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners (DoE, 2001)

teaching and learning. There is also a large and neatly built kitchen where volunteers cook for learners, as required by the national school nutrition programme. One worker is responsible for cleaning the office and the school surroundings. Learners are responsible for cleaning their classrooms. The school has no administration block. There is a computer laboratory with 11 computers donated by MTN, but they are only cleaned and polished every day – nobody seems to use them. There is a library, which is treated as a store room where they put unwanted books and desks.

Professionalism of the teachers and their relationship with the SMT

Of the 19 educators in this school, only 7 have the qualification of matric plus three years, what is called a Relative Qualification Value (RQV) 13. The rest of the teachers have a Standard 8 plus two years, which was offered in the former colleges of education in the 1970s. Many are not enrolled for further studies, as Ms Mulondo, a teacher in this school states:

We are all old here. Come five years, you will not find any of us here. We will all be enjoying our retirement time. You will only find the principal and her SMT, because they are still young. They expect too much from us; they can't see that we are their parents here.

The relationship between the SMT and the teachers seems to be characterised by some tension as hinted in the foregoing quote from Ms Mulondo. Ms Maluleke, another teacher in this school, also remarked during one of our conversations:

The principal and her SMT think they are better than us. The fact that we are old does not mean they must undermine us. They do not listen to our views. They are dictators; they just play the drums and expect us to dance.

Duty allocation (curricular)

When I entered the principal's office, my eyes searched for duty allocation charts on the wall, as I had come to expect after my observation at School A. I finally saw a blue chart on the wall in the corner of the office, on which was written: "Allocation of duty." The chart was written in black. However, the school seems to have educators who are actively involved in extracurricular activities. This is demonstrated by a number of excellence award certificates and trophies in activities such as athletics, music and volley ball displayed in the principal's

office. I was very interested to explore how duty allocation was done in this school. I started my discussion with the principal, where I raised the issue of her interpretation of the FFLC documents.

The principal, a smooth-talking middle-aged woman in her late 40s began by explaining the reading skills and levels of learners by the time she joined the staff in this school.

I joined this school in 1993 coming straight from the College of Education, where I trained to teach in the secondary schools. Because of lack of vacant posts in secondary schools by that time, I was forced by circumstances to join this school though it is a primary school. I remember the time I joined this staff I was allocated to teach in grade 1, the then-called Sub A. It was very tough, but through the support of the grade 1 teachers by that time and through my dedication, I ended up enjoying teaching the grade ones. Can you imagine, by that time we were also expected to teach needlework! I never held a needle in my life! I had to be taught like a child, but my colleagues were very supportive. By that time, when a learner passed to grade 2, then called Sub B, you could rest assured that that learner could read all the simple Xitsonga books. I became the deputy principal in 2009, and later the principal of the school in 2010. Things turned ugly with the introduction of the so-called outcomes based (OBE) education. We became confused as we were not provided with sufficient training, and the language in those OBE documents was not easy to understand. We were not sure how to teach. As a result I have experienced the reading levels and counting skills of learners dropping down as years passed by. With the introduction of the FFLC policy in 2008, with its prescripts for the 30 minutes reading for enjoyment time, things are becoming better; there is a slight improvement in the reading levels and skills of our learners. This extra 30 minutes reading for enjoyment raises some problems, though. You find that the learners are tired by that time, and the teachers are also exhausted. The advocacy of this policy was also not well done. As a result, parents complain about their children being in school until late.

This statement was supported by Mr Manyike, the cluster FFLC committee member in one of our conversations as he suggested:

I suggest that if the government can learn to involve key stake holders like parents and teachers in the initial stage of the policy development, it can help.

The principal's explanations and descriptions raise strong views about the impact which policy change may have on classroom instruction and later on learners' abilities and performance. She also raised a strong point regarding the need for the government to give sufficient information so that parents could be aware of the changes that would take place in their children's education, and for them to be able to provide support. Her descriptions and explanations aroused my interest to find out about the teachers' views and understanding of the expectations of the FFLC guides. I wanted to find out how they felt about the 30 minutes reading time for enjoyment, and all the prescriptions in the FFLC documents. I also wanted to find how the school went about setting aside the extra 30 minutes reading for enjoyment time.

I began my teacher observations and conversations with Ms Sithole. It was just after the second break at around 10:20 a.m. when I entered Ms Sithole's class.

There was a little bit of noise as learners were just coming from break. On the wall, there were birthday charts, weather charts, day charts, month charts, number lines, a concrete watch and class rules. The tables and chairs were arranged in four groups for learners to sit. In each of the four corners in her class there was a table packed with different kinds of reading materials such as magazines, story books and newspapers. I was keen to find out what criteria she used in forming these groups. Ms Sithole wanted her learners to feel free in the class, so she allowed them to arrange themselves into groups. This is what she said during our discussions:

Throughout my years as a teacher I have come to realise that learners learn best when they are in a relaxed atmosphere. They want to take part in decision-making inside the class. That's why every year, after five days in the beginning of the year, I arrange my tables and chairs into four groups and allow my learners to choose their group mates. This has worked for me in a number of ways. They usually choose to sit as friends, and because they are friends, I've experienced few complaints about quarrels, stealing from one another. And the most benefit of all is that they assist each other in writing homework and class work. It also encourages positive competition as every friend wants to perform better than the other.

From my observations of other lessons of Ms Sithole's, I realised that she always starts her lessons with a short greeting. An illustrative segment of her lesson is reproduced below:

Ms Sithole: Good morning learners.

Learners: (In chorus) good morning mam .

Ms Sithole: (Smiling) why do you say good morning?

*Boy 1: Because you told us that if the time is still 12 o'clock
a.m. we must say good morning when we greet people.*

Ms Sithole: Good boy! Clap hands for him.

Ms Sithole: What did you enjoy during break?

In the lesson, the issue of the creation of a positive environment featured again in Ms Sithole's lesson as she was bantering with her learners, making them more relaxed before she started with her reading lesson. The creation of a positive learning environment is a key aspect of teaching and learning in the classroom. Ms Sithole was passionate about using reading to reinforce thinking and reasoning in her learners. The theme of using reading as a way of reinforcing thinking and reasoning in learners featured frequently in her lessons. Below is a segment from her lesson. She had placed pictures on each of the learners' tables.

Ms Sithole: Does each of you have a picture on his or her table?

Learners: (In chorus) yes mam!

Ms Sithole: Each of you must take out a scribbler and a pen.

Look at the picture and write a short story about the picture.

*You only have 15 minutes to do that, then you'll read your story
to the whole class.*

Three issues featured in this lesson, namely thinking and reasoning, creative writing, and reading. Ms Sithole was very keen to teach her learners to take control of their own learning. I was puzzled by this observation and I pursued it during my conversation with Ms Sithole. This is how she explained it during the interview:

If you allow learners to take control of their learning, you will be surprised how motivated they become. I usually don't like to give my learners books to read. I

rather prefer to give them pictures and let them think and reason about the pictures, and later they create their own stories about the pictures. The best story of the day is kept at the reading corner where anyone can access it during the 30 minutes reading for enjoyment time. If you can re-visit my reading corner you'll realise that most reading materials are created by learners.

In the following lesson we observe Ms Sithole again picking up the theme of creative writing and thinking and reasoning in her lesson. Below is a short segment of her lesson:

Learners were supplied with different newspapers.

Ms Sithole: Pick up any story in your newspaper about any form of abuse, and read quietly for 15 minutes.

Learners: (Read quietly.)

Ms Sithole: Now I want you to write a short paragraph in your scribbler about what you would do if you find yourself in that situation. Today the best paragraph will receive a pencil case.

In this segment we notice that Ms Sithole is trying to make learning pleasant for her learners. In this lesson I observed that learners were encouraged during the reading time to think and reason while at the same time they were getting skills to deal with unpleasant situations they might encounter in life. In addition, they were encouraged to get used to reading in public, since in most of Ms Sithole's lessons, the learners were encouraged to read what they had written.

I pursued this observation during one of our interviews to which Ms Sithole responded:

I am just creative as a teacher. The government didn't train us about this FFLC, they just dumped these documents and we were left with the frustration of interpreting and implementing this policy on our own. That is where creativity comes in. I couldn't stay and look at my children because I was not trained. That's when I tried to interpret the FFLC documents and become creative in my implementation. Another thing is that as teachers, we don't have a say in the allocation of curricular activities;

for example, the principal just gave me this grade to teach without considering my level of training. Where I taught before I came here, I was teaching the senior phase. You can imagine how difficult and insecure I was about this experience. I had no chance but to learn to adapt to the situation. I had to learn to love this grade. Not that I'm complaining, but what is happening is that you find that teachers who are trained to teach in the foundation phase are allocated the intermediate phase and vice versa. I call this misplacement. How can you expect someone to produce good results in this situation?

From the above segment one can see that Ms Sithole was not happy with not being consulted in the allocation of work. The tone of her statement reflects that she wanted to have a choice regarding the grade she teaches. This issue of not being consulted about the class allocation also came up during my conversation with the cluster FFLC committee member. This is how she put it during the interview:

Mostly during our cluster meetings teachers complain about not being consulted in the allocation of classes, and this creates a negative attitude in some teachers, which affects their functionality.

The creativity in Ms Sithole's work lessons motivated me to find out more about the interpretation and implementation of the FFLC documents in this school. One more teacher I observed was Ms Mulondo, a mature teacher in her late 50s. She had about 30 years' teaching experience in different schools and different grades. Ms Mulondo was adamant that the former "Bantu Education" method of teaching reading was superior, and that it produced fluent readers. She argued:

I suggest that the Department of Education must go back to the old method of teaching that was used during the time of my schooling, because I think it was the best. These policy officials are where they are today because of those methods. A grade 12 learner of today can't compete with the grade 3 learners of those times in reading. The introduction of these policies is bringing damage to our education system.

I was interested to observe Ms Mulondo in action in her class, partly to understand how she would reconcile her strong views with the prescriptions of the FFLC policy.

On entering Ms Mulondo's class, I was attracted by a beautiful wall clock, and colourful flash cards pasted on the wall. The learners were arranged into four groups. On the left of each group was written the group's name, such as "apples, oranges, bananas" and "grapes". On the right side of each group was a table with a box on top, which was neatly packed with pencils, crayons, rubbers and rulers. Everything in the box was marked with each learner's name.

Ms Mulondo's class appearance did not seem consistent with what her earlier comments would suggest of the old school of teaching. It encouraged me to observe her some more. Looking into those four groups in her class, the way they were arranged aroused an interest in me to investigate during my interview conversation with her to find out about the approach she used to group these learners.

This is how she explained it during the interviews:

As we know that learners are not learning at the same pace, I saw it wise to group my learners according to their abilities. In this way it becomes easy for me to teach them according to their group's pace.

Below follows a segment from one of Ms Mulondo's lessons:

Learners had just read a passage about heritage during the national heritage week.

Ms Mulondo: Can you please mention the names of people who contributed in the democratisation of our country?

Girl 1: Nelson Mandela and Govan Mbeki.

Boy 1: FW De klerk and Steve Biko.

Boy 2: Chris Hani, Samora Machel and Winnie Mandela.

Ms Mulondo: Good! Now I want you to choose anyone who you think has contributed so much in the democratisation of South Africa, and write a short paragraph about that person. Then choose the best paragraph in your group, which you will read to the whole class as a group.

We can note from this lesson that Ms Mulondo wanted her learners to be conscious of their history. She wanted them to become proud citizens of this country.

This is how she characterised it during the interviews:

Yes, like other teachers, I want my learners to be fluent readers, but I also want them to make sense of what they read. I also want them to know their identity; they must use their reading skills to learn about important issues like their heritage. They must be proud of this country.

Ms Mulondo's approach to teaching was slightly different from Ms Sithole's. In Ms Sithole's lessons three features appeared, namely thinking, reasoning and creative writing, while Ms Mulondo used the reading lessons as a way to give information to her learners. However, they both wanted their learners to be fluent readers. Ms Mulondo's version was also supported by Ms Sithole during one of our conversations when she explained:

I don't see any reason why we must give our learners stories which are not conveying any knowledge to them. Every time my learners read a book, I want them to be left with knowledge and information that will be useful in their future, not mentioning the issue of creativity.

The theme of reading as a method of conveying information was very consistent in Ms Mulondo's lessons. In the following segment from her lesson I observed her picking up this theme again:

Learners had just read a passage about the Legends of Tsonga Shangaan music. She brought different musical instruments into the class.

Ms Mulondo: (Introduces different musical instruments which were used during the old times.) This is called a drum; it was used by our forefathers in the old times. Which other instruments have you heard about that were used in old times?

Girl 1: A handmade piano.

Boy 1: Handmade guitar.....(The list continues.)

Ms Mulondo was very consistent in using reading to teach learners about their identities and their heritage. She wanted them to grow up knowing where they came from. She confirmed it during the interview as she said:

It is good to develop and produce fluent readers, but what information do those learners gain from their reading? I don't encourage my learners to read fiction stories, but I want them to read books which will teach them about who they are. If we do not encourage our learners to read these kinds of books, children who are born in this millennium will not know how our country looked like in the 80s. I do all this without any training. With all these policies that are brought by the government, one must always be ready to move an extra mile. This newly introduced FFLC policy document put great emphasis on reading and counting. Reading is allocated 30 minutes extra time, and by this time learners are usually tired. One has to come with ways of making this time interesting to learners by motivating and encouraging them to read more stories about their heritage.

Although Ms Sithole and Ms Mulondo's approaches to reading were different, one thing I picked up throughout my observations and interviews with them is that both of them were creative and dedicated in producing proficient and knowledgeable learners who will one day give back the knowledge and information they gained to their societies. Ms Mulondo had a variety of teaching resources inside her class, but she was complaining about the government not providing resources. I was intrigued by this observation and wanted to find out more about it during our interview discussion. This is how she responded:

The government expects us to teach, but yet they don't provide us with sufficient teaching resources. As a teacher I can't just wait for them, so I went to a nearby Education Department's warehouse to collect some old reading books. One thing I like about this FFLC is that learners are allowed to read any book they want, as they are encouraged to read for enjoyment. Sometimes I have to surf the Internet to look for information which I can use in my class. I don't enjoy doing this but I have to, for the sake of my learners. This is very tiring. What disturbs me most is the lack of monitoring on the departmental side. I think that ever since this FFLC started, I only saw a government official coming to our school once. He just called all the grade 3 teachers into the principal's office to enquire about progress on the implementation. He didn't even bother to go into our classes to observe us in action so as to support us.

Ms Mulondo's statement was supported by Ms Sithole when she said:

Although we are trying so hard to do our best in teaching our learners, it's not as easy, because the Department of Education doesn't supply us with resources. One sometimes has to borrow reading books from the libraries so that the learners don't get bored by reading the same old books during the extra 30 minutes reading time for enjoyment. It's not as easy because it involves financial resources and we don't have a library in our community. One has to travel to the nearby town to get these books. It is very strenuous as it also involves time.

This issue of lack of resources also came out during my interview conversation with Ms Nkanyana, the cluster FFLC committee member, as she said:

We didn't receive any reading materials at all; in fact the only thing we received since the launch of the FFLC was the Government Gazette. We use old reading books that were supplied by the Department a long time ago. The worst thing is that the implementation of this FFLC is not monitored by the government officials; they should monitor and support us because it leaves us under a lot of strain.

My next participant was Ms Maluleke, one of the grade 3 teachers in the same school.

Ms Maluleke is a soft-spoken woman in her early 50s. She has 25 years teaching experience and she has been teaching in the same school. It was on Thursday morning in the hot month of March when I visited Ms Maluleke's class. She was busy dusting the tables and chairs when I entered the class. Learners were queuing outside the class waiting for the bell to ring; then they entered into the class and sat in groups for the 7:30 lesson. On the wall there were a class time table chart, birthday charts, weather chart, calendar, class rules and some of the activities done by the learners.

In my observations of Ms Maluleke's lessons I noticed that this is how she starts her lessons each morning:

Ms Maluleke: Good morning class.

Learners: (In chorus) good morning maam!

Ms Maluleke: Could you please close your eyes and say a short prayer.

Learners : (Eyes closed) *Our father who art in heaven... (praying in Xitsonga).*

Ms Maluleke: *Did you all bring your magazines with you?*

Learners: (In chorus) *yes maam!*

Ms Maluleke: *Read your magazines quietly. I am only giving you 10 minutes.*

In segment one can deduce that Ms Maluleke wanted to engage her learners in reading as the very first activity in the morning. She later pointed out: as she argued:

I came with this idea of giving my learners 10 minutes reading time every morning because I have observed through a number of years that when you start teaching early in the morning most of the learners don't listen; they fantasise about their early morning experiences at home. I use this method to get their attention because they will want to know what is happening in the magazine or newspaper. This has worked well for me. It's a good strategy.

Unlike Ms Sithole and Ms Mulondo, Ms Maluleke's approach to reading focused mainly on fluency. She seemed determined to produce fluent readers. Below is a segment reproduced from her lesson that was conducted in Xitsonga: There was already a passage on each of the learner's tables.

Ms Maluleke: *Good morning class.*

Learners: *Good morning mam.*

Ms Maluleke: *Look on your papers and read the passage after me.*

Learners: (Reading after the teacher) *My name is Sandi Monti, my mother's name is Thandi Monti.....*

Ms Maluleke: *Now make five columns in your scribbler. Read your story again. In the first column you write all the nouns in the story, second column you write all the pronouns in the story, third column you write all the synonyms, fourth column you write all the words with the "B" sounds in the story, and lastly, in column 5 you choose 5 words which you have written in column 4, and make a short sentence with each.*

In observing this lesson I noticed that Ms Maluleke was teaching according to the requirements of the FFLC which encourages teachers to teach learners about sounds, vowels and consonants so that it can be easier to read. Her approach was slightly different from those of her two colleagues. She confirmed my observation during our discussion when she said:

Teaching learners to read is not an easy task. I follow the prescripts (sic) of the FFLC where I teach learners sounds, consonants and others. In each lesson I encourage them to identify the parts of speech like verbs, nouns, pronouns and adverbs. This makes it easier for them to read a story. The extra 30 minutes reading time for enjoyment is another story. By this time of the day learners are already tired. When learners are reading for enjoyment during this time, I usually sit down to try and interpret this FFLC policy document because we receive no training which could assist in the implementation. We have to deal with this on our own. This policy is very good on its own; it just needs a little support on the side of the Departments. It can take the reading skills of learners into the next level.

From the statement above one can detect the differences in attitude between Ms Mulondo and Ms Maluleke. In Ms Mulondo's view, the implementation of this policy is a waste of time, while Ms Maluleke is looking on it differently. According to her, the policy has the potential to bring about change in the reading skills and levels of learners.

In another lesson we observe Ms Maluleke picking up again the issue of teaching learners the basics as an approach to reading. Below is a segment reproduced from that lesson.

Learners have just read a passage from their reading books.

Ms Maluleke: Today I want you to draw four columns in your class work books. In the first column you write all the verbs you have identified in the story, second write all the adjectives from the story, third column write all the adverbs in the story and in the last column choose 5 verbs from the first column and create 5 sentences with each one.

We can see from the foregoing segment that Ms Maluleke was persistent about equipping her learners with parts of speech to make it easier for them to engage in reading. This is how she talked about this approach during the interview:

As I said in my earlier comment, one has to interpret the FFLC documents on one's own since we didn't receive any training. After going through the FFLC documents I thought it to wise equip my learners with all the basics that will make reading easier for them. I have to be creative because the government didn't bother even to send us sufficient reading materials. We have to improvise as teachers. Teaching sounds and consonants are the basics of all reading. I think the mistake which this government made that caused the reading abilities of our learners to drop was adopting the Molteno project and the outcomes based education (OBE). These projects came with their approach of teaching learners to read sentences, words, then consonants and sounds. I think that was a very big mistake in our lifetime. It was like expecting a child to walk before he or she could even crawl.

Ms Maluleke's complaint about an insufficient supply of resources in the Department was supported by Mr Manyike, the circuit FFLC committee member, when he said:

I remember collecting other reading materials from Sunday Times as a way of supporting schools and trying to improvise to solve the problem of insufficient reading materials. I also encourage our learners to make use of study-mates as this can assist too.

In another conversation with Ms Maluleke, the issue of teacher's capacity and training also came up. She brought the issue of non-monitoring by the government into the picture as she said:

Despite our hard work, the principals are sometimes not fair on us. Look at me, I am above 50 years, and I haven't been trained to teach in the foundation phase. I was teaching at a certain senior primary school within the circuit. I came here because of R and R after there were no longer vacancies in senior schools within the circuit. The principal just gave me the grade 3s without even considering my level of capacity.

I just do everything I can as long my learners improve their reading skills. No-one seems to care much about what is practically happening in the classroom situation. The government officials don't even bother to monitor this programme. How do they expect us to be motivated? At least if they could take us to in-service training after every 5 years maybe it would be better. What they are good at doing is organising the booksellers, issue a circular which calls us to the so-called "workshop". When you

arrive there you find that it's not a workshop but booksellers. The Department must wake up; these people only want to sell their books. They only tell us how good their materials are. To show that it's not even informative, their so-called "workshop" will only last for 30 minutes or an hour. What kind of a workshop is that?

Ms Maluleke's statement was supported by the principal in one of our interview sessions as she maintained that:

This FFLC policy seems to be a good approach to teaching reading, but the problem is that the government does not provide teachers with sufficient training and resources. Even I as the principal didn't receive any training, so how do they expect me to support my teachers? In order for this policy to work successfully, people need to be taken to workshops. The Department must also support this programme through monitoring as it is scarce to see a government official in our schools.

This view was also supported by the FFLC committee member, Mr Manyike, when he explained that:

The national office has a problem of bringing in beautiful things to people; they just throw things from a distance. They usually throw the policy documents from a distance. Whoever receives it depending on the mood of that particular person and the level of education of that person and how that person interprets those documents, they don't seem to care. I think that it is crucial for the department to take teachers to the in-service training for at least a year before the implementation of each departmental policy.

Ms Sithole's approach to reading was basically on the theme of thinking, reasoning and creative writing while Ms Mulondo's approach was using reading to convey useful information to learners. Ms Maluleke's approach to reading was equipping her learners with basic sounds and figures of speech to make reading easier for them. The educators of School A and School B seem to have different approaches to reading, but they all agree on one thing – they all want the reading skills, reading levels and reading culture of their learners to improve. The similarities that I observed between School A and School B are that despite all the challenges that they endure, they are all hardworking inside their classes. They are all focused on improving the reading culture and reading skills of their learners. With such

dedication and motivation from their teachers, learners have better opportunities to engage in and to love reading.

4.4 Observations of other challenges facing the FFLC

During this study, a number of important issues were observed, and other insights into the challenges facing the campaign were identified:

1. One curriculum advisor indicated that there were vacancies for curriculum advisors, but because of the financial constraints of the government, these vacancies could not be filled. He pointed out that he had to control 6 circuits in the Mopani district, and it was extremely difficult for him. This was worse in primary schools. For example most primary schools complain that they have never seen the face of even a single curriculum advisor since the launch of the FFLC
2. Learners are expected to write the Annual National Assessment (ANA) every year. These assessments are supposed to be treated like the grade 12 examinations, which learners are supposed to write in the examination centres. The exam papers are supposed to arrive on the day of the examination with the departmental official, and be opened in front of all the candidates. These assessments are supposed to be conducted under strict monitoring. The reality is that school principals are called perhaps 4 or 5 days before the assessment dates, and they are given the discs with all the question papers, and are instructed to print them at their respective schools. Because no-one wants his/her school to be labelled as an underperforming school, principals tend to print these question papers before the dates, and give them to teachers to drill learners. Compounding the above is the fact that the invigilators are teachers at the same school. What the researcher observed is the tendency of these teachers to dictate the answers to the learners during the examinations. Naturally this leads to incorrect perceptions with regard to the success of the programme. The same teachers mark these assessments, make schedules, and submit them to the circuit office. There is no quality control in the whole process regarding the validity of these assessments.
3. Language question papers are usually set in English first language and then translated to other home languages, which makes it very difficult for learners. For example, the Xitsonga Home Language which was written in February 2011 was exactly the same

as the English question paper. In the above assessment, the learners wrote the English paper and then the Xitsonga paper, which was the direct translation of the English paper (see Appendix B and C). This approach raises a lot of questions with regard to the aims of the assessments and the objectives of the exercise. The timing of the FFLC assessments is usually confusing too. For example, learners were supposed to have written the ANA in November 2010, but because of poor organisation, the assessments were written in 2011. This caused a lot of confusion as learners who were currently in grade 4 had to write the grade 3 question papers, and those in grade 3 had to write the grade 2 question papers.

4. The schools which did not have access to the assessment tasks before the due date faced additional challenges. An example was that of the Xitsonga-speaking schools suddenly realising that the disc at their disposal had Sepedi question papers, which meant that the principals had to run up and down to find the correct question papers. Some schools could not write on the scheduled dates because the question papers could not be found in the discs. Other question papers were without memorandums and teachers had to do their own memos.
5. The FFLC expects each class to have a reading corner; the reality is that most classes do not have any reading corners at all because of overcrowding.
6. The Department sent the ANA language and maths daily preparation to schools. The daily activities which are in there cannot be completed in one day. Some of them can take a week to cover the work which the government expects to be covered in one day. Once a certain provincial education representative advised the teachers not to pressure themselves by following the schedule, but to use them as references. The end results are inconsistencies and confusion among the teachers with regard to the implementation of the FFLC in general.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, discusses the findings, draws conclusions, and ventures into some recommendations. The main aim of the study was to provide insights into whether the FFLC is helping to shape literacy instruction, especially reading instruction in the foundation phase, and if so, in what ways. In general, the study was aimed at understanding the relationships between policy and classroom instruction, by examining the policy provisions with respect to literacy in the foundation phase, and how teachers make sense of these in the construction of classroom instruction. To do this, I examined the cases of two schools in the Limpopo Province, to understand how they went about implementing the FFLC policy which was introduced in 2008. In short, the study formally aimed at answering the following research questions:

1. What are some of the factors that led to the launch of the FFLC policy in South Africa?
2. What is the vision of the reading instruction that is described by the FFLC?
3. How is the vision of instruction understood and translated into classroom instruction by the foundation phase teachers?

In the previous chapter, I presented some of the major themes arising from the data collected in the form of case studies of the implementation of the FFLC in the Limpopo Province. In this chapter, I wish to explore the collected data further, with a discussion of the emerging findings as well as their implications and the conclusions arising from the data.

5.2 Summary of the findings

In this section, I highlight some of the major themes arising from the data collected. The themes arising from the data presented in Chapter 4 will be grouped into the following categories: Perceptions from teachers, perceptions from principals, perceptions from the

cluster FFLC committee members, and perception from the circuit FFLC committee members. These categories will be broken down further into sub-categories for discussion purposes.

5.2.1 Perceptions of teachers

Basic information

All 5 teachers interviewed were experienced grade 3 teachers. They each had 15 to 30 years' teaching experience. Three of them had been teaching at the same school while the others had the experience of teaching in different schools. My data suggests that all were either instructed by the principal or the SMT to teach in the respective grades without due consultation about their own preferences. Overall, though, except for one, they were happy with their jobs at the time of the interview.

Training and support in preparation for the FFLC

Three of the educators reported to have received no training at all, while the other two attended workshops lasting a maximum of one day at most, and had attended an average of three workshops each. The facilitation of the workshops by the departmental officials mostly involved the coordinator of the workshop reading from some sort of document(s) which gave the educators an impression that those conducting the workshops were not familiar with the policy and what it was intended to achieve. Some of the evidence for this claim is discussed in some detail in Chapter 4. Some of the workshops were conducted by the booksellers, and tended to last for an even shorter duration (e.g. an hour). These workshops, although short, were viewed as more informative and beneficial by the teachers, and did shed some light on the new FFLC policy. Other forms of information about the FFLC were disseminated through circulars from the circuit officials. Evidently most teachers in the study did not receive them, and those who did, had not read them by the time of the interviews.

Reading materials were reported as insufficient, with some educators reporting having received three books at most. There were no follow-ups by the departmental officials, and no visits to schools to assess the progress of the intervention.

Each educator seems to have developed innovative ways of implementing the FFLC, using the little knowledge that they had learned at the workshops or from interacting with other

educators, often blending this “newly found knowledge” with old teaching methodologies in order for them to deliver on the FFLC policy.

Impact of FFLC on the reading culture

There was overwhelming agreement among the educators (there was only one exception) that literacy and reading culture before the FFLC was poor if not non-existent. Their views were that learners could not read, and those who attempted to read, did so with no understanding of the contents.

The teachers (except for one) were positive that the FFLC had somehow improved the reading culture of the learners, as they could read with interest and understanding. They also reported that learners had developed an interest in reading at home.

Impact of the FFLC on educators' instruction methods

The methods used by teachers before the launch of the FFLC included writing on the chalkboard and letting the learners read aloud, or giving them books to read, mostly without support. This method of instruction changed to a more proactive learner support to enhance their readings after the FFLC policy was introduced. The clusters developed innovative ways to encourage reading through the introduction of school competitions. This seems to have motivated schools to design strategies to encourage reading (e.g. reading during the morning assembly) to prepare the learners for these competitions.

Problems encountered by the educators in the implementation of the FFLC

A variety of concerns were raised by the educators. Major concerns encompassed a variety of issues. The most important was lack of preparation of the teachers to deliver with regard to the FFLC policy. The educators indicated that they received inadequate training and little or no support from the Department of Education, and hence felt not properly equipped for the implementation of the FFLC. Compounding this was the lack of resources. The concerns regarding resources featured prominently throughout the interviews, and were perceived as major obstacles to effective delivery of the FFLC campaign. Classrooms were crowded, which made it difficult to follow the progress of each learner, and to support them adequately. There were no consultations with regard to the allocation of teachers to particular grades, which made some teachers unhappy. Time was identified as another obstacle. The teachers reported having to do a lot of paperwork, which interfered with their core function of

teaching learners. Most schools allocated an extra 30 minutes at the end of the day for reading, but by that time the time learners were tired, which made the exercise less effective.

5.2.2 Perceptions of Principals

Basic information

Between them, the two principals interviewed had a total of 12 years and 10 months' experience in the post of school principal. They both indicated that they were happy in their respective posts.

Impact of FFLC on reading culture

Both principals were of the opinion that prior to the launch of FFLC, learners in their respective schools could not read, never mind understand what they were reading about. This seems to have improved with the inception of the campaign, with learners now able to read and develop confidence in their reading skills. In one school, the learners took turns to read scriptures during the morning devotion, and they were reported to be enjoying the initiative.

Although both the teachers and the principals felt that there had been some improvement in the reading culture, no concrete data was presented to support this conclusion. I was therefore not able to verify what the teachers and principals said in this regard.

The attitude of educators was reported to be mixed. The principals pointed out that there were teachers who were very negative with regard to the programme, while others had embraced the initiative with open arms. It seems that there had been no effort to understand this negative attitude other than trying to convince them to "buy-in" to the programme. From the interview with the educators it became clear that the basis for their negative attitude to the programme was the fact that the school principals never consulted them when it came to the allocation of subjects and grades. Secondly the fact that there was inadequate training and support from the Department of Education compounded the dissatisfaction. Lastly they felt that the programme brought with it a lot of paperwork, which added to their burden of work.

Supporting Resources

With regard to resources, the two schools had different experiences. In school A, the DoE did supply them with some reading materials (between two and five books per grade) while none was received by school B. Both used available resources (old books) either as the main

source or to supplement the reading materials supplied. In addition to old books, the teachers used newspapers donated by other organisations. This inconsistency with regard to teaching resources was also the experience of the educators, as discussed earlier.

Support for the principals

The main support given to the principals by the department was in the form of workshops. On average, each principal attended two workshops before the programme was implemented, but nothing further. The school principals felt that two workshops were inadequate to prepare them for effective and efficient implementation of the FFFLC programme.

Implementation and monitoring

When asked about the implementation strategies, the schools seem to have developed innovative ways of ensuring that the programme works. In one school, a committee of educators from different grades (grades R to 7) formed a committee which was tasked with the responsibility of the running the programme, including monitoring. In this committee, one educator was responsible for the foundation phase programme, another for the intermediate phase, and one for monitoring the monitors. “Monitoring” in this context means that the programme is running as agreed upon by the educators, but is not necessarily a measure of effectiveness.

With regard to monitoring from the circuit, there was no consistency. One school reported that an official from the circuit (although inconsistently) used to come with some documents and ask questions from them to assess if the programme was running smoothly. In the other school, no visits by the circuit were reported, although both pointed out that the circuit-organised school competitions aimed at assessing the FFLC.

Perceived challenges regarding the implementation of the FFLC

The main challenges confronting the school principals were educators’ negative attitude towards the programme, inadequate training and support by the department, and lack of resources. An example of the extent of the problem was provided by some educators who used to let the learners read alone during the time allocated for reading, without giving them any assistance in whatsoever. Lack of “reading materials for the FFLC” seems to be a major obstacle for the schools.

In addition, a general lack of understanding of what the campaign is all about, has been identified as a major challenge. Together with educators' negative attitude mentioned earlier, the implementation of the programme was severely compromised.

Insufficient time was another obstacle. The principals felt that there were too many activities going on in their schools and other commitments which made effective implementation of the FFLC an impossible task.

Recommendations for the Department of Education

The school principals interviewed acknowledged that the DoE is on the right track, and must be commended for the FFLC programme. Its intentions are appropriate and timely to address the poor reading skills among learners, and to encourage the culture of learning.

5.2.3 Perception from cluster committee members

Basic information

Two cluster members were interviewed. One member had volunteered to be in the structure, while the other educator was elected. Each one of these cluster members had been involved in the cluster committee for one-and-a-half years. Both reported that they were happy about their participation in such a structure.

Impact of the FFLC on the reading culture

Both individuals interviewed were in agreement regarding the poor state of reading culture before the inception of the FFLC, and about the improvement after its implementation. They substantiated this by saying that before the implementation, learners could neither, read, write or spell words. This, according to the cluster committee members, was slowly improving, as learners were displaying some improvement in reading skills, and seemed to enjoy such reading activities. They reported witnessing improvement in learners' confidence with regard to reading activities, as learners took the initiative and even read newspapers. They also pointed out that learners were even attempting to read English materials, which were not their first language.

Supporting resources

The problem of resources also featured strongly during the interviews. There was inconsistency regarding the supply of material, with one cluster member mentioning that the

only material they received from the Department was the departmental gazette announcing the FFLC. On the other hand, the other member confirmed receiving reading materials which were in English. The average number of books for those who received them was around six. This lack of resources was viewed as a major stumbling block to successful implementation of the FFLC. The supply of English reading material in a community which predominantly speaks Xitsonga was seen as somewhat counterintuitive and counterproductive.

Implementation and monitoring

Both cluster committee members had had the privilege of attending two workshops. According to the information discussed at the workshops, the circuit had been tasked to monitor schools, and the schools would then monitor the learners. The monitoring at school level accordingly would be the responsibility of the school principal.

There was, however, no monitoring by the circuit inspectors. The clusters had introduced innovative ways of encouraging and monitoring the programme through organising cluster competitions where schools would compete. These competitions also served as platforms for unearthing potential challenges as well as obstacles to the smooth running of the programme and sharing of ideas, while serving as support structures for the educators.

The cluster committee members were not aware of any specific monitoring tools or monitoring procedures to measure the success of the FFLC. The monitoring that the educators were using was individualised and not formalised. An example given was that of teachers who would ask the class to read together, listen to their pronunciation of words and how they read, and then make an assessment of whether the class had improved or not.

Perceived challenges regarding the implementation of the FFLC

The negative attitude of educators was also cited as a major obstacle. Added to this was a lack of reading materials. There was also a perception that officials who were sent to schools to monitor, lacked knowledge of what the FFLC is all about, and hence were of no assistance to the schools. The cluster committee members reported a lack of effective interaction between districts and schools. Most of the communication was reported to be in the form of “faxes”. If one needed further information or explanation, the officers in the district or circuit did not know how to help, never mind understand the materials themselves.

They viewed the Department of Education as non-consultative and only “throwing programmes” at them. The educators felt left out of the programme, unprepared and unsupported.

Recommendations for the Department of Education

The cluster committee members would have liked the DoE to have involved the relevant educators in designing the programme so that they could assist with the content, context and monitoring of the programme and ensure that it was relevant to the needs of the schools and acceptable to the environment in which the teachers find themselves.

National office has a problem of always bringing in beautiful things to people; they just throw things from a distance. They simply don't involve people with their good programme from the start. I suggest that those policy makers, after drafting the policy, should come down to the teachers on the grassroots level to discuss things and accept it at the initial stage.

Cluster committee member 1

The views of the cluster committee members were that the DoE should have been inclusive in the planning and implementation of the FFLC programme. This would have empowered the educators to spearhead the programme by way of running research, to ensure that obstacles were identified and addressed before the implementation phase.

The proper coordination of all educational programmes from national department down to the school level was what the teaching fraternity would have liked to see. This, according to the committee members, would have brought in checks and balances, as well as allocation of areas of responsibility for each aspect of the running of the programme. This would ensure accountability, and most likely would have minimised the problems that have been reported during the interviews.

5.3 Perceptions of Circuit FFLC committee member

Basic information

The circuit FFLC committee member interviewed was a school principal with more than 10 years' experience as a school principal. He was elected into the circuit FFLC committee and was happy to serve in that capacity.

Impact of FFLC on the reading culture

The person interviewed was under the impression that there was improvement in the reading culture, albeit slow. An example given to support this improvement was his experience of a grade R learner who approached him and greeted him in English. The circuit FFLC member described how their committee had had assistance from NGOs, especially in subjects like English and Mathematics, which was a major contributor to this improvement.

Supporting resources

According to the FFLC circuit member, reading materials could be gathered from different sources like newspapers and the use of study-mates, ensuring that resources are shared. In addition, reading resources were distributed by the circuit.

Implementation and monitoring

The main problem that emerged out during this interview was the shortage of curriculum advisors, which meant that most teachers were either not supported or where the curriculum advisors existed, there were not enough to ensure proper implementation of the programme. Teachers were given government gazettes as a means of communication regarding the FFLC, but their signature was all that was needed; no-one ensured that they understood and were familiar with the contents of the gazette. There were monitoring strategies in place, but sometimes those from the department delegated with the task did not visit the schools in the time stipulated and agreed upon.

Perceived challenges regarding the implementation of the FFLC

Time constraints and shortage of curriculum advisors were seen as major challenges. There were lots of activities happening within the education framework making it difficult to meet deadlines for the campaign. The teachers' strike that occurred in 2010 was also seen as a major stumbling block to effective implementation of the campaign.

Recommendations for the department

The main recommendation was a request for the Department to fill all the posts to ensure that there are sufficient human resources to support the implementation of the programme.

5.4 Making sense of the research findings in the context of the available literature

Having presented a summary of the major findings, I would now like to examine the findings in the context of the literature discussed in Chapter 2. I will divide the discussion into sections, each reflecting on the major findings arising from the data presented in Chapter 4 and as presented in the summary above. First I will discuss the training and support for educators in preparation for the implementation of the FFLC, and then explore the impact of the FFLC on the educators' instructional methods. I will further discuss the impact of the FFLC on the reading culture and reading skills of learners, supporting resources, as well as monitoring and support on the side of the Department. As discussed in Chapter 2, Coburn (2004) and Hill (2001) argue that teacher sense-making is influenced by the nature of teachers' connections to policy messages, their degree of depth, pervasiveness, specificity and volition. Furthermore, sense-making theories also hold that school and classroom culture, structure and routine results in part from micro-momentary actions by teachers and actors in school (Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, 2011). Other researchers argue that action is based on how people notice or select information from the environment, and make meaning of that information or events. They do so by placing new information into pre-existing cognitive frameworks, also called world views or working knowledge (Weick, 2001). Teachers draw on their existing working knowledge to interpret new instructional approaches, often reconstructing policy messages in ways that either reinforce pre-existing practices or lead to incremental change (Spillane, 1999, and Spillane and Jennings, 1999). The next discussion will highlight how the teachers were able to make sense of the FFLC policy and in what ways.

5.4.1 Training and support in preparation of the implementation of the FFLC

In Chapter, I stated that since 1995 the National Department of Education launched three literacy and reading campaigns, namely the Ithuteng Ready to learn campaign in 1996, SANLI in 1999, and the Masifunde Sonke campaign in 2000. The Ithuteng and SANLI campaigns were targeted at adult learners, while the Masifunde Sonke was a national reading campaign targeting the whole nation.

In spite of all the enthusiasm at their launch, the results of these campaigns have not been spectacular, to say the least. According to Aitchison et al. (2000) some of the problems surrounding the Ithuteng campaign, for example, were poor organisation with no national plan, limited capacity within the provincial departments to plan and run the campaign, absence of a well-developed advocacy and social mobilisation strategy, poor training of educators, and a lack of reading materials, especially in the mother tongue (Aitchison et al. 2000).

My findings in this study suggest that teachers and principals were not sufficiently trained before the implementation of the FFLC. Three of the educators reported that they had received no training at all, while the other two had attended workshops lasting a maximum of one day at most, and had attended an average of three workshops each. It became clear during the research that the principals were also not adequately prepared for the implementation of the FFLC. On average, each principal attended two workshops before the programme was implemented, and nothing further. The principals felt that two workshops were inadequate to prepare them for effective and efficient implementation of the FFLC programme.

A key issue that seems to permeate all the different sectors of the educational establishment is a lack of comprehensive implementation strategies as far as the schools (implementation sites) are concerned. The teachers interviewed seemed to lack information concerning the key elements of the campaign, or have only partial knowledge of what the campaign is about or how it is supposed to be implemented and monitored. The educators interviewed complained about lack of training concerning the implementation of the FFLC. In Chapter 2, I discussed the Langer & Allington (1995) argument that changing curricula has failed to broadly influence teaching and learning, because teachers have few opportunities to learn to improve their practice. This research seems to support the above view as it has uncovered that teachers devise their own interpretation of the FFLC. A similar case was argued by other researchers who pointed out that because of lack of understanding about the policies, teachers draw on

their existing knowledge to interpret new instructional policy messages in ways that either reinforce their pre-existing practices or read incremental change (Coburn, 2001). All five educators interviewed seemed to strive to reinforce the love for lifelong reading in their learners, as suggested by Smith (2002) that the goal of every classroom teacher, administrator and reading specialist is to create love of lifelong reading, and this attitude plays a vital role in establishing that habit. They do so without any training. They use their pre-existing knowledge coupled with their own interpretation of the FFLC.

During one of my interviews with the principal of school B, she argued:

This FFLC policy seems to be a good approach to teaching reading, the problem is that the government does not provide teachers with sufficient training and resources. Even I as the principal didn't receive any training so how do they expect me to support my teachers? In order for this policy to work successfully people need to be taken to workshops. The department must also support this programme through monitoring as it is scarce to see a government official in our schools.

This statement suggests that there are some frustrations among the principals. If the principals are not equipped to monitor the implementation of the FFLC at school levels, then this policy is heading for disaster.

All five teachers interviewed agreed with the principal of school B that the government did not provide sufficient training prior to the launch of the FFLC policy. Below is one of the statements supporting the principal of school B, which was made during my interview with one of the teachers, Ms Sithole:

I am just creative as a teacher, the government didn't train us about this FFLC, They just dumped these documents and we were left with the frustration of interpreting and implementing this policy on our own

5.4.2 Impact of the FFLC on educator's instructional methods

The FFLC was launched in March 2008, as a new policy initiative to change reading instruction in South Africa. However, this study has discovered that out of frustration, teachers tend to use their old instructional methods of teaching reading, mixed with their own interpretations of the reading instruction as prescribed by the FFLC documents. This again lays the blame on the Department of Education as the teachers complained about lack of training and support. In view of the evidence from the interviews and observations provided in Chapter 4, it would be proper to say that this study has highlighted that the FFLC has had little impact on the educators' instructional methods. This finding supports Allington (1999) who contends that at present, literacy instructional policies are replacing older policies with little serious attention given to the potential impact of the policies being replaced or documentation of the impact of the policy being replaced. This study shows that the policy makers of the FFLC are not putting into place the methods of determining the impact of this policy on the educators' instructional methods. Out of frustration, teachers use their previous experiences and knowledge to interpret new instructional approaches, often reconstructing policy messages in ways that either reinforce pre-existing practices or lead to incremental change, as described by Spillane and Jennings, (1997).

5.4.3 Impact of the FFLC on the reading culture of learners

The literature referred to in Chapter 2 reflects that research has been done locally and internationally which shows that reading is a problem for South African learners. The reading problem in South Africa was revealed in the findings by the Progress in International Reading Literature (PIRLS) study, which was conducted in 2006. This study evaluated the performance of grade 4 learners from 40 countries, including South Africa. The results revealed that South Africa achieved the lowest score (Prinsloo, 2008c). In 2008, the Department of Education released provisional findings from the 2007 grade 3 national assessments (Prinsloo, 2008c). Although the findings showed some minor improvements from 30% in 2001 to 36% in 2007, the reading problem was reported to be continuing to manifest itself. In 2008, the media also picked up the issue. The Daily Sun (2008) reported on the inability to read by South African learners. According to that report, nine-year-olds in the public school system were battling to read and to do their sums. The newspaper based its claims on an evaluation report from a study conducted in September and October 2007 by the DoE through systematic evaluation. This study was led by Reeves, Heugh and Prinsloo.

However, my observations and all the evidence from the interviews in Chapter 4 seem to show that the FFLC has a positive impact on the reading culture of the foundation phase learners. During my observation, I have seen some learners reading newspapers and magazines, and some reading the stories that they have created by themselves. Although this finding is a positive sign, it would be important to test this finding in a larger and more representative sample.

5.4.4 Supporting resources

In Chapter 2, I discussed some of the reading campaigns which were introduced and failed, like the Ithuteng campaign, which according to Aitchison et al. (2000) failed because of absence of a well-developed advocacy and social mobilisation strategy and poor training of educators and lack of reading materials, especially in the mother tongue (Aitchison et al. 2000). Aitchison et al. (2000) further suggested that another reading campaign, which was called the SANLI, had achieved very little, and had been reduced to a poorly funded provincial project (Aitchison et al. 2000). My findings in the present study suggest that the FFLC is also facing this challenge of insufficient reading materials, where teachers have to improvise. The educators interviewed complained about the lack of resources. During one of my interviews with Ms Maluleke, the educator in School B, she mentioned this problem:

As I said in my earlier comment, one has to interpret the FFLC documents on their own since we didn't receive any training. After going through the FFLC documents I thought it wise to equip my learners with all the basics that will make reading easier to them. I have to be creative because the government didn't bother even to send us sufficient reading materials. We have to improvise as teachers. Teaching sounds and consonants are the basics of all reading.

This comment suggests that teachers are frustrated as they have to teach while improvising the reading materials which were supposed to be provided by the DoE.

5.4.5 Implementation and monitoring

Failure of the teachers to define how they monitor the success of their intervention and use of diverse and non-scientific ways to support the effectiveness of the programme seems to have stemmed from the way the programme was implemented with little interaction between the DoE and the educators. This study uncovered that monitoring by the Department is sadly lacking. This finding supports Paterson, who maintains that there are few policymakers who are in fact interested in tracking the impact of policies they create, and there is also little educational legislation that provides funds for vigorous study of the effects of the policy being promoted (In press; Chapter 2). Even more worrying was teachers' comments that they felt inadequately prepared to implement the programme effectively. There were no available resources that outlined the objectives of the campaign, essential components, monitoring and assessment framework (DoE, 2010). However, this information does not seem to have reached those who were supposed to implement the programme.

The teachers interviewed had some knowledge of the essential structure and assessments of the FFLC, but not the details as outlined in the FFLC implementation document. It is clear from the study that there was inadequate preparation for the teachers, with the few workshops that were organised being seen as not fully given them the skills and the knowledge needed. Furthermore, it seems, as reported by all who were interviewed, that even provincial officers were not well versed in the programme. These findings may in part explain the resistance of some educators and their general lack of interest in the campaign. Some of the educators interviewed reported that they were not even aware of what was expected of them. This made it clear that they were not active participants in the programme. Lack of support from the Department was perceived as a major setback towards effective implementation of the FFLC programme. It appeared that the Department of Education was inadequately resourced in terms of manpower, so that the FFLC programme was experiencing challenges regarding managerial issues. This was evident from the fact that the programme was not implemented according to the Gazette, and there were deviations from its strategies and timelines, for instance the assessment timeline.

In the Government Gazette No. 30880, Volume 513 of 14 March 2008, the elements, implementation and monitoring strategies were clearly laid out. Lack of familiarity with the contents of this Gazette raises concerns about the line functioning of the DoE policies on the implementation of various departmental programmes. The literature in Chapter 2 reflected

that some of the previous reading campaigns have failed because of limited capacity in the provincial departments to plan and run the campaign (Aitchison et al., 2000). The findings in this study also suggest that there is limited capacity within the circuit under study, to run the campaign. The FFLC seemed to be well planned nationally, with the implementation strategies in place, but this study makes it clear that there is a lack of capacity to run this programme.

Communication strategy between the Department and the schools seems to be ineffective, as the teachers were not familiar with elements of monitoring of the FFLC although the Government Gazette No 30880 had all the information clearly laid out. These findings should be interpreted within the circuit under study as the extent of this problem regarding other circuits, districts and provinces remains to be tested.

5.4.6 The annual National Assessments (ANA)

The manner, in which assessments of the FFLC programme were conducted, as I witnessed during some of my visits to schools, also cast a shadow of doubt regarding the validity of future results about the effectiveness of the programme. This included issuing discs with question papers days before the tests to schools, which will only undermine the objectives of the programme. It would be tempting for an educator to want to teach the students beforehand (as was observed during some of the school visits) how to answer the question paper days before the actual time of the test. Lack of appropriate training and support structures worsens the situation further. As there were no quality control measures regarding the conduct and marking of assessments within this circuit, it would be difficult to believe any report which paints a successful outcome of the programme. The reported success might be just a self-fulfilling prophecy rather than a scientific exercise. This would be a travesty of social justice, and a double blow to the already crippling reading skills in schools in addition to wasting valuable resources that could have been utilised successfully elsewhere. Langer and Allington (1995) argue that many efforts to drive instruction by using high-stake tests to students failed to either link the tests to student curricula or offer teachers substantial learning opportunities. Things were no different in the case of the FFLC.

5.4.7 Parental involvement

It was indicated during the interviews that lack of parental involvement was a potential challenge to effective implementation of the FFLC programme. The same concern has been echoed by other researchers (Prinsloo, 2009). This lack of parental stimulation may be explained in part by the high level of illiteracy in Limpopo province (Cherian & Du Toit, 2008).

Because some parents themselves are not able to read and write, it becomes difficult for them to motivate their children in the home environment. This might in part explain the perceived lack of parental involvement in the schools under study. In some situations there are available resources and yet literacy is still a challenge (Cherian & Du Toit, 2008). The programme seems to have been well designed, and those involved do not doubt its value and potential to transform the reading culture in South African Schools. However, the challenges discussed above point to poor organisation and planning before the programme can be implemented. Costing should have been conducted, and appropriate personnel necessary for the success of the programme employed before the launch of the campaign.

5.4.8 Reading time

This study uncovered the challenge regarding the 30 minutes reading for enjoyment time. All five educators interviewed raised the challenge of this reading time, complaining that by allocating this time to the end of the day, both learners and teachers were already tired. In one of my interviews with the principal of school B, she also raised a concern about this issue of reading time:

This extra 30 minutes reading for enjoyment raises some problems, though. You find that the learners are tired by that time and the teachers are also exhausted. The advocacy of this policy was also not well done. As a result parents complain about their children being in school until late.

It was also highlighted that parents complain about their children coming home late from school because of this extra thirty minutes reading time.

My study suggests that not enough advocacies was done before the implementation of the FFLC, otherwise parents would not be complaining about their children's late coming from school because they would know that this was for the benefit of their children.

5.4.9 Teachers as key players in decision-making and delivery in the classroom

There are numerous studies that have looked at translating educational policy into classroom practice that one can learn from and use to contextualise the findings of the study. Educational policies need teachers to be at the centre if they are to succeed. This means that teachers must be involved at the policy level to ensure that they buy into the programme, and share their experiences, which might lead to the modification of the programmes (Lai Wah, 2007). This might explain the level of unhappiness reported by the teachers in this study.

Prinsloo (2009) has identified teacher skills, training and support as some of the key factors that determine the level of literacy among learners. Lack of curriculum advisors and other support personnel appear to have had a negative impact on the implementation of the programme in this circuit. In spite of some of these challenges, the teachers managed to institute innovative ways of supporting each other, as was the case when they organised school competitions within the circuit.

Giving teachers departmental schedules without providing a forum for discussions and questions to enhance understanding creates room for different interpretations and understanding of what the policy and programme are all about. Studies have shown that given the same policy, educators will not be uniform in their interpretation and understanding of the same material (Allington, 2000). This seems to have been the case in this study, and perhaps explains the diversity in the implementation of the programme. Teachers' knowledge of subject matter is crucial for effective classroom instruction (Tambyah, 2008). Teachers needed training with regard to the objectives, context and implementation of the FFLC, not just a few workshops conducted by booksellers.

5.5 Continuous evaluation of the programme

The FFLC campaign was launched in 2008. There have been ample opportunities for the administrators to evaluate the programme. This evaluation would have required not just the assessment of learners but also looking at the systems that influence effective implementation of the programmes as well as the challenges encountered by the teachers and all levels of administration. This does not seem to have been the case with the FFLC. Studies aimed at assessing these aspects might have identified a number of the issues and hence a change in approach (Allington, 2000).

5.6 .1 Conclusion

In the main, the literature reflected that South African learners compare most unfavourably with other countries with regard to literacy and numeracy. One can therefore infer that the introduction of the FFLC was a well thought out and systematically planned process to help in shaping literacy instruction, especially reading instruction in the foundation phase.

By all accounts, the policy directive is a bold and progressive step in the right direction towards alleviating poor literacy and numeracy.

Roughly 5 years after this intervention policy was gazetted, it is important to find out how far this policy directive has found its way into the classroom instruction of the many foundation phase teachers. My main interest was to find out how different schools went about implementing the policy as introduced in 2008. I chose to use the prescripts and specifications of the FFLC policy to benchmark the levels of implementation.

5.6.2 Weakness of the Study

I used a case of two schools, which in my view may not constitute sufficient grounds for generalisations about the prevailing conditions in all schools. The research has uncovered some interesting issues that can form the basis for comparisons with other similar sites. I am cognisant of the fact that this research was conducted fairly early during the implementation of the FFLC programme, and it is possible that some of the problems encountered might have been just “teething” challenges of any policy implementation process. The sample used in the study was small, but can be of value in guiding future programmes, as the issues raised could be obstacles for other policy implementation initiatives as well.

I concede that a bigger sample with enlarged scope may reveal outcomes different to those in this study. This may be a limitation of the present study. In order to reduce the impact of this small sample, I chose two schools located in completely different environmental conditions. One school was in a fairly affluent and well-resourced background while the other school was situated in an environment characterised by abject poverty and low levels of parental education. The two contrasting conditions generally constitute the environment in which most of our schools are found in South Africa. This understanding provides a firm ground for the applicability of the findings from the two schools to other similar ones. I am certain that the lessons drawn from the scenarios can resonate across other similar schools in South Africa.

With all the necessary steps having been taken to reduce the margin of research error, the study has managed to bring about some understanding on the vision of reading instruction that is described in the FFLC policy, the context within which the FFLC was launched, as well as how the vision of instruction is understood and translated into classroom instruction by the foundation phase educators in the selected Limpopo schools.

The study has brought to light the complications to policy implementation created by such variables as the contentious allocation of teaching loads by principals, the lack of reading resources, the lack of commitment and enthusiasm by some of the educators, negative attitudes or perceptions by educators, poor management and planning skills by principals, and insufficient teacher development workshops on the new policy.

An interesting story emerging from this study, however, is the situation observed from other committed educators who have managed, amidst all the challenges of shortage of resources, to mitigate the problems with creativity and commitment. The use of newspapers, bible scripts and other individually collected reading materials by those educators of the participating schools bears testimony to this claim.

5.6.3 Recommendations

A key recommendation emerging from my findings therefore would be that when implementing new policies in education, it is important for policymakers to pay attention to issues of budget allocation for such activities as the teachers' professional development and curriculum support. Resource allocation is another critical issue which flows from my findings as a matter having a determining factor on whether the implementation of a policy will succeed or not. The case study postulates that unavailability of reading resources compromises the objectives for the implementation of the Foundations for Learning Campaign. It is therefore of utmost importance for the Department of Education to provide sufficient reading resources for the successful implementation of the FFLC if the obtaining status quo on learners' capacity in reading and numeracy is to be changed.

Carefully planned workshops and information-sharing sessions for educators will go a long way towards enhancing the capabilities and confidence needed for curriculum delivery.

Together with advocacy workshops, it is possible to enlist the “buy in” from educators and other relevant stakeholders for collective ownership of the policy implementation process.

Secondly, it is important to ensure that there are properly trained personnel who are strategically located near schools to give the necessary support and mentoring to teachers. This is to avoid a situation where improperly trained curriculum advisors are dispatched to run workshops on topics they are not knowledgeable on, and thereby resort to just reading the manuals. The picture reflected by educators in the two schools regarding curriculum support was less than ideal.

Thirdly, the need for in-depth continuous in-service training for teachers to realise the notion of ongoing and lifelong professional learning and growth cannot be over-emphasised. Teacher development should not be treated as a once-off event, as was the case with the FFLC, but should be a continuous process accompanied by monitoring and evaluation, in order to deal with educators’ information and knowledge gaps.

Finally, as an educator serving in the school management team, (SMT) I have observed and learnt that if educators or school management team members are not well equipped to teach a particular grade or subject, they tend to struggle and thus develop negative attitudes about the grade or subject. For policy implementation to succeed, a more collaborative and supportive environment is needed at the school level. Principals and their management committees are important in creating and sustaining such an environment in their schools.

The potential for the FFLC campaign to change the lives of South African children is, on all accounts, without dispute. However, the programme as it stands at present in the schools and circuit under study needs urgent attention. The study has, in many ways, suggested that the time may be ripe for a more detailed and introspective reflection and review of the FFLC policy. I present my study as just one contribution in this regard.

6. REFERENCES

- Aitchison, J., Houghton, T. & Baatjies, I. with Douglas, R., Dlamini, M., Seid, S. and H. Stead. 2000. *University of Natal Survey of adult basic education and training: South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: Centre for Adult education and Centre for Adult Community Education, University of Natal.
- Alderson, J.C. 2000. *Assessing reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Allington, R.L. and Cunningham, P.M. 1996. *Schools that work: where all children read and write*. New York: HarperCollins College Publishers.
- Allington, R.L. 1999. *Crafting state education policy: The slippery role of research and researchers*. *Journal of literacy research*, 31: 457-482.
- Anderson, T. & Kanuka, H. 2003. *Research methods, strategies and issues*. New York: Design and Production Services.
- Asmal, K. 1999. *Statement in the National Assembly by the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, M.P. on the occasion of International Literacy Day, 8 September 1999*. [http://education.pwv.gov.za/Media Statements/Aug99/illiteracy.html](http://education.pwv.gov.za/Media%20Statements/Aug99/illiteracy.html) Accessed 3 December 2010.
- Baatjies, I., Land, S., Harley, A., Thomson, C. Sader, S. & J.J.W. Aitchison. 2002. *Masifunde Sonke: the state of literacy in South Africa*. Unpublished report, Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal
- Bohlman, C.A. & Pretorius E.J. 2002. *Reading skills and mathematics.. South African Journal of Higher Education*, 16(3), 196-206.
- Bohlman, C.A. & Pretorius E.J. 2008. *Relationship between Mathematics and literacy: Exploring some underlying factors*. *Pythagoras*, 67:42-55.
- Bryman, A. 2004. *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cherian, L. & Du Toit, C. 2008. Literacy learning in Limpopo, a *Multilingual Environment*. *Perspectives in Education*, 26(4): 108-114.
- City Press 2007. *The New Curriculum is failing the test*. 2007. 27 May: 1.

Clinton, W. J. (1996). *Remarks in Wyandotte, Michigan*. Retrieved from GPO database (Weekly compilation of presidential documents) on the World Wide Web: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/nara003.html> Accessed May 30, 2000.

Coburn, C.E. 2001. *Making sense of reading: Logics of reading in the institutional environment and the classroom*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University

Coburn, C.E. 2004. *Beyond decoupling: Rethinking the relationship between the institutional environment and the classroom*. *Sociology of Education*, 77:211-244.

Coburn, C.E. 2005. *Shaping sense making: School leaders and enactment of reading policy*. DOI: Corwin Press.

Cohen, D.K. & Hill, H.C. 2001. *Learning Policy: When state education reform works*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Cohen, L. and Manion, L. 2007. *Research methods in education*. London: Croom Helm LTD.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. 2002. *Research method in Education*, 5th ed. New York: Routledge Falmer.

Cooper, D. & Schindler, P. 2003. *Business research methods*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Cosgrove, J., Perkins, R, Moran, G., & Shield, G. 2011. Digital Reading Literacy in the OECD program for International Student Assessment of student (PISA, 2009): Summary results for Ireland. Dublin: Education Research.

Cresswell, J.W. 1998. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five traditions*. London: International Education and professional publisher.

Cresswell, J.W. 2001. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and mixed methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cresswell, J.W. 2002. *Educational Research*. Columbus: Merrill-Prentice Hall.

Cresswell, J.W. 2003. *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cunningham, J.W. 2000. *How will literacy be defined in the new millennium?* *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35: 64-72.

Daily Sun 2008. *Kids' reading is poor*. 22 July: 5.

Daily Sun 2008. *Zim Scores better than us in reading and writing*. 2008. *Daily Sun*. 13 August: 6.

Darling-Hammond, L. 1997. *Doing what matters most: Investing in quality teaching*. New York: National Commission on teaching and America's Future.

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. 2000. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oakes: Sage.

Department of Education. 2002. *Revised National Curriculum Statement grades R-9 (schools). First Additional language*. Pretoria: Department of Education.

Department of Education. 2008a. 2007 Grade 3 Systemic Evaluation. Pretoria: Department of Education. 2008b. *Foundations for learning Campaign 2008-2011, Government Gazette no 30880, Government Notice 306, 14 March 2008*. Pretoria: DoE.

Department of Education. 2008c. *Teaching reading in early grades*. Pretoria: Department of education.

Department of Education. 2010. *Foundation phase: Literacy and Numeracy: revised version, 2010*. Pretoria: DoE

Department of Education. 2011. *Report of the Annual National Assessment of 2011*. Pretoria: DoE

Department of Health and Human Services. 2002. *Comment letter on HPAA*. USA. Washington: D.C

De Vos, A.S. 1998. *Research at grass roots: for the social science and human service professions*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

De Vos, A.S. 2002. *Research at grass roots: for the social and human service professions*. 2nd edn. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Dubin, F. and Kuhlman, N.A. 1992. *The dimension of cross-cultural literacy*. Englewood Cliffs.

- Dudley-Marling, C. 2005. *The complex relationship between reading research and classroom practice. Research in the teaching of English*, 40 (1): 127-130.
- Eivers,E, 2011. National Assessment of Mathematics and English Reading. InTouch, 116:36-37.
- Elley, W.B. & Irvyin, J.C. 2003. *Revised Socio-economic index for New Zealand*. Journal of educational studies, 38: 3-17.
- Flick, U. 1998. *An introduction to a qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Foertsch, M. 1998. *A study of reading practices, instructions, and achievement in District 31 schools*. Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Education Laboratory. Available on line: http://www.ncrel.org/s2rs/areus/31_abs.htm
- Gay, L.R. & Airasian, P. 2003. *Educational research. Competencies for analysis and applications*, 7th ed. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: pearson Education.
- Gay, L.R. 1992. *Educational research*. 4th ed. New York: Merrill Gomez.
- Ganzglass, E. 1998. *The Workforce Investment Act*. Centre for law and social policy.
- Geertz, C. 2000. *Available light: Anthropological Reflections on philosophical topics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Grabe, W. 2002. *Teaching and researching reading*. Harlow: Longman.
- Graves, M.F., Juel, C. & Graves, B.B. 1998. *Teaching reading in the 21st century*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Graziano, A.M. & Raulin, M.L. 2000. *Research methods: a process of inquiry*, 4th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Heald-Taylor, G. 2001. *The beginning Reading Handbook: strategies for success*. Portsmouth, N.H. Heinemann.
- Heugh, K. 2001. *Many languages in education. Perspectives in Education*, 19(1): 116-126.
- Heugh, K., Diedericks, G.A.M., Prinsloo, C.H. & Herbst, D.L. 2007. *Assessment of the language and mathematics skills of grade 8 learners in the Western Cape in 2006*. Pretoria: HSRC.

Heinz, J.P., Laumann, E.O., Nelson, R.L. & Salisbury, R.H. (1993). *The hollow core: Private interests in national policymaking*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Heywood, A. 2002. *Politics* (2nd ed.). New York: Palgrave Foundations.

Hill, H.C. 2001. *Policy is not enough: Language and the interpretation of state standards*. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(2):289-318.

International Reading Association and National Association for the Education of Young Children. 1996. *Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children* (online). Available:

http://www.anaeyc.org/resources/position_statement/psreado.htm accessed 11 may 2011

Ismail, A.E. 2002. *How to use qualitative methods in evaluation*. London: Sage.

Jennings, N.E. 1999. Reform in small places: implementation of comprehensive state policies in rural schools. *Journal of research in rural education*. 15(3): 127-140.

Krashen, S. 2004. *The power of reading*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Kvale, S. 1996. *Interviews and introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. London : Sage publication.

Labuschagne, A. 2003. Qualitative research – airy or fundamental. *The qualitative report*, 8 (1), From: <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/WR8-1?Labuschagne.html> accessed. September 20, 2010.

Lai Wah, Y. 2007. *Challenges and Strategies to Educational Change – School Based Curriculum*. APERA Conference 2006, 28-30 November. [Online]. Available from: http://edisdat.ied.edu.hk/pubarch/b15907314/full_paper/370305096.pdf

Accessed: 05 May 2011.

Langer, J.A., & Allington, R. L. 1995. *Curriculum research in writing and reading*. In Jackson P.W. (Ed). *Handbook of research on curriculum*. (pp. 687-725), New York: Macmillan.

Limpopo Literacy Study. *HSRC Review*, 2007 6(4): 7

MacDaniel, J.E., Sims, H. & Miskel, G. 2000. *The National Reading Arena: Policy actors and perceived influences*. Paper prepared for politics of education yearbook. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan.

Macdonald, C.A. 2002. *Zebediela District Baseline study for Molteno Project*. Unpublished research report. Johannesburg: Zenex Foundation.

Machet, M.P. & Pretorius, E.J. 2003. *Helping your child become a reader*. Cape Town: New Africa.

Machet, M.P. & Pretorius, E.J. 2004. *Family literacy: A project to get parents involved*. *South African Journal for Libraries and information science*, 70(1):39-46.

Macmilan, J.H. & Schumacher, S. 2001. *Research in Education: A conceptual Introduction*. (6th ed). New York: Longman.

Mantere, S. 2000. *Sensemaking in strategy implementation*. Unpublished master's thesis, Finland: Helsinki University of Technology.

MasifundeSonke. 2003. MasifundeSonke website.

<http://www.masifundesonke.org.za> Accessed: 3 December 2010.

Maree, K. 2008. *First steps in Research*. Pretoria Van Schalk.

Matjila, D.S. & Pretorius, E.J. 2004. *Bilingual and biliterate? An exploratory Study of grade 8 reading skills in Setswana and English*. *Per Linguam*, 20(1): 1-21. York: Longman publishers.

Mazzoni, T.L. 1995. *State policy-making and school reform: influences and influential*. Washington, DC: Falmer Press.

McCormick, S. 1995. *Instructing Students who have literacy problems*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Merrill.

Merriam B. 1998. *Qualitative Research and Case Study Application in Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, C. Webster's third International Dictionary. 11th (ed). Franklin electronic publishers.

- Moll, L.C. 1994. *Literacy research in community and classrooms: A sociocultural approach*. In *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading* (4th Ed) (pp.179-207).
- Mooney, J.U. 2003. *Social science research methods: An African handbook*. London: Hodder & Stoughton.
- National Education Policy Act (No. 27 of 1996) *Adult Basic Education and Training Act* (No. 52 of 2000).
- Naude, H. 1999. *Language Enrichment of Senior Toddlers in Environmentally Deprived Communities*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Paterson, F.R.A. 1998. *Mandating methodology: Promoting the use of phonics through state statute*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Patton, M. Q. 2002. *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pearson, P.D. 2003. *Reading in the twentieth century*. In T.L. Good (Ed.). *American education: Yesterday, today and tomorrow, ninety-ninth yearbook of the national society for study of education. Part II*. (pp. 152-208). Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Pearson, P.D. 2003. *The role of professional knowledge in reading reform*. *Language Arts*, 81, 1:14-16.
- PIRLS. 2006. *Assessment. International Association for evaluation of education*. Timms & PIRLS International study centre. Lynn school of Education, Boston College.
- Porac, J.F., Thomas, H. & Baden-Fuller, C. 2011. *Competitive groups and cognitive communities: The case of Scottish knitwear manufactures revised*. *Journal of management studies*, 26(4): 397-416.
- Pretorius, E.J. 2002a. *Reading ability and academic performance in South Africa: Are we fiddling while Rome is burning?* *Language matters*, 33: 179-208.
- Pretorius, E.J. 2002b. *Reading and Applied Linguistics- a deafening silence*. *South African linguistics and language studies*, 20: 91-103.
- Pretorius E.J. 2008. *What happens to literacy in (print) poor environment? Reading in African Languages and school policies*. Proceedings of CentReplo? 1fas, workshop, University

of Pretoria, 29 March 2007. Institut Francais d' Afrique du Sud, Johannesburg: 60-88.
www.ifas.org.za/research.

Pretorius, E.J. & Machet, M.P. 2004. *Literacy and disadvantage: Enhancing learners' achievements in the early primary school years*. *Africa Education Review*, 1(1): 128-146.

Pretorius, E.J. & Machet, M.P. 2008. *The impact of storybook reading on emergent literacy: Evidence from poor rural areas in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa*. *Musaion*, 26(2): 46.

Pretorius E.J. & Naude, H. 2002. *Results from empirical study. The impact of carrying a child on the back on the development of visual integration pathways*, *Early Child Development*. Care, (Submitted for review).

Pretorius, E.J. & Ribbens, I. R. 2005. *Reading in a disadvantaged high school: Issues of accomplishment, assessment and accountability*. *South African journal of education*, 25(3):239-147.

Prinsloo, C.H. 2008a. *Extra classes, extra marks? Report on the Plus Time project*. Pretoria: HSRC.

Prinsloo, C.H. 2008b. *Practice makes perfect – Limpopo study shows the value of exercising literacy muscles*. *HSRC Review*, 6(4): 5-6.

Prinsloo, C.H. 2008c. *Turning 'learning to read into reading to learn': Conclusions from a Limpopo Literacy study*. *HSRC Review*, 6(4): 7-8.

Prinsloo, C.H. 2009. *Building a strong foundation: Learning to read; reading to learn*. *South African Chiled Gauge 2008/2009*. PART TWO: Meaningful access to basic education.

[Online]. Available from:

http://www.ci.org.za/depts/ci/pubs/pdf/general/gauge2008/part_two/buildingstrong.pdf

Accessed: 06 May 2011.

Punch, F.P. 2005. *Introduction to social Research, Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London, Sage Publications Inc.

Quinn, J.R. 2009. *Teacher sense-making and policy implementation. A qualitative case study of a school system's reading initiative in science*. Unpublished Dissertation. College Park, MD: University of Maryland.

Reeves, C., Heaugh, K., Prinsloo, C.H., Macdonald, C., Netshitangani, T., Alidou, H., Diedericks, G. & Herbst, D.L. 2008. *Evaluation of literacy teaching in primary schools in Limpopo Province*. Pretoria: HSRC.

- Roe, B.D, & Ross, E.P., 2006. *Integrating language arts through literature and thematic units*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Rubin, H.J. & Rubin, I.S. 1995. *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. London: Sage.
- Schwandt, T.A. 1997. *Qualitative Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Scott,V.N., Stevenson, K.E., and Gombas, D.E. 2006. *Verification procedures*.The food products Association, Washington, D.C.
- Seldman, I.E. 1991. *Interviewing as qualitative research*. New York: Teacher's College Press.
- Shade, L.R. 2008. *Reconsidering the right to privacy in Canada*. *Bulletin of science, Technology & society*, 28: 80-91.
- Silverman, D. 1993. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2nd ed.)* Newbury Park: Sage.
- Silverman, D. 1993. *Reading in school-based curriculum development*. London: Sage publications.
- Sims, C.H. 1999. *Two little engines: The American Reeds proposal that couldn't and Reading Excellence Act that could*. Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration, Minneapolis, M.N.
- Smith, B. 2001. *Primary school teachers's experiences of Education Policy in South Africa*. Unpublished thesis (PhD). Pretoria, University of Pretoria.
- Smith, F. 2002. *Understanding reading: A psycholinguistic analysis of reading and learning to read. (4th ed)*. Hillsdale: Erlbawn.
- Spillane, J.P. 1999. *External reform initiatives and teachers' efforts to reconstruct their practice: The mediating role of teachers; zones of enactment*. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. 31(2):1-33.
- Spillane, J.P. 2000. *Cognition and policy implementation*. District policymakers and the reform of mathematics education. *Cognition and instruction*, 18(2): 149-179.

Spillane, J.P. & Jennings, N.E. 1997. *Aligned Instructional policy and ambitious pedagogy: exploring instructional reform from classroom perspective*. Teacher's college record, 983(449-481), abstract.

Reiser, B.J., & Reimer, T. 2002. *Policy implementation and cognition: Reframing and Refocusing implementation research*. *Review of educational Research*, 72(3): 387-431.

Spinelli, J. n.d. *Urban Literacy: At It's Worst or Finest?*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.geog.psu.edu/sites/default/files/people/files/pfp%20paper-1.pdf> Accessed: 06 May 2011.

Steinar, K. 1994. *Ten standard objections to qualitative research interviews*. Institute of psychology, Denmark: Aarhus University.

Tambyah, M. 2008. *Will They Know Enough? Pre-Service Primary Teachers' Knowledge base for Teaching Integrated Social Sciences*. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 33(6):44-60.[Online].Availablefrom:

<http://ajte.education.ecu.edu.au/issues/PDF/336/Tambyah.pdf> Accessed: 6 May 2011.

Cambridge, M.A: Harvard University Press.

Taylor, N. & Vinjenvold, P. (eds.) 1999. *Getting learning right: Report of the president's Education Initiative Research Project*. Johannesburg: JET.

Trochinm, W.M.K. 2002. *Types of surveys. Research methods knowledge base*.

Tyack, D. & Cuban, L, 1995. *Tinkering towards utopia: A century of public school reform*. Cambridge, M.A. Harvard University Press.

Vaughan, D. 1996. *The challenger launch decision: Risky technology, Culture and deviance at NASA*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wadsworth, S.J., Corley, R.P., Hewitt, J.K. & Defries, J.C. 2001. *Stability of genetic and environmental influences on reading performance at 7, 12 and 16 years of age in the Colorado Adoption Project*. *Behav.Genet.*, 31(4):353-359.

Weick, K.E. 2001. *Sense making in organizations*. Blackwell: Oxford.

Wells, G. 2001. *Learning an Additional Language Through Dialogic Inquiry*.New York: Teachers College Press.

Whitehead, J. 1993. *The growth of educational knowledge. Creating your own living theories*
Bournemouth: Hudy.

Wigfield, A., Guthrie, J.T., Kathleen, C.P., Tabodda, A., Klaude, S.L., McRae, A. & Barbosa,
P. 2008. *Role of reading engagement on mediating effects of reading comprehension
instruction on reading outcomes*. Wiley Interscience: University of Maryland.

Worthen, B.R., Borg, W.R. & White, K.R. 1993. *Measurement and evaluation in the school*.
New York: Longman

7. Appendices

Appendix A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Q.1. Please state your name, your school's name and how long you have been in the teaching profession.

Q.2. Have you been teaching in the same school for all those years?

Q.3. Which grade(s) are you teaching and how did it come about that you teach that grade?

Q.4. Are you happy teaching this grade?

Q.5. What type of training did you receive before the implementation of the FFLC?

Q.6. How would you describe the reading culture, skills and levels of your learners before the launch of the FFLC in 2008?

Q.7. It is now more than four years since the FFLC was introduced. What impact do you think it has made on the reading culture of your learners?

Q.8. What kinds of supportive resources have you received from the Department of Education since the introduction of the FFLC?

Q.9. How is the FFLC monitored by the Department of Education in your school?

Q.10. What influence do you think the FFLC has had on your classroom literacy instruction as a teacher?

Q.11. What are the top three challenges that you experienced during the implementation of this policy?

Q.12. How did you deal up to now with each of the challenges that you have identified?

Q.13. If you were to suggest a few things to the Department of Education and policy makers, what are some of the things you would suggest to make this policy work successfully? What do they need to do differently?

Interview guide for principals

Q.1. Please state your name, your school's name and how long you have been the principal.

Q.2. How could you describe the reading culture of learners in your school before the launch of the FFLC in 2008?

Q.3. What impact do you think the FFLC has had on the reading culture of learners in your school?

Q.4. What kinds of supportive resources has your school received from the Department of Education since the introduction of the FFLC?

Q.5. How is the implementation of this policy being monitored by the Department of Education in your school?

Q.6. What are the top three challenges that you experienced in your school during the implementation of this policy?

Q.7. What are the most important things you would like to suggest to the Department of Education and policy makers which you think can add value to the successful implementation of this policy?

Interview guide for the FFLC cluster committee members

Q.1 Can you please state your name, your cluster's name and how long you have been on the cluster FFLC committee?

Q.2. How did it happen that you serve on this committee?

Q.3. Are you happy serving on this committee?

Q.4. How would you describe the reading culture of learners in your cluster before the launch of the FFLC?

Q.5. It is now more than four years since the FFLC was introduced. What impact do you think it has had on the reading culture of learners in your cluster?

Q.6. What kinds of supportive resources has your cluster received from the Department of Education?

Q.7. What are the top three challenges that you have experienced during the implementation of the FFLC?

Q.8. What recommendations could you make to the Department of Education and policy makers that could contribute to the successful implementation of this FFLC?

Interview guide for Circuit FFLC committee members

Q.1. Please state your name, the name of your circuit and how long you have been in the circuit FFLC committee.

Q.2. How did it happen that you find yourself on this committee?

Q.3. Are you happy serving on this committee?

Q.4. How would you describe the reading culture of learners in your circuit before the launch of the FFLC?

Q.5. It is now about four years since the FFLC was introduced. How do you think it has impacted on the reading culture of learners in your circuit?

Q.6. What type of supportive resources has your circuit received from the Department of Education?

Q.7. How is the implementation of this policy monitored by the Department of Education in your circuit?

Q.8. What recommendations would you like to make to the Department of Education and policy makers which you think can contribute to the successful implementation of this policy?

Appendix B: ANA ENGLISH 2nd LANGUAGE QUESTION PAPER



LEARNER NUMBER	
----------------	--



basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ANNUAL NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS 2010
GRADE 3 LITERACY- ENGLISH

SURNAME _____ GENDER (TICK)

BOY	GIRL
-----	------

NAME (S) _____ PROVINCE _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

SCHOOL NAME _____

EMIS NO. _____ DISTRICT / REGION _____

Instructions to learners:

1. Read all instructions carefully.
2. Answer all questions.
3. The test duration is 45 minutes.
4. The teacher will lead you to complete the practice exercises before you start the test.

Practice exercises
Example 1

Draw a circle around the letter with the correct answer.

Cows give us ...

- a. cheese.
- b. butter.
- c. milk.
- d. ice cream.

You have done it correctly if you have **circled c** as above.

Example 2

Tick the correct word from the boxes.

The sun rises from the

south	west	north	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> east
-------	------	-------	--

You have done it correctly if you have **ticked** inside a box as above.

Example 3

The following sentences tell us about how to make a cup of tea.

Number the sentences (1-3) in the boxes to show the correct order of how "I make a cup of tea".

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| a) | I pour the hot water into the cup. | 3 |
| b) | I switch the kettle on to boil the water. | 1 |
| c) | I put the teabag in the cup. | 2 |

You have done it correctly if you have **numbered** the sentences in the boxes as shown above.

Note:

- In your test you will answer some more questions like the ones you have just completed.
- Do your best to answer the questions, even if you are not sure about an answer.
- Please write the answer that you think is the best, then move to the next question.
- When you finish a page please move to the next.
- Look only at your work.

The test starts on the next page.

Read the story and answer questions that follow.

It is Linda's first day at school. She is very excited but also a little frightened. They are all in the hall and the principal is welcoming all the new learners. Fortunately Linda's best friend, Paula, is also a new learner. All the new learners remain behind when the others go to their classes. The teacher takes the new learners to a classroom where she tells them to sit down.

Linda is sitting next to Paula who comes from the same village as herself. This makes Linda feel relaxed. There are many pictures and charts on the wall. Paula's puppy, Snoopy, followed her to school. She is trying hard to hide him. This frightens Linda because she thinks the teacher might send her, Paula and the puppy home. The boys, however, enjoy playing with Snoopy. They call the little puppy and poor Paula cannot keep him out of sight.

As it is the first day, the teacher decides that she does not want to be too strict. She tells Paula to come to the front and tell the class about him - where she got Snoopy and how she cares for him. Paula loves her pet and loves talking about him. Linda is glad. She is no longer frightened because she feels that the teacher is kind.

1. Who is Linda's best friend?

2. Draw a circle around the letter with the correct answer.

The story is about ...

- a. Linda and the little puppy.
- b. Paula and her mother.
- c. Linda's first day at school.
- d. Paula and the kitten.

3. Write one word from the story which means the same as:

3.1 afraid _____ (paragraph 1)

3.2 happy _____ (paragraph 3)

4.1 Draw a circle around the letter with the correct answer.

Choose a word from the story that tells you more about the teacher.

- a. Smart
- b. Careless
- c. Kind
- d. Beautiful

4.2 Give a reason for your answer.

5. Tick only the box that has the correct answer.

Who tried to hide the puppy?

The boys Paula

Linda The teacher

6. Write the following sentence starting with the given word.

Linda is happy.

Yesterday

7. Write the following sentence starting with the given word.

The puppy ran to school.

Now

8. Write the following sentence starting with the given word.

The teacher talked to the children.

Tomorrow

9. Write the following sentences using the correct punctuation marks.

9.1 in our classroom we have pictures and books

9.2 when is my brothers birthday

10. Write the plural (many) of the underlined words.

10.1 The teacher may send them home. _____

10.2 Paula enjoys her reading class. _____

10.3 The teacher likes the child.

11. The following sentences tell us what Paula does in the morning of a school day.

Use the numbers (1-4) in the boxes to show the correct order of what Paula does.

- | | |
|---|--|
| a) Paula meets her friends on the way. | |
| b) Paula wakes up and gets out of bed. | |
| c) Now she is ready to go to school. | |
| d) She washes herself and gets dressed. | |

12. Write five sentences about how you spend your playtime at school. Use the correct punctuation marks and spelling.

13. Read the following table and answer questions 13.1 – 13.3.

Duty List for Grade 3		
Name	Monday	Tuesday
Helga	Water the plants	Sweep the floor
Linda	Sweep the floor	Clean the board
Mimi	Clean the board	Dust the desks
Paula	Dust the desks	Close the windows
Anton	Close the windows	Water the plant

- 13.1 Who has to water the plants on Tuesday?

- 13.2 Who has to dust the desks on Monday?

- 13.3 What must Mimi do on Monday?

Look at this picture and answer Questions 14 and 15.



14. Complete the sentence using not more than 3 words.

The picture is about ...

15. Write two things that are different about summer and winter seasons.

End of test!
Thank you.

Appendix C: ANA HOME LANGUAGE XITSONGA QUESTION
PAPER102

LEARNER NUMBER	
----------------	--



basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NHLAHLUVO WA RIXAKA WA LEMBE NA LEMBE 2010
GIREDI 3 LITHERESE - XITSONGA

XIVONGO	_____	RIMBEWU (GWAJULA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>)	MUFANA	NHWANYANA
MAVITO	_____	XIFUNDZANKULU	_____	
SIKU RO VELEKIWA	_____			
VITO RA XIKOLO	_____			
EMIS NO.	_____	XIFUNDZA/ RHIJINI	_____	

Swiletelo eka mudyondzi:

1. Hlaya swileriso hinkwaswo hi vukheta.
2. Hlamula swivutiso hinkwaswo eka swivandla leswi nyikiweke.
3. Nkarhi wa ku tsala xikambelwana lexi i 45 wa timinete.
4. Mudyondzisi vata ku pfuna ku endla ntirho wa xikombiso u nga se sungula ku tsala xikambelo.

Ntirho wa xikombiso

Xikombiso 1

Tsondzela letere leri nga na nhlamulo leyi nga yona.

Homu yi hi nyika ...

- a. chizi.
- b. botere.
- c.** rivisi.
- d. ayisikhirimi.

U endle kahle loko u **tsondzele c** ku fana na laha henhla.

Xikombiso 2

Gwajula eka bokisi ra nhlamulo leyi yi nga yona.

Dyambu ri xa e

dzongeni.	vupela-dyambu.	n`walungwin.i	vuxeni. ✓
-----------	----------------	---------------	-----------

U endle kahle loko u **gwajule** ku fana na laha henhla.

Xikombiso 3

Swivulwa leswi swi hi byela ndlela ya ku endla tiya.

Nambara swivulwa (1-3) emabokisini ku komba ndlela ya ku endla tiya ku ya hi ku landzelelana.

- a)

Ndzi chela mati yo vila eka khapu.	3
------------------------------------	---
- b)

Ndzi lumeka ketlela ku virisa mati.	1
-------------------------------------	---
- c)

Ndzi chela xibegana xa tiya eka khapu.	2
--	---

U endle kahle loko u **nomborile** swivulwa tani hi laha henhla.

Swiletelo:

- Eka xikambelo xa wena u ta hlamula swivutiso swin`wana swo fana na leswi u nga swi hlamula eka swikombiso.
- Humesa vuswikoti bya wena ku hlamula swivutiso hinkwaswo.
- Hambi loko xivutiso xi ku kankanisa tsala nhlamulo leyi u ehleketaka leswaku hi yona.
- Yana emahlweni u hlamula xivutiso lexi landzelaka. Loko u heta papila ra wena yana emahlweni u ya eka leri landzelaka.
- Languta ntirho wa wena ntsena.

Xikambelo xi sungula eka papila leri landzelaka.

Hlaya xitori ivi u hlamula swivutiso leswi landzelaka.

I siku ro sungula ra Ndzalama exikolweni. U tsakile swinene kambe u chuhile. Vadyondzi hinkwavo va le holweni laha nhloko ya xikolo a va amukelaka kona. Munghana wa yena Khanyisa na yena u ta dyondza ro sungula exikolweni lexi. Vadyondzi hinkwavo lavantshwa va yisiwile etlilasini ta vona. Ndzalama u tshamile ekusuhi na Khanyisa, swi n'wi endla leswaku a titwa a tshamisekile. Ku na swifaniso na tichati to tala ekhumbini ra tlilasi ya vona. Ximbyanyana xa Khanyisa Bovha, xi n'wi landzelerile exikolweni, u ringeta ku xi tumbeta. Leswi swi chavisa Ndzalama hikuva u ehleketa leswaku mudyondzisi u ta va hlongola hinkwavo etlilasini. Vafana va tsakela ku flanga na Bovha, Khanyisa u ehlekeia leswaku va ta n'wi yivela ximbyanyana xa yena.

Tani hi leswi ku nga siku ro sungula exikolweni, mudyondzisi u pfumelerile Bovha ku tshama etlilasini. U lerisa Khanyisa ku hlamusela tlilasi hi ximbyanyana xa yena, laha a nga xikuma kona na leswi a xi hlayisisaka xiswona. Khanyisa u tsakile ku vulavula hi mbyana ya yena hikuva wa yi rhandza. Ndzalama na yena u tsakile hikuva mudyondzisi u na tintswalo, u twerile Bovha vusiwana a n'wi amukela etlilasini.

1. I mani munghana wa Ndzalama?

2. Tsondzela letere leri nga na nhlamulo leyi nga yona.

Xitori xi vulavula hi ...

- a. Ndzalama na mhani wa yena
- b. Khanyisa na mhani wa yena
- c. Siku ro sungula ra Ndzalama exikolweni.
- d. Khanyisa na ximanga xa yena.

3. Tsala rito rin'we ro huma eka xitori leri vulaka swo fana na:

3.1 chavile _____ (ndzimana ya 1)

3.2 byela _____ (ndzimana ya 3)

4.1 Tsondzela letere leri nga na nhlamulo leyi nga yona.

Hlawula rito ro huma eka xitori leri hlamuselaka Mudyondzisi

- a. sasekile
- b. karhata
- c. fintswalo
- d. hlekelela

4.2 Seketela nhlamulo ya wena

5. Gwajula bokisi leri nga na nhlamulo leyi nga yona.

I mani a nga ringeta ku tumbeta ximbyanyana?

Vafana	Khanyisa
--------	----------

Ndzalama	Mudyondzisi
----------	-------------

6. Kopunula xivulwa lexi hi ndlela leyi faneleke u sungula hi rito leri u nyikiweke.

Ximbyanyana xi tsutsuma xi ya exikolweni.

Tolo

7. Kopunula xivulwa lexi hi ndlela leyi faneleke u sungula hi rito leri u nyikiweke.

Ximbyanyana xi tsutsuma xi ya exikolweni

Sweswi

8. Kopunula xivulwa lexi hi ndlela leyi faneleke u sungula hi rito leri u nyikiweke.

Mudyondzisi u vulavula na vana

Mundzuku

9. Kopunula xivulwa lexi landzelaka u tirhisa mimfungho leyi faneleke.

9.1 etlilasini ya hina ku na tichati na tibuku

9.2 siku ra ku velekiwa ra nyiko hi rini

10. Tsala vuyingi bya marito lama nga khwatihatiwa.

10.1 U rhandza mudyondzisi. _____

10.2 Ndzalama u rhandza ximbyanyana. _____

10.3 Etlilasini ku na n'wana . _____

11. Swivulwa leswi landzelaka swi hi byela leswi Ndzalama a swi endlaka na mpundzu hi siku ra xikolo.

Tsala tinomborò1 - 4 eka swibokisana ku komba nandzelelano lowu nga wona wa leswi Ndzalama a swi endlaka.

a)	Ndzalama u hlangana na vanghana va yena endleleni.	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Ndzalama u pfuka a huma eminkumbeni.	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Wa suka ku ya exikolweni.	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Wa hlamba a ambala swiambalo.	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Tsala ntlhanu wa swivulwa hi ndlela leyi u tirisaka nkarhi wa wena wo tlanga exikolweni. Tihisa mimfungho leyi faneleke.

13. Hlaya nongonoko lowu u hlamula swivutiso 13.1 – 13.3.

Nongonoko wa mintirho ya giredi 3		
Vito	Musumbhunuko	Ravumbirhi
Themba	Cheleta swimilani	Kukula rivala
Xiluva	Kukula rivala	Basisa xitsalelo
Khensani	Basisa xitsalelo	Sula switulu
Tintswalo	Sula switulu	Pfala mafasitere
Amukelani	Pfala mafasitere	Cheleta swimilani

- 13.1 I mani a faneleke ku cheleta swimilani hi Ravumbirhi ?

- 13.2 I mani a faneleke ku sula switulu hi Musumbhunuko?

- 13.3 Khensani u fanele ku endla yini hi Musumbhunuko?

Xiya-xiya xifaniso lexi landzelaka, u hlamula swivutiso 14 na 15.



- 14. Hetisa xivulwa lexi landzelaka, u nga tirhisi marito yo tlula manharhu.**

Xifaniso xi vulavula hi

- 15. Tsala swilo swimbirhi leswi kombaka ku hambana ka nguva ya ximumu na ya xixika.**

**Makumu ya xikambelo!
Inkomu.**

APPENDIX D

**LETTER TO THE CIRCUIT MANAGER REQUESTING A PERMISSION TO
CONDUCT A RESEARCH IN THE NKOWANKOWA CIRCUIT**

P.O BOX 964

LETABA

0870

11 February 2011 The Circuit Manager

Nkowankowa Circuit

P.O.Box 1413

Letaba

0870

Dear Madam

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS
AROUND NKOWANKOWA CIRCUIT: PERSAL NO 81008996**

1. The above matter bears reference
2. I am currently registered for masters of education specializing in curriculum studies with the University Of South Africa.
3. I have completed my course work and I'm currently doing a dissertation part.
4. I therefore humbly request to be granted a permission to conduct a research in primary schools in your circuit.
5. The above referred matter will be conducted in a manner that will be less disruptive to the school program.

Looking forward to your positive response.

Yours Faithfully

Mbhalati N.B

0849000312

APPENDIX E: LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM NKOWANKOWA CIRCUIT



PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

REF. : 81008996

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

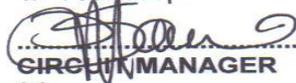
ENQ. : BALOYI A.

DATE : 10 MARCH 2010

The Principal
Attention : Mbhalati N.B.
N'waxindzhele Primary School
DAN VILLAGE
0870

**REQUEST FOR A PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PRIMARY SCHOOL
AROUND NKOWAKOWA CIRCUIT : MBHALATI N.B.**

1. We acknowledge your letter dated 11 February 2010.
2. The Circuit Office wishes to inform you that Mbhalati N.B. has been granted permission to conduct research in our primary schools.
3. The following conditions should be observed :
 - 3.1 Arrangements should be made with both the circuit office and the schools concerning the conduct of the study. Care should be taken not to disrupt the academic programme at the schools.
4. Your cooperation is always appreciated.


.....
CIRCUIT MANAGER
/ab

NKOWANKOWA CIRCUIT, PRIVATE BAG X1413, LETABA 0870
TEL NO. 015 303 1725/2393/2368 FAX NO. 015 3031539

The heartland of Southern Africa – development is about people

APPENDIX F

LETTER REQUESTING FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

P.O.BOX 964

LETABA

0870

13 MARCH 2010

The school Manager

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

1. The above matter refers
2. I am currently registered for a MASTERS OF EDUCATION IN CURRICULUM STUDIES with the UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA
3. I have completed my course work and I am now doing the Dissertation part.
4. I therefore humbly request to be granted a permission to conduct my research in your school.
5. I promise that no participant's name or participating school will be mentioned in the research report.
6. My topic is: The influence of policy on classroom literacy instruction: The case of the Foundations for Learning campaign in Limpopo, Mopani district in South Africa.
7. I will direct my study to the grade 3 teachers.
8. I therefore humbly request them to sign the attached consent forms if my request is welcomed. Also receive the attached letter of approval from the circuit office.
9. Thanking you in advance for your positive response.

Yours Faithfully

Mbhalati N.B

Appendix G

CONSENT
FORM



CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

TITLE: THE INFLUENCE OF POLICY ON CLASSROOM LITERACY INSTRUCTION: THE CASE OF THE FOUNDATION FOR LEARNING CAMPAIGN IN LIMPOPO, MOPANI DISTRICT IN SOUTH AFRICA.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: MBHALATI N.B CELL 0849000312, PROMOTOR:
PROF LOYISO JITA

As we are all aware that the government has introduced an intervention programme “THE FOUNDATION FOR LEARNING CAMPAIGN” to try to solve the reading problem in our Schools, I am conducting a research to investigate how this programme is shaping the practical classroom literacy instruction, and to investigate if it is improving the reading culture and skills for learners in our schools. I believe that the findings of this study, whether positive or negative, will assist towards success in the implementation of this policy. Although our discussions will be electronically recorded for analysis, no names or names of schools will be mentioned in the report.

I will be observing individuals in the classroom situation and conducting interviews with individuals and groups. There are no economic implications for participating in the study. Any further questions can be addressed to the principal researcher.

CONSENT

I-----hereby
voluntarily agree to participate in the above study as explained by Mrs Mbhalati N.B. I hereby

Voluntarily consent for participating in the above referred study. I further declare that I will always retain my right to withdraw in the event where I feel uncomfortable or experience infringement of my rights.

