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ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE WRITING COMPETENCY AMONG GRADE 12 LEARNERS: THE CASE OF TWO EASTERN CAPE RURAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By

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DECLARATION

I solemnly declare that this thesis is entirely a product of my own research which has never been submitted previously in full or partial fulfillment of any degree or diploma in any Institution of Higher Learning. Information obtained from published or unpublished sources have been thoroughly acknowledged in the text and a list of references is provided.

Besman S.   Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DEDICATION

To my late loving Grandmother Yokose Nowinit Besman.

My late brother Toto Mzingisi Besman, this was your dream bhuti wam.

To the entire Besman and Mazwi families.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BICS   Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills

CALP   Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

CAPS   Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

DBE   Department of Basic Education

DoE   Department of Education

EAC   English Across the Curriculum

EFAL   English First Additional Language

FAL   First Additional Language

FET   Further Education and Training

FGDs   Focus Group Discussions

HL   Home Language

LAD   Language Acquisition Device

LiEP   Language –in-Education Policy

LoLT   Language of Learning and Teaching

NCS   National Curriculum Statement

OBE   Outcomes Based Education

RNCS   Revised National Curriculum Statement

SASA   South African Schools Act

SGB   School Governing Body

ZPD   Zone of Proximal Development

ABSTRACT

Contextualized in the South African Language in Education Policy (LiEP) and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), the study aimed at investigating the writing competency of EFAL Grade 12 learners in the two rural public schools. It was the researchers' hunch that the learners' socio-cultural conditions at which they learn EFAL are not taken into consideration by teachers and that hampers or impedes the development of language and writing. Further, the research sought to unearth the strategies and techniques used by teachers to teach writing in EFAL, and whether these facilitate the development of writing competency, that enhances better performance in other Grade 12 subjects taught through English as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT). The study is informed by the socio-cultural theory, language acquisition theories, and the language learning theories. The study also drew from the writing strategies, writing in the curriculum, and second language learning discourses

Framed in the interpretive paradigm and the qualitative approach, the research adopted a case study design. The sample of the study comprised of seven teachers of which two were EFAL teachers and five of these teach content subjects. Twenty four Grade 12 learners constituted the four Focus Groups. The data collection tools comprised of interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), observation and document analysis. Learners wrote essays and free writing exercises which formed transcripts for document analysis. The purposively selected teachers and the Grade 12 learners were granted interview questions in advance. The collected data was analysed and put under themes as determined by the study's research questions. Such themes included; challenges faced by learners when writing in EFAL, strategies used by teachers in teaching writing , perceptions of teachers and learners on learners' writing competency and the connection or linkage between learners' writing competency in EFAL and content subjects.

Learners' essays and free writing revealed that the learners have limited vocabulary in their FAL. Furthermore, the study made known that learners experience anxiety when they have to answer questions in English and that results in them being incompetent in writing in the target language. Other hindrances to EFAL writing that were revealed by

the study included the detrimental effect of social media on the writing competency and lack of motivation to read for writing in English.

In addition, the study established that there were teaching approaches that were employed by teachers when teaching writing which included the process writing and integration. Content subject teachers made known to the study that they were not teaching writing to the learners but assess them in essay writing and summaries as required by the school-based assessments in their respective subjects. It was also disclosed in the study that writing encompasses other language skills especially reading. The study also revealed that writing is a skill that is obligatory to be taught because it becomes beneficial to other subjects and that it enhances learners' writing for a variety of reasons. Overall, the study made known that there are complex circumstances that Grade 12 learners in rural public schools encounter when engaging in writing in the EFAL.

The study concluded that although English could be perceived as a dominant language, it is embedded with multiplicity of challenges in the rural secondary schools where it is used as a LoLT. Such hindrances mostly find expression when learners have to engage in writing activities and encompass; lack of motivation, anxiety, limited vocabulary and the influence of social networks. The study recommended that the EFAL policy makers should not use a blanket approach on how EFAL should be taught but consider the demographic situations of the various sections of South Africa. The study also recommended that code switching which is practiced in bilingual classrooms appears inevitable and therefore should be formalized.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

1.1 Background

One of the critical aspects in teaching and learning is language because it has the power to influence academic achievement (Rademeyer, 2005). Cuvelier, du Plesis and Teck (2003) also claim that language has always been a contentious issue in South African education. Many South African learners in rural public schools are taught the subject English First Additional Language and use English which is not their Home Language to learn other subjects. In view of the above, it is necessary for this study to investigate the writing competency of the learners given that they can only perform well in their tasks and exams if they are competent in the writing in their First Additional Language(FAL).

The post-apartheid government in South Africa had to deal with the democratization and equalization of the country's education. The Freedom Charter which was conceived in 1955 declared that "The doors of education shall be open to all". It is against this background that the new constitution which came in force in 1996, granted eleven South African languages namely; SePedi, SeSotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, XiTsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu a status of official languages with equal status (Republic of South Africa, 1996). The constitutional assertion is of the impression that all official languages enjoy equal status whereas in practical terms only English dominates as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) (Besman, 2012). In this regard, de Wet and Wolhuter (2009) state that after 1994, in the spirit of democracy although all 11 South African languages were granted equal status there were deep seated fears that education in the Home Language could never expose learners to politics, economy and globalization and as a result, most of South African schools preferred English as LoLT.

Despite the fact that the policies were made to protect and promote usage of these languages in schools, Visage (2007) maintains that English is still the most dominant in the majority of schools. Buthelezi (2002) underlines the aforementioned argument by saying that although the language policy of the country insists on giving equal status to all languages, English still dominates to an extent of being used as a Language of Learning and Teaching in the rural areas, thus handicapping the majority of learners whose Home Language is not English.

It should be noted that although the South African constitution (1996) and Language-in-Education Policy (LieP) (1997) does not prescribe which of the official languages should be used as a Language of Learning and Teaching, English becomes the language of choice. The National Education Policy Act (1996) and the South African Schools Act (SASA) (1996) preserve that the underlying principle of the LiEP is to maintain Home Languages while affording access to acquisition of additional languages. The LiEP (1997) gives the School Governing Body (SGB) the total power to make a choice of the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in their respective schools. This resulted in most of the schools where the majority of learners are non-English speakers choosing English as a LoLT.

Given what is encompassed in the constitution, the government through collaboration with the Department of Education, recognized the diverse culture of the South African nation and yearn to promote multilingualism and respect for all languages used in the country (Cuvelier, 2003). It was in 1997 that a new Language-in- Education Policy was formulated as an integral and essential part of the government's new strategy to create an environment which can encourage respect for languages other than one's own language. Cuvelier (2003) asserts that the Language-in-Education Policy presumes that learning more than one language, meaning multilingualism, could be appropriate in the South African society which is characterized by cultural diversity and could also act as a counter to any ethnic prejudice. The Language-in-Education Policy (LiEP) of 1997 could be regarded as a very positive stride taken by the Department of Education because it suitably positions the principles underlying the constitution with a particular reference to the promotion of human rights and also promoting multilingualism. Probyn, Murray,

Botha, Botya, Brooks and Westphal (2002), commended the South African LiEP as among the most progressive language policies in the world.

It is stipulated in the LiEP that only the official language may be used as languages of instruction and that the power to determine the language policy of the school rests with the School Governing Bodies who in their respective schools would promote multilingualism (Department of Education, 1997). Probyn et al (2002) concluded that in most of the schools that they sampled, it was evident that the SGBs were not well informed about the LiEP and as a result the LoLT in those schools is English, which is a language foreign to the isiXhosa populated schools. It could be concluded that although the government made provisions for the usage of official languages in schools as LoLT, it was apparent that those given the responsibility to make the choice of LoLT for learners; their parents or guardians, were not aware of how the LiEP functions. As a result, they resorted to the use of English which was the learners' foreign language or Second Language. English then, remained the language of choice to many schools as a LoLT for various reasons.

The adoption of the new constitution in South Africa also reconstructed the educational landscape of the country. In view of this, the South African Schools Act (SASA) repealed all the apartheid legislation that pertained to schools (Chisholm, 2004). In order to map out the constitution at the school level, there was an essential need to transform the old school curriculum and the development of the new curriculum that would do away with the processes of the past (Besman, 2012). Breidlid (2003) observes that the curriculum makers were informed that it was crucial that the new curriculum should not reproduce the apartheid dichotomies, but should focus on establishing a new national identity on the basis of the rainbow nation.

The new curriculum, premised on Outcomes Based Education (OBE) as an approach to teaching and learning, was adopted in the post-apartheid South Africa and also included all eleven official languages. It also emphasized that South Africa as a multilingual country needs its learners to be highly competent in at least two of the eleven official languages and that those learners should be able to communicate in other languages (Department of Education, 2005). The new curriculum therefore adopted an additive

multilingual approach where learners were required to learn their home language and add one other official language. The notion behind this additive multilingualism was that the learners should become competent in their additional language while their home language was still maintained and developed (DoE, 2005). Further to that, the DoE (2007) also asserted that the learner's Home Languages should be used for learning and teaching with the particular reference to the Foundation Phase (Grades 1-3) where children learn to read and write. In the Further Education band (FET) which is Grades 10-12, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) also emphasizes the importance of additive bilingualism where learners should receive their tuition in two official languages one of which should be the learner's additional language until the end of Grade 12 (DoE, 2005). The DoE (2005) further stated that the promotion of multilingualism was in the interests of the country's constitution which advocates for healing the divisions created by the apartheid regime so that it could build a society based on democratic values. It is believed that through additive multilingualism societal boundaries could be broken and there be respect with the recognition of cross cultural values. It is still disturbing that the curriculum talks about the additive bilingualism and the use of FAL at the FET phase without taking into cognizance the issue of competency in these languages. Writing which is used for assessment and examination, a vital skill at this level, then becomes a challenge since learners are struggling with the FAL.

The implementation of the OBE came with challenges among educators and was reviewed in 2000 as the Revised National Statement (RNCS) for Grades 1-9 and as the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) for Grades 10-12. There were ongoing challenges with the implementation of the curriculum which also resulted in the 2009 review known as the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) which commenced from 2012. CAPS advocated that the First Additional Language (FAL) should be introduced in Grade 1, shifting completely from what the RNCS was carrying out, where the FAL had to be introduced from Grade 4. The new paradigm shift was based on the principle that if learning of the FAL should start at Grade 1, by the time learners reach Grade 3, they should have reached a high level of competency in the additional language (DoE, 2011), and would be able to read and write well in their FAL by the time they reach Grade 4. The DoE is of the view that by the time the learners are

at the Intermediate (Grade 4-6) and Senior Phases (Grades 7-9), they should continue strengthening their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in their FAL, and should be getting more exposure to English. This early exposure to FAL (English) could expose learners to being able to think and reason in their additional language earlier. The DoE (2011) further ascertained that the early introduction of FAL could enable learners to develop their cognitive academic skill which is a requirement in the studying of the content subjects in English. CAPS (2011) stated clearly that from Grades 10-12, learners should be supported and provided with a curriculum that enables them to meet the Grade 12 required standard which must be in such a way that the learners can use their FAL at a higher level of competency so that they be prepared for further or higher education or the world of work.

Howie, van Staden, Tshele, Dowse and Zimmerman (2012) argue that few learners in S.A. schools can demonstrate competency in writing. The Department of Basic Education (2012) endorsed the claim through an analysis of the results released in 2012 demonstrating that learners did not perform sufficiently well in language and other content subjects because they were unable to express themselves in writing as far as EFAL is concerned. Competency in FAL depends upon successful development of learners' Home Language (HL), a language used and best known to the learners when entering the school (Ash, 2007). Rudwick (2004) asserts that, with the intention of developing learners' writing in the FAL, it becomes essential that they start to be developed in their HL in the first six years of school entry. This should be done before introducing writing in FAL which will later be used as learners' LoLT. The idea contradicts what is carried and promoted in the current South African curriculum; Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) which advocates for the teaching of English FAL from Grade 1 along the Home Language in all schools (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

The language barrier is a challenge faced by many learners in most rural South African public schools. Most schools in the rural areas use English as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT). It should be taken into consideration that in those rural areas, English is foreign to everyone, meaning that the learners are taught in a language that

is not used at home and the community. The language they use at school as a language of learning becomes a barrier because it is foreign to them and they are not familiar with it. If the learner is disadvantaged in a language especially the LoLT, that learner is unlikely to perform to the best of his or her ability through writing (Owen-Smith, 2010). The danger of disadvantaging learners in language could be producing learners with low self-esteem because their writing skills in their FAL are not developed enough.

In an attempt to bridge the gap between teaching language and content as separate subjects, the DoE (2014) introduced the slogan of "every teacher is a language teacher" through teaching English Across the Curriculum (EAC). The DoE (2014) describes EAC as a strategy for integrating the teaching of content subjects with language learning. This means, the skills that were meant to be taught by language teachers only could be included in the teaching of content subjects. It is in this view that Peha (2003) argues on writing across the curriculum claiming it as not only the responsibility of language teachers, but for all subject teachers. He further argues that it is through writing that the learners are able to express their knowledge of a given subject and teachers make learner assessment through their writing.

Van der Berg (2008) claims that there should be correlation between learners' language and their performance. He further argues that research has found out that LoLT has an impact on learners' performance. Ash (2007) argues that there is a strong correlation between matric or Grade 12 pass rate and the use of Home Language as a LoLT. He further argues that most learners who write in their Home Language pass and most of those who write in their FAL which is commonly English, are less successful. To achieve writing competency in FAL, it becomes essential that learners should be taught enough so as to allow them to study a large volume of writing skills given that it is a needed skill to write their examinations. In that manner, learners will understand the written and spoken form of the target language. Writing and reading can also assist learners to have sufficient command of their FAL so that it can serve as a means to learn other subjects which form part of the curriculum. Writing therefore becomes a key aspect that is associated with gaining knowledge and having insight into learning.

Competent writing becomes a crucial issue when addressing EFAL learners and the challenge they face when being taught in a language foreign to them.

Learner competency in writing is seen as posing challenges for the EFAL learning contexts across the globe (Lillis and Scott, 2007). Munro (2003) alludes by stating that on the international front, it is noted that writing competency in schools is very low and that children cannot write properly. Therefore, it becomes imperative that language barriers that challenge EFAL learners' equal opportunities to do extremely well in challenging fields and chosen careers needed to be identified and devise strategies to unravel them.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

In the South African context, there are growing concerns about the high level of poor writing in secondary schools (EFAL Paper 3, Chief Marker's report, 2012). In the researcher's own experience as an educator; rural learners in public schools learn using a language foreign to them. Those learners are expected to study seven subjects of which six are done in English. They learn EFAL as a subject and do all other five content subjects in English; the English equivalent to that learnt by English Home Language speakers. Such learners are expected to use textbooks with heavy vocabulary and concepts. At the end of the year, they are assessed and write their examinations that determine their progression in English- examinations are set for all Grade 12 learners irrespective of their language competency and are all expected to meet certain level of achievement to progress.

Banda (2007) states that there have been several identified aspects which negatively influence learners' writing. He further argues that children from the African language speaking homes are at a disadvantage and therefore need strategies to mediate EFAL writing. Van Schalkwyk (2009) asserts that some of the approaches used in teaching writing do not address certain aspects of learners' writing needs. Further to that, in the researcher's own perspective, the education system does not take into consideration the conditions at which the learners study EFAL which is their LoLT. In view of this, the

study seeks to find means through which writing particularly in EFAL can be developed to enable competency and thus, better performance in all their academic work.

Most of the research was conducted around second language, second language acquisition, and mostly second language writing by second language learners generally-meaning including those in townships and urban schools. This particular study will be carried in rural public schools where schools are the sole sources of English learning. Above all, the word from content subject teachers who teach in rural areas and use English as LoLT had been silent in most of the studies conducted on teaching using EFAL. The study will try to listen from the voices of content subject teachers.

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 Main Research Question

How competent in writing are Grade 12 learners in their EFAL as LoLT?

1.3.2 Sub-research questions

1. What challenges do Grade 12 learners face in writing EFAL or across all the subjects?

2 .What strategies are used by EFAL teachers or all subject teachers in teaching writing in schools?

3. What are the perceptions of content subject teachers on learners' writing competency?

4. What is the link between the learners' writing competency in EFAL and performance in both EFAL and content subjects?

1.4   Purpose of the Study

The study sought to understand how competent are the Grade 12 learners in writing using EFAL. The emphasis focused on second language learners' development in writing competency. It was against that background that the researcher was thirsty to find ways of equipping EFAL learners' writing competency as the language of learning and teaching.

1.5   Delimitations

The study focused on the acquisition of English FAL competency of twenty four Grade 12 learners in two South African rural schools. In each school the researcher engaged two focus groups of twelve learners at different times. The researcher was confined to two Districts of Education in the Eastern Cape Province. The seven educators were also shared by the two schools.

1.6   Significance

The significance of this study might relate to its implications for second language writing competency. The study had several educational implications particularly for the EFAL in South African schools which use the EFAL as their LoLT.

It might contribute to research on learners' writing competency and assist with the provision of a deeper understanding of factors that impact on Grade 12 learners' writing skills. The study might provide valuable input for the Secondary Schools using EFAL as a LoLT. It might also guide the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and Language Curriculum Policy makers to seek better or alternative approaches of systematically teaching writing in schools since writing is one of the most important components in the teaching and learning as tests and examinations are carried out through it. The study

might contribute to the research field through the description and discussion of competent writing in the FAL.

1.7 Definition of Terms

First Additional Language: The term used to describe the second language that the learners learn. The term FAL replaces 'Second Language' which was used during the apartheid era and it indicates that learners are often multilingual. Kaap and Arend (2011) define FAL as a language which the child shares along with his or her home language.

Second Language Acquisition: It is the study of how second languages are learned and the factors that influence the process. Acquiring a language happens unconsciously because there is little or no formal teaching of that language (Singhal, 2012).

Second Language Learning: It refers to a formal learning of a foreign language in a formal setting. Geva and Yaghoub-Zadeh (2006) clarify Second Language Learning as mostly depending in more confined environments like in the classroom where children are formally taught language elements that are learned informally in their home language.

Communicative competence: Tank (2002) describes communicative competence as a language user's grammatical knowledge as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately. Ross-Friedman (2003) concurs with Tank by stating that communicative or language competency is the ability to interpret the underlying meaning of a message, understand cultural references, and use strategies. This is done with the intention to keep communication from breaking down and the ability to use the rules of grammar. Communicative competency therefore refers to an appropriate use of the target language in a social and cultural context.

Language as a Social Practice: Janks (2007) describes Language as a form of social practices that are embedded in specific socio-historical contexts. This means, language is perceived as being part of the wider social and cultural activities in which people

engage in their communities. This is what Vygotsky (1962) terms as a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which is very imperative in a learner's acquisition of the second language. The ZPD is described by Lui (2012) as a difference between what the child can do independently and what he or she is capable of doing with the assistance of someone with more knowledge than them. ZPD means an area of potential learning in which a child can be able to do a task with the help of someone who knows the task better.

Constructivist theory: Westhaver (2011) describes the constructivist theory as a learning model that empowers students to learn through their classroom guided experiences and reflect upon those experiences because there is a strong belief that students are able to construct their new knowledge from their past experiences. It is an educational philosophy which holds that learners ultimately construct their own knowledge that then resides within them, so that each person's knowledge is as unique as they are (Bashutki, 2011). Learners in constructive learning are expected to actively participate in their learning by thinking critically when given a problem to solve and should also construct their own knowledge by testing ideas based on their prior knowledge and experiences. This is a type of learning which allows the learners to be hands-on in their own learning and knowledge development and teachers are to take the role of facilitating the process.

For the current study, the concepts or terms English First Additional Language (EFAL) and English Second Language will be used interchangeably because they refer to the same aspect but are coined differently depending in the context of the country. EFAL is used in the South African context while Second Language Learning is an international term.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

Theoretically, the study was structured within Lin's (2013) framework which advocates that from a socio-cultural perspective, learners' cognitive processes are influenced by the interaction and social environments. That means the interdependence of cognitive

learning and sociocultural activities entails that learning does not take place in emptiness; it is constructed by the learners and their immediate and broader sociocultural circumstances. In his theory of sociocultural learning, Vygotsky (1962) identified language as a symbolic system by which people communicate and also as a tool through which history and culture are transmitted. Vygotsky also emphasized that social interaction plays a vital role in internalizing the process of language acquisition, meaning that learners' language learning is mediated by more knowledgeable members of the society. Brunner (1986) on agreeing with Vygotsky furthers the notion by suggesting the idea of scaffolding where learners can receive a kind of assistance in their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) from other society members more experienced and knowledgeable than them. Wang (2006) is of the belief that learning is rooted within social events and happens when a child interacts with the people, objects and events in his or her environment. In the worldview of social constructivism, individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences.

In the researcher's opinion, EFAL learners are all expected to be competent in writing for their academic success not taking into consideration their social backgrounds. In the light of what the researcher views, the framework that was chosen for the study could be seen as the most appropriate, having to consider that it should take into consideration the social backgrounds of rural learners whose LoLT is English, a language not spoken in their communities.

1.9 Literature Review

In the literature review, the researcher focused on Second Language Acquisition, Second Language Learning, Language as a social practice, Constructivism, Ecological influence on learning and Motivation for language learning.

Sivasubramaniam (2011) views FAL (English) language learning as intercultural communication competence because English is an international language which has the power to assemble diversity of cultures. It is through English communication competence that individuals can learn and understand other cultures so that one can

respect and tolerate such cultures. This view befits the South African schools' context due to its diverse nature which promotes multilingualism and favours the use of English as a LoLT. It becomes apparent to the schools that language learning plays a key role in education. In support of the above view, Foncha (2013) asserts that as far as language learning is concerned, it becomes essential to uphold the context of interaction in a very high esteem. He further states that for understanding what role is being played by English as the LoLT, it becomes essential to reinforce its relevance and the competence in the actual context where this interaction is in full swing. In the study, the Grade 12 learners whose FAL is English could be given an opportunity to interact with the language of learning and teaching through writing to promote competency in the target language which is English.

In addition, Turuk (2008) believes that learning FAL should not be done in isolation. In view of this, it is a collaborative effort where learners in their participation are assisted by society members. In light of this, the study is of the view that an ecological approach to language learning can give a good balance to Lin's (2013) sociocultural theory from which the study will be framed. The Ecological perspective of language looks at language as being connected with the sociocultural aspects of life through which any culture is portrayed (Foncha, 2013). Sivasubramaniam (2004) assert that the ecological viewpoint looks at ecology as a metaphor for conceptualizing language learning as an ecosystem of interconnectivities. He further views the ecological approach as one that negates or contradicts the dominance of scientific thinking in language learning. Like Vygotsky's theory of Social Constructivism, an ecological approach assigns centrality to the learners' environment which is complete with meanings and knowledge. These meanings come out gradually as the learner acts and interact within and with his environment (Sivasubramaniam, 2004:56). According to Van Lier (2004), the ecological approach regards language learning as a study of the interconnections existing between thought, action and power. With regards to this respect, an ecological approach could be understood as taking language learning and relating it to a bigger environment with which a learner can engage in a meaningful construction of activity along with the others. The ecological approach would assist in the study in that it would provide the

researcher with the context within which the learners engage in meaningful writing activities with other participants who might be more competent in the target language.

On developing the concept of ecological approach, van Lier (2010) affirms that an ecological approach refers to how numerous relationships are created in and among the physical, social and symbolic worlds in human ecosystem and how language assists in their establishment, maintenance and expansion of such relationships. Foncha (2013) explains the above statement by stating that human beings are capable of learning and living in language in any given context. This means the physical world where human beings live afford them with language scope that could provide opportunities for learning and active participation of learners. Aspects of physical world, sociocultural world, social communities and symbolic world of ideas, histories and stories provide several affordances (Van Lier, 2010). Augustyn (2012) defines affordances as relationships of possibility, meaning that they make action, interaction and joint projects possible. Gibson (1979) in his interpretation of affordance claims that it is an aspect of the environment which can support the action without necessarily causing it to happen. In language learning, Sivasubramaniam (2004) is of the opinion that affordance in language learning can be seen as a relationship between language and its learner because to know a language is equivalent to how one learns to practice it or to live in it. To preserve that position, learners require a rich "semiotic budget" so that they are able to structure their activities and participation so that access is made available and engagement encouraged (Foncha, 2013). "Semiotic budget" refers to those opportunities for action that are opened up for an active language user (Lantof, 2000). Augustyn (2012) claims that semiotic in language is intended towards investigating the basis that all knowledge is interconnected with representation. In light of the definitions above, affordance could be useful in the study in that learners will be provided with a space for learning to write in their FAL.

Given the inseparable link between language and sociocultural activities in promoting language competency, it becomes imperative to explore the learning of FAL in the classroom context. Cummins (2000) is of the view that, for learners to achieve optimally in the school situation, they require integrated basic interpersonal communicative skills

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(BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). He further claims that, it takes the second language learners approximately two years to achieve conversational fluency (BICS) at the level of their peers, and five to seven years to achieve academic language proficiency (CALP).Courtiency (2010) describes BICS as the kind of language we use in informal conversations, whereas CALP is the language one needs so as to think abstractly and carry cognitive demanding tasks that are part of the school curriculum, also known as academic language. The BICS and CALP dissimilarity intends to give a robust explanation to the academic deficit of FAL learners, which in the context of the study is said to be created by their environments.

Dornyei (2004) suggests that motivation is one of the key factors influencing FAL learners because it provides the driving force for sustaining the long and often tiresome learning process. Motivation consists of factors such as the attached value of task, the rate of success expected by learners whether they believe they are competent enough to succeed and what they think to be the reason for their success or failure at the task (Dornyei and Ushioda, 2011). In view of this, motivation becomes a central point of departure towards learners' writing in FAL.

Writing is considered as one of the most critical skills at school because most assessment tasks require demonstration of competent learning through writing (Scott, 2006). Judging from the points discussed above, one can argue that the role of developing learners' writing skills lies with the schools. In the South African context, the majority of learners who are doing English FAL are from the environments or societies who have little or no understanding of English. That is why it becomes imperative that the socio- economic circumstances of the learners be taken into consideration when learners learn in their FAL (Sanchez and Paulson, 2007).

1.10 Methodology

1.10.1   Research Paradigm

A paradigm is a way of looking at the world and is composed of certain philosophical assumptions that guide and direct thinking and action as researchers perceive reality; hence, it represents what they think of the world (Mertens, 2010). The research paradigm that was chosen for the study guided the researcher on how to carry the investigation and in trying to comprehend the writing competency of Grade 12 learners. With that in mind, the study followed the interpretivist paradigm because that paradigm seeks to explore people's experiences and their views and perspectives of these experiences (Gary, 2009). Furthermore, the study relied on the views of the participants, as argued by (Creswell, 2003).Through the subjective views of the participants; the interpretive paradigm deduced knowledge which viewed the attitudes and experiences of all the respondents in relation to the FAL (English) writing competency of Grade 12 learners.

1.11 Research Approach

1.11.1   Qualitative approach

Having chosen the interpretive paradigm, the qualitative approach was useful for understanding learners' experiences. Maree (2007) defines qualitative research as fundamentally an interpretive inquiry process that is based on a naturalistic approach where a researcher develops a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, and reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting. Qualitative research approach that will be used in the study will allow the researcher to clarify the complexity of the participants' sociocultural histories and try to make meaning of it. The rationale for using qualitative approach was to find as much detail as possible on the EFAL writing competence of Grade 12 learners. Such information could only be understood in context, not through the use of numbers.

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1.12 Case Study Design

To get to an understanding of writing competency, the study focused on a particular case; which is Grade 12. That provided a good context as the case study is described by Yin (2003) as an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit such as an individual group, institution or community.

1.13 Sampling

The researcher purposely chose two Districts of education out of the 23 in the province. In purposive sampling the researcher hand picks the cases to be included in the study (Cohen et al., 2006).The study sampled two rural schools where EFAL is the LOLT of the learners. The schools were purposely selected because the dominant language in environments where they are located is isiXhosa. This means their LOLT which in the case of the study is English would be foreign to them. The choices of the cases were believed to be able to expose the EFAL writing challenges of the learners.

In terms of population, two EFAL teachers were chosen for the study because they were teaching of the target language. There was a variety of content subject teachers who were also sampled. That was done so as to get a variety of views on learners' writing difficulties or challenges. The following content subject teachers were sampled for the study; History, Mathematics, Business Studies, Economics and Maths Literacy. That was done to get a full representation of most subjects taught and written in learners' FAL. The four groups of Grade 12 learners would comprise of six members per group and all these learners are doing EFAL and study all other subjects in English.

1.14 Data Collection Instruments

In the study, the researcher solicited data by using the interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis.

1.14.1   Interviews

Yin (2003) argues that the semi-structured interviews allow the respondents to express themselves at some length and could provide what is inside the person's head. The researcher used the semi-structured interviews because they allowed the participants not to be confined to the question, the respondent were at liberty of asking probing questions. The interviews were tape-recorded to form part of this data for this study. The interviews were important to the study as they assisted the researcher in gaining insight on issues affecting Grade 12 writing competency.

1.14.2   Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussions with the learners were an essential data gathering tool in that the responses that would be provided about writing in FAL could present information that could be hard to get from the interviews. The power relationship between the researcher and the learners could stop them from telling exactly how they feel. Krueger and Casey (2009) define a focus group discussion as a carefully planned series of discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a non-threatening environment. The researcher needed to create a conducive atmosphere or environment for the participation of members in the groups. The schools which in this case were the places familiar to the respondents were used for data collection. The discussion was tape-recorded and transcribed. The data that was solicited through the Focus Group Discussions was essential in that, it provided in depth views from the learners about writing in EFAL.

1.14.3   Document analysis

1.14.3.1   Essays

According to Maree (2007), document analysis means focusing on all types of written material that could shed light on the studied phenomenon. Borg, Gall, M. and Gall, J

(2003) posit that qualitative researchers often study written communication found in natural settings as data sources. Document analysis is unobtrusive and non-reactive and can yield a lot of data about the values and beliefs of participants in their natural surrounding (Maree, 2007). Analysis of documents in this study complemented interviews and focus group discussions in the data collection process. The analysis of documents, since it was in a written form, helped to address questions which interviews could not answer and enlightened the researcher on some areas which needed clarification.

1.14.3.2   Free writing

Free writing could be perceived as writing which allows for free flow of one's thoughts and feelings without any resistance or without being conscious of grammar, spelling and style. Elbow (1973) argues that free writing should be done as a way of effectively improving writing and for better results, should be done regularly. The researcher employed free writing to allow learners write whatever they feel about the topics that they were given.

1.15 Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

The researcher tried to identify the themes from the data by using codes to express the identified themes (Ibrahim, 2012). Such themes were linked to the raw collected data to be summarized. The raw data was from the interviews, observation and focus group discussions. This code-related analysis assisted the researcher in grouping together categories of the data that was regarded as the same type under one umbrella theme.

1.16 Ethical Considerations

A researcher has an obligation to respect the rights of the respondents due to critical and sensitive information that is shared during data collection (Creswell, 2008). In

addition, Gearing (2004) asserts that the researcher should consider adhering strictly to ethical measure to ensure safety and rights of the participants.

The study was guided by the University guidelines on research policies. The researcher then had to go to the schools to seek permission from the principals, teachers and learners' parents so as to make appointments for the interviews. Such policies guided the researcher to be mindful of the rights of the respondents, for example when collecting data, respondents should not be forced to participate and that their names should remain off the record. The rights of the respondents were respected by the researcher. The respondents were not forced to participate in the study and anytime one who wanted to pull out would be granted to do so without any intimidation. The researcher also sought permission from the learners' parents to conduct the interviews since secondary school learners are still minors. The interviews that were conducted to the participants; teachers and learners to elicit data, required a lot of time which they set aside after the school hours. Names of all the participants were safeguarded by giving them codes and pseudonyms.

1.17 Reflexivity

Lambert, Jomeen and Mc Sherry (2010) define reflexivity as a process in qualitative research that allows for objectivity to flow through the research with the aim of reducing research bias. Gerrish and Lacey (2006) further concur by emphasizing that reflexivity is perceived as an integral process in qualitative research whereby the researcher continuously reflects on how his or her actions, values beliefs and experiences have an impact on the research and how they also affect data collection and analysis. Davies (2008) claims that researchers do not do research in isolation, at some degree, they are found connected with their research. From the statement above, the researcher is teaching EFAL in a rural school and would like to understand more about developing writing competency of the Grade 12 learners.

In the case of the study, the researcher who is an EFAL teacher saw reflexivity as befitting for the study. It assisted the researcher in reflecting on oneself and coming to

terms with the research problem and the respondents. In light of what is said, the researcher could be viewed as an insider in the study because she/he teaches the EFAL. Kahuna (2000) defines the insider in qualitative research as when researchers conduct research with population of which they are also members so that the researcher shares some identity and experience shared by the participants. This means the role status of the insider could repeatedly permit the researcher more rapid and complete acceptance by the participants. As a researcher, the case study to be explored would be the EFAL writing competency of Grade 12 learners in the rural schools. Since the research setting was in the subject that the researcher teaches, she/he collected data as an insider. Her/his role was then different from that of a researcher alone in that the researcher was carrying the research from within, but professionally trying not to be an integral part. Given that the researcher is the EFAL teacher, and was related to the study, it was proper for her to bracket herself to avoid bias. Tufford and Newman (2010) define bracketing in qualitative research as suspending judgment about what you already know exist in the world and focusing on analysis of the psychological involvement. Furthermore, Asselin (2003) asserts that with the insider research, participants might be willing to share their experiences because they will be having an assumption that the researcher understands them meaning he or she is one of them.

In some instances where the researcher had to collect data from the content subject teachers, assumed the status of an outsider. The researcher does not understand the content subjects taught in English. Being an outsider in the social setting afforded the researcher with a wider scope to position himself or herself back and abstract material from the research experience (Hellawell, 2006).The outside researcher is not familiar with the setting and the people she/he was researching on and as a result was able to produce research that provided an objective view or reality.

1.18 Outline of Thesis Chapters

The study consists of six chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: The problem and the setting

This chapter will discuss the background of the study where concerns about Grade 12 learners' writing competency are raised. This section will further discusses the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, and it also presents the research questions, theoretical framework where the study will be framed, the literature review. The objectives, assumptions, significance and limitations of the study are also discussed in this section. Also the methodology that will be employed in the study is discussed.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter discusses socio-cultural theory from which the study will be framed. It also discusses literature on issues such as: second language learning, second language acquisition, constructivism, ecological influence on language learning and motivation for second language learning.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter will present and justify the research methodology used in the study. It also discusses the philosophical assumptions underlying various methodologies and the one which the study is placed. The research design, population and sampling procedures, research instruments used to collect data and ethical considerations will be discussed also.

Chapter 4: Data presentation; analysis and interpretation

In this chapter, the researcher will present and analyse all the data collected through questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis.

Chapter 5: Discussion of findings

This chapter will discuss the findings of the research. The discussion in this section will include the comparison of the findings with data found in the literature. The objective of

this chapter is to bring the findings into the fold of the existing knowledge in the writing competency of Grade 12 learners in rural public schools.

Chapter 6: Summary, conclusions, and recommendations

This chapter will give the summary of the findings in relation to the problem, the methods used to reach the findings and how they relate to the research questions. It will also include conclusions and recommendations reached and their implications for the policy makers and further research required in the area will conclude the chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter demonstrates how the theories selected could be relevant to rural secondary schools' Grade 12 learners' writing competency. The study reviewed a number of theories as one theory could not accomplish all that could be entailed in FAL writing competency. The chapter also focuses on related literature collected on major methods/approaches concerning writing. The reviewed literature paved the pathway that made it possible for the researcher to have an insight into what other researchers have written on learners writing.

Teaching and learning in a foreign language has been and continues to be a subject to different viewpoints. If one could follow the globalization trend, one would discover that English dominates the education landscape as a LoLT. It has been used in the African context as an official language since it was the coloniser's language. Considering the use of a foreign language as a LoLT, a theoretical framework is imperative for the comprehension of how learning takes place and how learners cope with writing.

The literature is reviewed on issues such as; the relationship between language and culture, ecological approach to language learning, language learning, second language acquisition and acquiring second language in the classroom (BICS and CALP). Specific South African language policies like; the constitution, South African Schools Act (SASA), Language in Education Policy (LiEP) and Norms and standards Act were reviewed. Furthermore, the researcher reviewed literature on teaching and learning EFAL and also motivation for second language learning. The literature on writing using EFAL which includes; approaches to educational writing, writing strategies, curriculum cycle on writing and some obstacles on writing are reviewed in this section.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Theoretically, the study is structured within Lin's(2013) framework which advocates that, from a socio-cultural perspective, learners' cognitive processes are influenced by the interaction and social environments. This means, the interdependence of cognitive learning and sociocultural activities entail that learning does not take place in emptiness; it is constructed by the learners and their immediate and broader sociocultural circumstances. In his theory of sociocultural learning, Vygotsky (1962) identified language as a symbolic system through which people communicate and also a tool where history and culture are transmitted. Vygotsky also emphasized that social interaction plays a vital role in internalizing the process of language acquisition. In view of this, learners' language learning is mediated by the more knowledgeable members of the society (Vygotsky, 1987). In addition, Brunner (1986) suggests the idea of scaffolding where learners can receive a kind of assistance in their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) from other society members more experienced and knowledgeable than them. This builds from Vygotsky's (1934) notion that the ZPD is the area between the level of the child's actual development and the level of potential development; meaning a place where instruction should be focused so as to focus the greatest learning gain for each learner. Learners' exposure and interaction with others is the critical element of their educational growth in that their journey to language learning would be constructed by being aided or supported by their peers, teachers, families and societies. Wang (2006) is of the opinion that learning is rooted in social events and happens when a child interacts with the people, objects and events in the learning environment. In the worldview of social constructivism, individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences. Levy and Stockwell (2006) argue in favour of considering adopting sociocultural theories when examining language in that they offer theoretical perspectives which view language as a social practice and consider learners as participants in constructing their learning that assist in investigating how different factors involved in the process of learning interact.

It should be noted that English is no longer foreign in South Africa but in the context of the study, it is viewed as foreign or additional because participants in the study who

employ English in their academic writing are not English Home Language speakers. To them English is the LoLT, hence is could be treated as a foreign language. In the South African context, the attempt by the constitution that strives for the promotion of the country's 11 languages could be perceived as posing more challenges because the target participants-the learners, find it difficult to become competent in multilingualism (Howie et al, 2012). Viewing the hegemonic nature of English, EFAL learners should be afforded with the opportunity to actively participate in class and assisted to becoming autonomous learners (Foncha and Sivasubramaniam, 2014).

Grade 12 learners in most rural schools use English in formal conditions because it is the school LoLT. To understand the writing competency of the learners whose LoLT is English, the sociocultural context of such learners should be key or taken into consideration. Having known that the learners display the best of their abilities when engaging on activities that they could socially relate to, the researcher sees befitting that the study should employ the sociocultural theory. This theoretical framework could challenge the existing language policies which envisage the same results for all EFAL learners, without considering individual school sociocultural circumstances. Also, employing the sociocultural theory in the study could afford the researcher with the opportunity to examine or investigate FAL learning as a social practice involving learners who participate actively in the learning process.

The perception of the LiEP is for the promotion of additive Bilingualism in all SA schools irrespective of the learners' circumstances. It further envisages that if the learners are fully developed in their Home Language, they could be competent in their FAL. The study seeks to investigate the validity and reliability of such claims as not the only benchmarks which could measure the EFAL learners' competency, but highlight that even the sociocultural backgrounds of rural learners have an impact in acquiring their LoLT.In view of the above argument on sociocultural impact on language learning, the researcher felt it necessary to look at the role culture plays in language learning.

2.2.1 Relationship between language and culture

Language learning could be viewed as co-construction through people's interaction with others taking place within a sociocultural context (Vygotsky, 1978).This means, language cannot be learnt in isolation for it is embedded within social events in the environment. By emphasizing the sociocultural nature of language learning, one is trying to put emphasis on the fact that language learning should not only be considered as merely a process of cognitive acquisition where linguistic rules should be taught and learnt (Mitchell and Myles, 2004). If language learning is regarded as involving social practices, it provides an understanding of language as dynamic and which is continually and constantly evolving and very personal because it contains rich complexities of communication (Brock-Utne, 2007). It is through language that people see, understand and communicate about anything where one uses his or her language. Foncha (2013) asserts that there is a need to see language as a social construct requiring an understanding of issues of identity and culture. This implies that it is through language that learners' culture and identity are embodied.

Learning a new language involves the use of vocabulary and grammatical rules of that language in order to communicate with speakers of that language (Nel and Muller, 2010). This understanding of language sees language as social practice in which people participate and construct meaning. If language is a social practice of meaning making and interpretation, language learners need not to know only vocabulary and grammatical rules but also how that language can be employed in creating and representing meanings, thus promoting communication amongst them (Svalberg,2007). The manner in which educators understand language has an effect on what happens inside their classrooms; particularly on the ways learners begin to understand the relationship between their own languages and the LoLT. In understanding the notion of language as social practice, and seeing language as having power to make meaning and assist in interpretation, educators need to provide learners with opportunities to engage beyond what they already know or have experienced (Svalberg, 2007). He

further argues that such learners require learning skills which can promote independence as users of language.

In view of this, Nel and Muller (2010) state that central to the process of learning another language, is to understand the relation that exists between language and culture. They further observe that the language in its cultural context creates meaning and interpretation which can be carried on within a cultural framework. This promotes the notion that the culture in which the meaning is communicated and the learners' culture both impact on the manner in which meanings are comprehended. The context for communicating and interpreting meaning is not contained in a single culture as both the target language and culture together with the learners' language and culture are being presented concurrently. It becomes imperative when learning to communicate in an additional language to develop awareness of the ways in which culture interrelates with language (Svalberg, 2007). Hence, Foncha (2013: 15) comes to conclusion that language learning is a very crucial factor in the skills and knowledge transfer process which are meditated through the written and spoken words and should also be viewed as a "contextualized and socially constituted activity".

At this point, it is crucial to focus on the interpretation of the Activity theory by Vygotsky (1978). According to Vygotsky, human beings use their involvement with activities in a bid to construct their social histories which include their culture, history, environment and other complexities of their real life. That brings forth a notion that the Activity Theory makes a distinction between internal and external activities of a human being and postulates that the internal and external human activities have mutual variations as a result should not be analysed in isolation (Engestrom, Miettinen and Punakaki (2003). The Activity Theory is could be viewed as an appropriate example of language learning theory for the context of the study because the theory from which the study is framed, envisages that learners' cognitive processes are influenced by their sociocultural activities. This could be interpreted as what takes place in their environments has an influence towards how they learn their language.

Hare and Gillet (1994) identify the behaviourist and syntactical paradigmswhere languages can best be understood. These paradigms can become essential in the study because they outline a clear demonstration on how the human mind functions and how it could in any given environment assist in the construction of meaning. In simpler terms, for a person to achieve communication competence in a given language, there is a stern need for one to understand the structure of that language before being able to utilize it in any context (Sivasubramaniam, 2011). At this juncture, it can be argued that cognition becomes essential and as such, should be seen as a social practice not being the language master. Behaviourist and syntactical theories could better assist in the understanding of howthe activity theory relates to language learning. Both theories are scientifically positioned. In light of their scientific posture, they attempted theorizing cognition as a cause-effect relationship on the basis of predicting and reorganization (Sivasubramaniam, 2011). What stems from the two approaches is the fact that language issues cannot be viewed as quantifiable and controllable objects due to its dynamic and non-static nature. Such approaches can be examined as taking a social creativity feature of a language.

In light of the above argument, a need arises for embarking on a socially aligned and socioculturally sensitive understanding of second language competency among rural learners. For the study to be understood since it is context based, it should be perceived as one in which participants (in this case, learner) in their individuality engage in their unique human activities. To get a better understanding of the sociocultural effects on second language learning, it is needful to understand thecentral concepts of sociocultural theory namely; mediation, the ZPD and scaffolding.

2.2.1.1 Mediation

Lantof (2000) defines mediation as a role played by other significant or important people in learners' lives. These people are responsible for enhancing learners' learning by choosing and outlining the learning experiences presented to them. Wang (2006) concurs that mediation represents the usage of tools (which sees language as the most

significant tool), referring to the objects which are adopted in an attempt to achieve a goal or solve a problem. In this context, language is used as a very significant tool by the participants, so as to promote thinking and encourage cooperative construction of meaning (Vygotsky, 1978; Sivasubramaniam, 2011 and Foncha 2013). Given such responsibility to language, Vygotsky (1978) emphasises that effective language learning depends on the nature of social interaction between people with different levels of knowledge. It might be through the promotion of this notion that learners may be assisted to move into and through the next level of knowledge.

From a different perspective, Breen (2001) views social interaction and cultural institutions as playing crucial roles in the cognitive development of learners. It is through this interpretation that mediation should be viewed as a social instrument responsible for bringing in cognitive development. Thus, language should be seen as a meditational tool that a child acquires knowledge through interactions, which is emphasized in the sociocultural theories. Vygotsky (1978) claims that the first step to acquiring knowledge by a child is through contact and interaction at a social level, then later internalizes and assimilates the knowledge adding to it his or her personal values. By so doing, itbecomes a transformation of what has been learnt through interaction to form personal values. In a school or classroom context, learners need to transform what was taught during the process of learning and teaching because the process of meditation takes the form of instruction, textbooks, and visual resources. In emphasizing the importance of social interaction in language learning, Ellis (2000) and Sivasubramaniam (2011) both state that mediation as a social practice can happen between an educator and the learners. This can become evident once the learners succeed in performing a given task being assisted by their educator, and then theycan internalize the task in such a way that they are able to perform it independently. It is in this mode that the results ofmediating learning through social interaction are exhibited.

2.2.1.2 The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Having discussed how essential mediation is in language learning, it becomes equally important to link it with another sociocultural concept called the ZPD. Donato (2000) claims that it has crucial repercussions in assisting learners to learn. The ZPD is defined by Vygotsky (1978:86) as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under the adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers". In light of the quotation, one gets to understand that learning can occur when assistance is offered at the points where performance requires assistance. Also, to understand what is contained in the aforementioned quotation, it is useful to interpret the term 'adult guidance' as assistance by an educator, guardian and parents. This kind of interpretation can encourage the understanding of the variety of assistances that can be given to learners by educators, guardians and parents as they engage in the process of teaching and learning.

In the context of language learning, it might be viewed as describing a child's development through interaction with more experienced people. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Mitchel and Myles (2004) view the ZPD as the area of skills or knowledge where the learner is not yet ready for independent functioning, but through relevant backing can achieve the desired purpose. It should be noted from the above definitions that different forms of social assistance like help from other people, modelling and the feedback are all contained in the ZPD, whose importance is still applicable to the secondary school learners. The ZPD enables educators to come to terms with the fact that all learners have the potential and therefore need to be treated as being able to offer to their learning or studies new valuable knowledge which can encompass a substantial contribution on the themes or subjects under discussion in their classrooms.

2.2.1.3 Interaction

Noteworthy is Vygotsky's (1978) emphasis on the role played by interaction between people and their environments that assist in stimulating learner's learning in their ZPD by internalizing the process and ultimately constructing development. This in uncomplicated terms means that social factors are as crucial in stimulating learning in the ZPD as they are in mediation. In the same vein, Mitchel and Myles (2004) stress sequencing in learning with a joint sociocultural view where social interaction happens before the individual learning. They point out that all learning is seen as social or inter-mental, then as individual or intra-mental. Furthermore, it can be concluded that it is within the ZPD that the construction and interaction with more capable or experienced people; that learners are equipped with sociocultural activities in a bid to develop their language.

Sociocultural theories declare that learning occurs when there is provision of assistance in the ZPD (Wang, 2006).In view of this; the ZPD maintains that there is some knowledge and skills that learners cannot yet perform but are in the good standing to learn with guidance. Some support mechanism therefore needs to be employed as alternative means that can allow learners reach their potential performance (Mitchel and Myles, 2004).

To concur, Donato (1994) refers to the metaphor of scaffolding which is described as a social interaction in which a more knowledgeable person can create, using language and supportive conditions in which the learner can competently participate in and extend knowledge to a high level. In the educational context, what happens in scaffolding is that educators model the desired learning task then gradually and responsibly move away from the learners. Taking the notion of scaffolding forward, McKenzie (1999) opines that it provides the following:

- ➢ It provides a clear route to the learners,
- ➢ learners are kept focused on the task,
- ➢ assessment is offered to clarify the expectations,
- ➢ learners are guided to valuable sources.
- ➢ It minimizes uncertainty and misunderstanding,

> delivers or provides efficiency and,

> also creates a positive drive.

From the above mentioned advantages of scaffolding, Donato (1994) views it as the position taken by an experienced individual or educator towards continued revision in trying to respond to the emerging capabilities of learners. If more errors are committed, and very limited capabilities are continually displayed by learners, that becomes a signal enough for the adults to improve the scaffolding (McKenzie, 1999). This means that it is only when learners begin to take on more responsibility for their given tasks that the educator or experienced person should split up the scaffold. That is then an indication that the learners have benefited from the assistance provided previously. Donato (1994) stresses his strong belief on scaffolding by advocating that educators should try as much as they can to provide scaffolding to their learners so as to help them in internalizing what might have been taught to them.

2.2.1.4 Exposure to the Second Language

Social interaction is perceived as a vehicle for second language acquisition since language is a system of mediating all social activities (Daweti, 1999). Exposure to second language is of paramount importance because its ranges of meanings exist which are largely unstructured and which at the end can become difficult for understanding by the non-native learners of the target language. Brown (2005) argues that contextualization, appropriate and meaningful communication in second language all serve as best possible practices for non-native speakers to engage with the goal and competence in their second language. Although second language learning can take place in a monolingual setting, it is also viewed appropriate and speedy to learn a second language where there is some degree of contact with second language speakers (Daweti, 1999). Munoz (2000) emphasises that in a context with little exposure, attainment of second language might be very slow. Second language learners need exposure to second language activities and opportunities so that they can

practice the language because it could not only be learned by listening from the teachers, they also need practice (Brown, 2005).

Mackay (1999) asserts that conversational interaction is able to facilitate second language development by encouraging active participation in conversation. He further warns that if learners' competence in second language is not practiced regularly, it can diminish especially when they do not have occasions to use it. Such exposure can be promoted by print rich classrooms, exposure to story books at home and audiotapes. Baker et al. (2000) are of the view that exposure to second language learning is essential because most vocabulary learning happens naturally when learners attempt to comprehend newly found words that they have heard or read. This is what they term incidental learning since it was not the main focus or target of the activity. They also observe that repeated exposure to a story presentation can contribute positively to learners' vocabulary growth.

2.2.2 The ecological approach to language learning

The above discussions appear to accommodate the relevance of the Ecological perspective to language in the study. It looks at language as being embedded within the sociocultural features of our day-to-day living. It should be noted in this regard that language is not perceived as just grammatical rules, instead as an apparatus or instrument which is a portrait of any culture. From that premise, both Sivasubramaniam (2011) and Foncha (2013) complement each other by arguing that the ecological approach to language learning could be seen as having the power to contradict the supremacy of attaching scientific thinking to language learning. They both view the ecological approach to language learning as having the potential of uniting numerous well established views of language learning. An ecological approach to language learning maintains that learning cannot be based on the processes that happen inside the brain only, but take into consideration the ability and social involvement of a learner which can be displayed in his or her interactions for meaning making, which in this context can serve as means of learning (Foncha, 2013).

This viewpoint could lead to the argument brought forth by van Lier (2000) that the nature of language is perceived as both representational (schematic, historic and cultural) and also ecological (perceptual and action based). This means that the ecological approach allocates the learners' environment and social activities as central to the learners' knowledge and meaning making. The views articulated above are seen as complementing the sociocultural theory where the study is premised.

The theories discussed above could assist learning in the EFAL classroom. The fact that they outline the existence of the relationship between language and culture demonstrates that in reality every language is socially and culturally embeddedand therefore should not be taught and learnt without recognising the two factors. It becomes imperative that there should be a shift from the scientific eye of language learning to accommodate the sociocultural perspective. If that paradigm shift could be put into practice when teaching skills like writing in, it could yield positive results to the learners whose Home Language is not their FAL. Such learners depend on the guidance by their EFAL educators to acquiring good writing skills.

Having discussed the relationship between language and culture as put into perspective by the researchers or theorists, it becomes imperative to look at the role language plays in the learning process.

2.3 Language as an Object of Study

The role of language in learning cannot be over-emphasized since languageis the prime source that everyone has and have to use to mediate learning (Broadfoot, 2005). During the process of language learning, educators and learners are working with language simultaneously as an object of study and as a LoLT. In defining language, CAPS (2011) states that a language is a tool for thought and communication. It is through language that cultural diversity and social relations are expressed and constructed. Learning to use a language effectively can enable the learners to think and acquire knowledge, express their identity, feelings and ideas, and interact with others and to manage their world.

Mothata et al. (2000) assert that the South African system of education has the foundation of the past and the present because prior to the democracy, English and Afrikaans were the only official languages as well as the only languages used as media of instruction in secondary schools. Currently, there are eleven official languages; still English and Afrikaans are the only media of instruction used in secondary schools. English attains the national status because it is a language that is used to link all cultures in South Africa. It is envisaged by the Constitution of South Africa that all learners should be fluent in at least two of the eleven languages. Language is the means through which we interpret, organise and access our world. It is also the means through which we communicate ideas, feelings and thoughts. Little (2004:106) defines language as:

- the chief means through which we think all language activities, in whatever language, are exercises in thinking
- the vehicle through which knowledge is acquired and organized
- a central factor in the growth of the learner's personality and
- one of the chief means through which societies and cultures organise themselves and culture is transmitted.

A child's language development forms an integral part of his total learning and becoming. A child soon discovers that language is not only a means of communication but that it attributes meaning to objects, things and situations that he or she comes across in life. Thoughts in symbolic form can be cast in the form of language and concepts serve as bearers of thoughts and ideas and the deepest feelings are expressed in language form (Potgieter, 1997). This means, what a child feels, sees and thinks, is in a form of a symbol that can be described or expressed using a language.

Little (2004) claims that the better the language development of the child, the better his learning progress at school, because the task required of the child remains inseparable from language. If the child masters the language, his/her understanding of learning any subject matter may become better. Meaningful learning can be assisted by sound language development. In this sense every educator is a language teacher. The South African Schools Act (SASA) (1996) recognizes the importance of teaching languages at

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school. This is also confirmed by the time allocated for language learning which is equivalent to those of essential subjects. The table below indicates time allocated for the NCS subjects:

SUBJECTS	TIME ALLOCATION, HOURS PER WEEK
Home Language	4.5 hrs
First Additional Language	4.5 hrs
Mathematics or Mathematics Literacy	4.5 hrs
Life Orientation	2.0 hrs
Group B subjects 3X4 hours	12.0 (3x4h) v
TOTAL	27.5 hrs per week

Table 2-1: Table illustrating CAPS instructional time for Grades 10-12 (DBE, 2011:7)

The inclusion of languages in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), as well as in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) is governed by the national policy in the form of the Language in Education Policy (1997) and Norms and Standards for Languages (1999) that stipulate that all learners must receive tuition in at least two official languages until the end of Grade 12. The DBE asserts that the range of literacies

needed for effective participation in society and the work place in the global economy of the twenty first century has expanded beyond listening, speaking, reading, writing and oral traditions to include various forms such as media, graphic, computer, cultural and critical literacy. The inclusion of language in the curriculum is to prepare learners towards the challenges they may face as South Africans and as members of the global community.

The purpose of the Department of Education (DoE) is to promote additive multilingualism. This means that learners must learn additional languages while maintaining and developing their home language at a high level. Bilingual education would make it possible for the learners to transfer skills such as reading, writing and speaking acquired from the language which they are most proficient into their additional language (DBE, 2011). The CAPS (2011) claims that teaching learners a language can lead to careers such as translation, language teaching, marketing and advertising.

Language learning is perceived as central to the growth of learners and also a means through which societies are organized and cultures, transmitted. Furthermore, if the learners' language could be fully developed, that could increase the chances of meaningful learning (Little, 2004). In aiding the promotion of additive bilingualism, it becomes imperative that the skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening be fully developed in the learners' HL so that it becomes easy to transfer them to their FAL. In view of the above, considering language as an object of study, it becomes essential for the study to take a stock in a bid to examine the theories that the researchers perceive as entailing in the process of language learning.

2.4 Language Learning

Many theories have been proposed on how children learn a language. On his theory of behaviour, Skinner as cited by Lighthouse (2010) is of the opinion that children learn language through imitation. Schutz (2004) a social developmental theorist emphasizes the importance of natural, communicative and experiential approaches to language learning. He also emphasized that human interaction plays an important role in the

cognition in children, that children's language learning is supported and mediated by more knowledgeable members of the society. Vygotsky (1986) also proposed what he termed the zone of proximal development(ZPD) which is the gap between what an individual can do on their own and what they are able to do with the help of the more knowledgeable others. Bruner (1986) suggested the idea of scaffolding where learners will receive a kind of assistance in their zone of proximal development by someone more knowledgeable. Once the learner has been helped by the more knowledgeable other, in this context, the educator, the scaffolding can be partially removed and learners could be able to accomplish their goals on their own.

Wadsworth (1978) who studied how children learned concepts and concluded that children learn through experience, through discovering things for themselves and this process starts from birth and followed predicted biological stages. He also claimed that children build up increasingly complex mental pictures called schemata or concepts of how things work, through their experience and interaction with the environment. What Piaget had proposed was that learning is a process of an individual interaction with the world and in so doing confirm or reshape their internalized view of the world. Wadsworth (1978) also claims that although Piaget's theories applied to learning, they had a profound influence on education theories and methods. He quotes Piaget as having the following to say about education:

> *The principal goal about education is to create men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply of repeating what other generations have done-men who are creative, inventive and discoverers. The second goal of education is to form minds which can be critical, can verify and not accept everything they are offered. The great danger of today is of slogans, collective opinions, and ready-made trends of thoughts. We have to be able to resist individually, to criticize, and to distinguish between what is proven and what is not. So we need pupils who are active, who learn early to find out by themselves, partly by their own spontaneous activity and partly through materials we set up for them: who learn* early *to tell what is verifiable and what is simply the first idea to come to them (Wadsworth, 1978: 36).*

Another language theorist Chomsky, argued that human beings have an innate capacity to learn a language based on the view that only human beings have this unique inborn capacity which he termed a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) (Chid, 1981). He believes that the most convincing evidence for the innateness to language acquisition is the fact that children can speak their home language without any formal instruction. It is to him logical to conclude that LAD allows learners to learn any language they are exposed to because language rules come to children naturally irrespective of their levels of intelligence and cultural backgrounds.

On EFAL to the second language learners, it becomes essential for the educators to communicate with the learners in the target language (English) frequently so as to help the learners acquire the language. In so doing, educators need to act as what Schultz (2004) term as the more knowledgeable others. Bruner (1986) suggested scaffolding meaning that educators should assist learners in acquiring English. Wadsworth (1978) claims that children learn concepts through experiences where educators need to share how they expose their learners to the English language through writing in an attempt to assist them to acquire the language and later exhibit competency.

Having discussed the general theories on language learning, the researcher understood as most fitting to include in the study the theories that pertain to Second language acquisition, anticipating that they could shed light towards understanding some aspects of learning in the second language.

2.4.1 Second Language Acquisition

"Second language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules and does not require tedious drill. Acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language-natural communication-in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the message they are conveying and understanding" (Johnson, 2001:103)

Theories of second language acquisition have strongly influenced the approaches and methods of teaching English as a second language. English Second Language

generally refers to a situation where English is a language of broader communication in the country concerned (Johnson, 2001). In the South African context, although English is used by the minority, most schools even those in the rural areas use it as a LoLT.

Krashen (1982) developed a theory of Second Language Acquisition which later had a strong influence on second language teaching approaches and methods. He based his theories on the way that children naturally learn their first language. He proposed the following five hypotheses:

2.4.1.1 The acquisition –learning distinction

According to Krashen (1982), there are two independent systems of second language performance: the acquired system and the learned system. The acquired system or acquisition is a product of subconscious process similar to the process that children undergo when they acquire their first language. Schutz (2007) argues that a second language is acquired unconsciously through real communication in a way similar to the way that children will acquire their first language. It is that acquired language that enables a person to speak or write fluently without thinking directly about language rules. In this sense, it becomes a social practice.

Krashen (1982) also claims that when a focus of learners is on meaningful communication, then they can consciously acquire knowledge of the grammar. The knowledge may be largely implicit so that learners may be aware that an utterance sounded correct or incorrect but would not be able to say exactly what rule was being applied. To him knowledge about language does not help learners to use language fluently. The learned system or learning is the product of formal instruction and it comprises a conscious process which results in conscious knowledge about the language for example learning of poetic devices or grammatical rules. He also claims that learning and knowing grammatical rules or all about the language does not help learners use the language fluently (Crystal, 1997). The distinction he makes between language acquisition and learning is that acquisition is informal learning of the language

(social practice) and learning is formal learning of the language (knowing the language and its rules).

2.4.1.2 Natural order hypothesis

In this hypothesis, Krashen suggests that the acquisition of grammatical structure follows a natural order which is predictable, for example, a second language learner is likely to acquire the progressive –*ing* ending and plural –*s* before they acquire the regular past tense and third person singular –*s.* For a given language, some grammatical structures tend to be acquired early while others late. Crystal (1997) alludesto Krashen's natural order hypothesis by emphasizing that second language learners make very similar errors at different stages as they progress towards more accurate language use. He further argues that this order seemed to be independent of the learner's age, first language background and conditions of exposure. Krashen also points out that the implication of the natural order hypothesis is not that a language programme should be based on the order found in the studies; he rejects grammatical sequencing when the goal is language acquisition.

2.4.1.3 The monitor hypothesis

Krashen (1996) suggests that acquisition and learning are used in different ways. He claims that it is implicit acquired knowledge that gives rise to fluent production of language and the explicit learned knowledge about language is used only to monitor language production just before or after it happens. He suggests that second language performers are only able to use the monitor when they have enough time to think about conscious rules which is not usually possible in conversations when they are focusing on language form rather than meaning and when they know the rule.

2.4.1.4 The input hypothesis

Schutz (2007) suggests that this hypothesis is Krashen's attempt to explain how the learner acquires a second language and- how second language acquisition takes place. The input is only concerned about acquisition not learning. Krashen claims that language is acquired when learners receive a lot of meaningful and comprehensible language input through listening and reading which is slightly beyond their existing level of understanding. He says the learner will acquire new language structures that are beyond their existing level of understanding if they are given more material to read and extra linguistic support such as visual aids and gestures to make more meaning. A second language educator can also provide a variety of language support like speaking slowly to help learners understand the meaning of the text, a print rich classroom, role play and film review. The communication or conversations should contain language that is familiar and add some new vocabulary for the learners.

Since not all learners can be at the same level of linguistic competence at the same time, Krashen suggests that the natural communicative input is the key to designing a syllabus, ensuring in this way that each learner will receive some input that is appropriate for his or her current stage of linguistic competence. Ellis (1988) agrees by arguing that comprehensible input which refers to meaningful oral or written language somewhat above their current level of understanding allows for acquisition of grammar and vocabulary, makes exposure to additional input more comprehensible. He also claims that mere exposure to grammatical rules is not sufficient.Teachers should try to ask students to understand the meaning not to reproduce it.

It is in the interest of the researcher to seek ways in which the EFAL educators adjust their language level so that it contains language that is familiar and new to the learners.In so doing, the researcher envisages that what the educators will   instruct the learners to write about, could be easily comprehended and written in simpler FAL.

2.4.1.5 The affective filter hypothesis

In this hypothesis Krashen is of the view that a number of affective variables play a facilitative, but non casual role in second language acquisition. He claims that if second language learners are motivated, self-confident and they have low levels of anxiety, they are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. To him, if learners are anxious, then their affective filter will be high and that will prevent them from acquiring a language effectively, if learners are anxious or their emotions are negatively disturbed, language acquisition is not easy.

Gibbons (1991) cites another theorist on second language acquisition, Cummins, as having the view that learners whose knowledge of their first language is not well developed, will find it difficult to acquire a second language. Cummins (2000) assert that second language acquisition is most effective when a learner's first language is adequately developed in terms of reading, speaking, listening and writing.

Coelho (2004) explores this notion by suggesting that EFAL learners should not be plunged into learning a second language before they have learned to decode several discreet language skills in their first language. Specific literacy skills and concepts must have been mastered in their first language in order to transfer them to their second language (Cummins, 2000).

Cummins, is of the view that learning in an additional language should involve a focus on meaning (reading), focus on language (structure) and focus on use (writing) (Coelho, 2004). Cummins suggests that a focus on meaning should go beyond learners just understanding the literal meaning of the text, but learners should also be able to relate the meaning in the text to their own experience, they should be able to question the ideas in the text and be able to respond critically to the text. A focus on language should focus on the formal features of the language or the structure or rules of the language and how language is used to make meaning, but also to explore the relationship between language and power. For example, how some languages have more power or how a language can be used to persuade others. A focus on use should

involve learners in writing for authentic purposes and audiences about issues that are important to them.

Note should be taken of the fact that in the South African context, learning of the home language is very imperative because it is believed to provide a sound foundation for learning additional languages (DBE, 2011). This is in line with Cummins's point of view that it is easy to acquire the second language when learners have adequately developed their first language. The EFAL Grade 10-12 CAPS document contains four Language skills namely; Listening and Speaking, Reading and Viewing, Writing and Presenting, and Language structures and conventions which are taught in the context of the afore mentioned skills and as part of language development programme (CAPS, 2011). All the learning skills have content that collectively describe what learners should know and be able to know.

In view of the above arguments, it becomes essential to have a look at what actually happens in the EFAL classroom as learners attempt to learn in their FAL.

2.4.2 Acquiring Language in the Classroom

Webb et al. (2010) are of the opinion that it is through language that affective and social development is mediated, it follows that the higher the development of learners' linguistic skills, the higher is their ability to acquire, to process and to use information. High level skills of command which involve these acquired abilities may include the ability to understand and produce academic texts, the ability to compare and explain phenomenon, to define and to reason at abstract levels, and the sociolinguistic knowledge which is the appropriate way of referring to informal texts. It should be considered that wide vocabulary and complex grammatical structures are some of the linguistic skills required for educational development. The ability to integrate new knowledge into existing knowledge and selecting information for problem- solving requires highly developed language cognitive skills. Competency in a language is a factor that shows the extent to which the language has been understood by the learner and forms part of his/her cognitive scheme. It is the ability to apply specific processing

in problem identifiable cognitive demands. Cummins (2000) asserts that knowing a language does not only mean demonstrating grammatical competence but also the ability to use the grammar correctly and in the appropriate situations.

Gibbons (1991) distinguishes between what she terms as the playground language and the classroom language. According to her, the playground language involves the language which the children use to maintain and develop social contacts in their daily activities including games. In such a language, fluency becomes vital in that if not, a child could find oneself isolated from the normal social life. The classroom language is what teachers are expected to teach in the classroom which is associated with higher order skills. That language is used to teach subjects like History, Mathematics, Geography and other school subjects.

Cummins (2000) also proposes a framework for thinking and talking about language in the classroom. He describes language proficiency in a continuum from conversational language, Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) to academic language, Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). Carter and Courtney (2010) describe BICS as the kind of language we use when we are talking face to face or when talking on the phone. It is informal language and just a form of basic communication and a language of social interaction. It is immediately apparent when the person we are speaking to does not understand, it can be repeated, rephrased and use other strategies to communicate and negotiate the meaning effectively.

Gibbons (1991) gives a description of CALP as academic language proficiency that one needs to think in abstract ways and to carry on cognitively demanding tasks that form part of the school curriculum, or academic language. Cummins (2000) argues that CALP is the kind of language that is needed for academic learning not strongly supported by context; it is more abstract e.g. reading a book or writing an essay. In this situation, the persons communicating are most often separated by space and time.

Cummins (2000) has also claimed that it takes the second language learners approximately two years to achieve conversational fluency (BICS) at the level of their peers. He also claims that it takes much longer, approximately five to seven years for

learners to achieve academic language proficiency (CALP). There could be two reasons for such major differences that are found in the length of time required to attain the level of conversational and academic skills. It needs to be understood that, firstly, considerable less knowledge of a language is usually required to function appropriately in the interpersonal communicative situations than is required to function in academic situations. Learner's social expectations and sensitivity and interpersonal cues or signals such as facial expression, eye contact and intonation play a huge part in facilitating meaning in communication. By pointing at objects, using head nods or hand gestures and intonation, learners could receive plenty of clues which could assist them in the comprehension of the message. Such social signals are not present in most academic situations that only depend on the knowledge of the language itself for completion of a given task, successfully.

Secondly, it should be noted that a major goal for schooling for all children is to expand their ability to manipulate language and increasingly abstract academic context. It is for this reason that the English native speakers could not be standing still waiting for the English language learners to understand the language and catch up with them. Cummins (2001) stresses the fact that every year English L1 learners gain more expansion of their vocabulary and grammatical knowledge and increase their literacy skills. In other words, English second language learners should catch up with a moving target which is a task that cannot be completed in one or two years.

Although some learners may appear to be fluent in their second language, this does not necessarily mean that they will achieve well academically, as their academic language skills may not have developed sufficiently. It is the language associated with higher order thinking skills such as hypothesizing, evaluating, inferring, generalizing, predicting or classifying that are related to learning and are required for academic tasks across the curriculum.

Vygotsky (1986) believes that in language learning a special role should be ascribed to the development of writing because unlike speaking, writing should be taught. Manyike and Lemmer (2010) concur with Vygotsky by asserting that as learners move to senior classes, their writing becomes more complex and subject related. That means, the

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variety of subjects the learners are exposed to require writing specific genres coupled with some particular characteristics. Each school subject carries with it different perspectives which are embedded in the terminology of that particular subject (Schleppegrell and de Oliviera, 2006). For the learners to be able to deal with that, their competency in their FAL or LoLT should be highly ordered; on CALP level-and should be able to support their achievement in these subjects through writing which allows for their progression to the next grade.

In conclusion, Cummins claims that second language learners can acquire language and content most successfully when they are challenged cognitively but provided with contextual and linguistic support.

2.5 S.A. Language Policies

The advent of democracy in South Africa (S.A.) advocated for the recognition of eleven official languages. These languages include; Setswana, SePedi, SeSotho, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, IsiNdebele, siSwati, Afrikaans and English. A Language Task Group which had a mandate of establishing the language needs of the country was established by the government. The change that occurred in the South African language policy which is embedded in the constitution meant that several indigenous languages will be recognized. This was done as one of the building blocks of a democratic S.A. Alder (2001) argues that the decision to recognize the indigenous languages was an indication of a willingness to change the distribution of power among the language groups. The recommendations of the Language Task Group were a multilingual language policy for S.A. and also the use of African languages so as to counterbalance the effect of English instruction. This means, the language policy changed and focused on multilingualism. The country's constitution requires that the state should recognize the historically diminished use of those indigenous languages.

In the light of what has been discussed above, it can be concluded that language became a major focus in S.A. education. There was a shift from enforced use of language in schools as was the case during apartheid era to a more liberal approach to

language use in schools. Schools moved towards multilingualism. Pluddemann(2002) views the promotion of multilingualism in education as a defining feature in the language in education policy which was introduced by the Ministry of Education and the South African Schools Act of 1996. These policies have given schools autonomy to choose their own language policies subject to the provincial and national norms and standards. This was done with the aim of promoting multilingualism, assisting in the development of eleven official languages and instilling respect for all languages. This policy endorses the additive bilingualism with the primary principle being the maintenance of Home Language while promoting the successful FAL acquisition.

This indicates that the new language policy signifies a paradigm shift towards bilingualism which recognizes the essentiality of choice and favours the maintenance and development of the learners' Home Language. In the South African context, learners come from different Home Languages or Indigenous languages as indicated by the country's eleven official languages. Based on this, it is glaring that in most schools irrespective of the location, there is a heavy emphasis on English as it is regarded as a language of economic mobility (Suzman, 2002). This also leaves many learners being expected to acquire English at the same time learning through English academic content. It appears that the rationale for teaching learners in their FAL is positioned economically, politically, technically and for wider communication (Lemmer, 1998). This is in line with Desai's (2003) view that the importance of acquiring English proficiency in South Africa is for the interaction with the outside world.

Pluddemann(2002) is of the opinion that all languages have to develop new terms and concepts or terminology concerning the developing technology that had surfaced around. He further argues that such development of terminology should not be a problem for any language in that speakers of that language might decide to coin new terms or borrow terms from another language whichever option to best facilitate communication and good understanding among the speakers. Heugh (1995) concurs with the above argument by insisting on fact that English has gained the powerful status it is enjoying today because of borrowing from other languages.

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2.5.1 The South African Constitution

The Constitution is the highest authority in the country in that all the law and conduct must be in accordance with it. The Republic of South Africa has a constitution that was adopted in 1996 which set out certain important values on which the democratic state should be based. Carrim (2001) argues that equity is the prominent feature in the constitution and is listed as the first substantial right in the Bill of Rights. The Constitution's Chapter 2, Section 9 sub-section (1) and (2) provides a mechanism which challenges equity denials arising from discrimination. It states that:

1) Everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law.
2) Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote achievement of equality legislative and other measures, designed to protect or advance persons or categories disadvantaged by unfair discrimination, may be taken (RSA Constitution, 1996).

Again, Chapter 2 of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, spells out a number of fundamental social and human rights. The issues such as the right to education, redressing past discriminatory practices and language in education are dealt with in Section 29 (RSA Constitution, 1996). One can observe that the Constitution relates to many aspects of governance in the country, and is not specifically directed to education, it does provide the basis on which the national and provincial levels can act in the field of education. Section 29 (2) of the Bill of Rights states that:

Everyone has a right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in the public educational institutions, where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure access to and implementation of this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single and medium institutions, taking into account: equity, practicability and the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practice (RSA Constitution, 1996:114). Education is provided for to the South African citizens in the Constitution of the Republic in Act No. 108, Section 29 and states that everyone has a right to:

o A basic education including adult basic education

o Further education, which state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

Having outlined what the constitution articulates about education, it could be concluded that the country's constitution in its vitality forms the cornerstone for the formulation of all the policies governing education, including the language policies. All language policies that will be discussed below are embedded in the constitution which promotes bilingualism, hence it became imperative to start with the Constitution as one of the language policies.

2.5.2 South African Schools' Act of 1996

The South African Schools' Act (SASA) of 1996 was formulated in a bid to serve as guiding principles in school transformation and to regulate democratization of schooling. SASA introduced a new schooling system aimed at giving everyone equal opportunity to learn. Through the introduction of SASA, public school policies were standardized and could no longer discriminate against learners of any particular race. This is provided for in the Constitution which affords learners' equal rights to basic education and freedom from unfair discrimination stipulated in Section 9 and 29 (RSA Constitution, 1996). SASA aimed at the creation and management of a new national school system that must give everyone an opportunity to develop one's talent without fear of discrimination.

It should be noted that before SASA became a fully blown act, it went through a series of draft white papers, debates and discussions. SASA covers the funding, organization and governance of schools, outlines the powers of the School Governing Bodies (SGB), the nature of their composition and the procedures they need to follow in performing their official duties. SASA tried to redress the imbalances in public schools that were created during the reign of apartheid. The Act puts accountability of every parent for the school attendance of every learner. It also stipulates that admissions to public schools should not be discriminatory. The above signals that SASA repealed all the apartheid

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legislation pertaining to school. SASA puts the responsibility of choosing the school's LoLT to the SGBs.

2.5.3 Language –in –Education Policy

After the transition to full democracy in 1994, a new South African Language –in – Education Policy was formulated to meet the needs of the society in transformation (Barnes, 2004). Probyn, Murray, Botha, Brooks, and Westphal (2002) argue that the policy was designed to allow freedom of choices while adhering to the underlying principle of equity and the need to redress the results of the past discriminatory laws and practices and that policy was regarded as the most progressive in the world. Barnes (2004) further argues that the new language-in-education policy was conceived as an integral part of the new government's strategy to build a non-racial nation in South Africa. It meant to facilitate communication across the barriers of colour and language while fostering an environment in which respect for all languages as well as language policy matters.

The S.A. constitution also envisages that all learners should be fluent in at least two of the official languages, hence the formulation of the Language-in-Education policy in 1997 (DoE, 1997). Heugh (2002) extends the notion by arguing that, the logic behind the Language-in-Education Policy is based on the recognition that South Africa is multilingual and that the mother tongue is the most appropriate language of learning and it is also acknowledged that all learners need a very strong proficiency in at least one other language. Van Tonder (1997) and the DoE (1997) emphasize that the Language-in-Education Policy should be seen as part of the continuous process inwhich policy for language in education is being developed as part of the national language plan encompassing all sectors of society and should operate within the paradigm of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa which recognizes that South Africa's cultural diversity is a valuable asset.

The architects of the policy recognize that both societal and individual multilingualism are the global norm today, especially in the African continent. The policy states that

learning of more than one language should be a general practice and principle in South African society (DoE, 1997). The core characteristics of the policy which are manifested in the main aims of the policy as stated in the Department of Education (1997) are: flexibility, freedom of choice, equity and practicability. The following are the main aims of the language-in-education policy:

- To promote full participation in society and the economy to equitable and meaningful access to education.
- To pursue the language policy most supportive of general conceptual growth amongst learners, and hence to establish additive multilingualism as an approach to language in education.
- To promote and develop all official languages.
- To support the teaching and learning of all other languages required by learners or used by communities in South Africa, including languages used for religious purposes, languages which are important for international trade and communication, and South African Sign Language as well as Alternative and Augmentative communication.
- To counter disadvantages resulting from different kinds of mismatches between home languages (mother tongues) and languages of learning and teaching.
- To develop programmes for the redress of previously disadvantaged languages (DoE, 1997).

This means the adoption of the Language-in-Education Policy implied being multilingual should be a defining characteristic of being South African (SASA, 1996). Van Tonder (1997) and the DoE (1996) argue that whichever route is followed, the underlying principle behind the adoption of the Language-in –Education Policy is to maintain Home Languages while providing access to and the effective acquisition of the additional languages. Basically, learners should be allowed to access their mother tongues as the language of learning and teaching (LOLT). On the same vein, Heugh (2002) stresses that the Language-in-Education Policy offers the best possible opportunity for those who

do not have English as the first language to learn it well enough to use it in learning institutions and for employment.

The implications of the Language-in-Education Policy include the need to use other official languages as languages of learning alongside English (Heugh, 2000). Molepo (2008) alludes to what Heugh is bringing forth by emphasizing that the implementation of additive bilingualism in S.A. implies that since English and Afrikaans were used as media of instruction that disadvantaged the majority of South African citizens over the apartheid years, it would be taught alongside African languages in the new Language-in Education Policy. In an additive bilingual approach promoted by the new language policy, the learner gains competence in the second language while maintaining the first language (Laufer, 2000).

The South African Schools Act (SASA) (1996,B-33) states that the School Governing Body (SGB) must stipulate how the school would promote multilingualism through using more than one language of learning and teaching and by offering additional languages as full-fledged subjects. The SGB has the responsibility of putting the policy into practice by announcing the school's language policy and to state how it strives to promote multilingualism through a variety of measures (DoE, 1997). Van Tonder (1999) emphasizes the argument by noting that the language of learning and teaching is not spelt out in the Language-in-Education Policy, it is left to be decided by the SGB.

2.5.3.1 Additive Bilingualism

Cummins (1984) argues that native language instruction helps to make English comprehensible by providing contextual knowledge that aids understanding. When children already know something about poetry (from their native language which is not English), a lesson on that subject would make more sense when instruction shifts to English. He draws a distinction between **additive bilingualism** in which the first language continues to be developed and the first culture to be valued while the second language is added, and the **subtractive bilingualism** in which the second language is added at the expense of the first language and culture which diminishes as a

consequence. Cummins further claims that children who work in an additive bilingual environment succeed to a great extent than those whose first language and cultures are devalued by their schools and the wider society.

Krashen (1996) shares the same sentiment with Cummins by coming up with two ways in which bilingual education can help the English language to develop in order to contribute to academic success, known as two pillars of bilingual education. The first is the background knowledge indicating the fact that when students have a good education in their first language, they get background knowledge and this knowledge helps the English they hear and read more comprehensible. The second is the literacy transfer meaning developing literacy in the first language is the short cut to developing literacy in the second language. Krashen (2000) extends his assertion by saying that children whose native language is not English should acquire English skills as quickly as possible if the native language can be used in ways that accelerate English language development. Developing literacy in a native language is a short cut to English literacy. That is to say that once a child can read in her native language-which is much easier to learn, the reading ability can easily be transferred to English. Teaching subject matter in the first language stimulates intellectual development and provides valuable knowledge that may help the child to understand the instructions when presented in English. In turn, it can help in the development of the English language.

In this regard, Collier (1992) confirms that parents of children in bilingual programmes find this rationale reasonable to support the use of first language in schools. Children in bilingual programmes can acquire as many English skills as children in all English programmes. She further claims that studies in Manhattan Institute reveal that bilingual education has positive effects. They concluded by arguing that efforts to eliminate the use of the native language in instruction turn to harm children and deny them access to beneficial approaches to effective learning.

2.5.3.2 The current situation in schools

It needs to be taken into consideration that when the DoE in 1997, adopted the Language-in-Education Policy, it provided a strong foundation for the protection and advancement of the country's diverse cultures and languages (Heugh, 2002). Probyn et al (2002) argue that there is a gap between the Language-in-Education Policy goals and what is actually happening in schools. In view of this, they concluded that there is little SGB involvement in the Language-in-Education Policy debates and development. It is of great concern to note that although the huge responsibility of implementing the LiEP in school is vested on the SGBs, they were never capacitated. One also needs to take into consideration that the SGBs are made up of parents, most of whom are not educated and know nothing about policies which could lead to less or no participation in policy implementation.

Taylor and Vinjevold (1999) conducted a small scale qualitative research which suggested that only few schools have developed a school language policy in line with the LiEP.Kgobe and Mbele (2001) confirm through the case studies of a representative group of 27 schools in all provinces of South Africa where they found out that by 2000, only five schools had developed their language policies and only one had made changes in the direction proposed by the LiEP. In the Eastern Cape schools Probyn et al(2002) noted that a number of reasons have been put forward to account for the failure of schools to implementing the Language-in-Education Policy (LiEP) . They are as follows:

- ➢ schools do not have any knowledge of the policy,
- ➢ do not understand the extent of their powers and responsibilities,
- ➢ lack of experience and expertise in developing their own policies and do not know the support the Department of Education will provide and also
- ➢ that education department district officials who might advise schools, lack the knowledge of the LiEP (DoE, 1997).

They also argue that the introduction of the LiEP was overshadowed by the concurrent implementation of Curriculum 2005. Where schools have made changes in their

policies, this appears to have been in response to economic and political pressures and the introduction of the new curriculum rather than to conform to the LiEP (Taylor &Vinjevold, 1999).

From another angle, Buthelezi (2002) argues that although the Language-in-Education Policy of the country insists that all eleven official languages be equally used, English still dominates in all spheres to an extent where even in rural schools, it is used as a LoLT. Mothata, Lemmer,Mda and Pretorius (2000) support the claim by arguing that, currently, the official languages total eleven but English still dominates as a medium of instruction in schools and attains the national unity that links all other languages and cultures in S.A. Probyn et al (2000) argue that the language choices of the schools are determined to a large extent, but not entirely by socio-economic context in which they are located. Their findings reveal that in some schools, parents are poor, uneducated, often unemployed and unable to pay the school fees, but who see English as a way to put bread and butter on the table, a way out of the poverty trap. Ward (2003) supports the above statements by claiming that the new LiEP has been ignored and that parents are opting for a straight-for-English approach. Parents are still ignorant of their rights and are not informed of the numerous benefits of learning through the mother tongue as a result they still view mother tongue education negatively.

Barnes (2004) argues that as a way forward, dissemination of information is highly needed so that parents, teachers, the school boards and learners are made aware of the options and made aware of research findings on the advantages of additive bilingualism. Matjila and Pretorius (2004) state that on Bilingual and Bilateral focus on the reading skills in Setswana and English, is at a well-established level of literacy since the mother tongue is the best foundation for developing literacy in the second language. Their findings support other studies which have proven that the learner should learn to think and function in the home language up to Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency level before the learner can transfer the skills in the second language. An inadequate transfer of skills may significantly delay and sometimes permanently impair the learner's academic development (Matjila and Pretorius, 2004).

The LiEP is generally regarded as a very positive light given the fact that it is an appropriate expression of the principles underlying the country's constitution. Particular reference should be given to the promotion of equality and human rights, including citizens' to make their own decisions or choice of subjects in trying to promote multilingualism. Webb (2009) asserts that language planning has been found to be effective if it has the support of the communities involved and is driven by leaders of such committees. One of the central contentions of the LiEP is that its implementation carries serious negative outcomes, leaving the so called previously disadvantaged schools still disadvantaged as far as language is concerned.

2.5.4 The Norms and Standards Act of 1998

The norms and standard for language policy of 1997 was determined by the Ministry of Education in terms of the National Education Policy Act No 27. Note should be taken of the fact that both the LiEP and Norms and Standards policies complement each other and it is advised they should be read together. The Act stipulates that:

- ❖ the minimum number of learners considered to be practical for any official language to be requested as a language of learning is 40 for Grade 1 to 6 and 35 for Grades 7 to 12.
- ❖ The SGB is obliged to outline how the school will promote multilingualism, this is spelt out , this is spelt out as a variety of measures such as offering more than one language of learning and teaching, offering additional languages as fully fledged subjects or the use of special immersion or language maintenance programmes
- ❖ The minimum number of languages to be learnt is two, and at which level, that is, second or third level

The educational promotion criteria attached to language are, one official language as Home Language up to Grade 9 and two languages for Grades 10-12, one of which should be official languages (SASA, 1996).In the case of the schools under study, the learners' HL is isiXhosa and use English as a FAL. The same English is also the

schools' LoLT. This means for the learners to be assessed and progress to the following Grades, they need to write their examinations in English. In view of that, it is important for the researcher to further gather other researchers' views on teaching and the learning of the EFAL.

2.6 Teaching and Learning EFAL

Judd et al. (2009) describe teaching an additional language as teaching a second or third language to learners whose native languages are not the one being taught, like teaching the Chinese English or French. They further argue that they use the term additional language rather than the commonly used Second language or foreign language because 'Additional' applies to all except the first language learned. An additional language may not be foreign since many people in the country may speak it (Judd et al., 2009). Nunan (1999) is of the opinion that learners should be taught how to use an additional language clearly, accurately and effectively for genuine communication. Learners should be able to produce and comprehend additional languages independently without any aid from the teacher.

Language is the medium through which all teaching and learning takes place, and without language no other subject could exist (Kaiser, Reynecke and Uys, 2010). The DoE (2003) states that a language teacher has an important responsibility to ensure that, languages are fully utilized across the curriculum.Goodwyn and Findlay (2003) argue that it is generally accepted that teachers of English have the leading role in providing learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to write, read, and listen effectively.

2.6.1 EFAL classroom practice

Gibbons (1998) notes that in the classroom where the learners are taught in English which is not their home language, there are possibly two goals to achieve, which are content learning and language learning. To some extent the two goals complement

each other in the sense that when teaching and learning is focused on communication content, then teachers and learners use their home language to communicate. At the end of all the discussions, learners are obliged to write in the additional language. If teachers are focusing on grammatical rules for the learners to improve their English language skills, learners may not fully understand the content (Gibbons, 1998).

Vygotsky (1984) believes that children learn a language more successfully when they have an understanding of the topic being taught. This means an educator should try to develop an understanding of the language by linking the learning to what the child once experienced, knows or practices every day. Examples that teaching methods that could assist the educator in creating a communicative classroom that builds on the child's experiences could include:

- Making the texts simpler
- Using visual aids to support the development of oral interactions
- Promoting extensive reading
- Use gestures to demonstrate actions
- Create a print rich classroom where flip charts and posters could be displayed (Gibbons, 1998)

Teaching and learning a second or additional language should be a challenge to both educators and learners. Mercer (1996) notes that schools and classrooms are pervasive language environments and that classrooms create certain patterns of language use which reflect the nature of learning and teaching. Since language is the medium through which all learning and teaching takes place, the language teacher has a responsibility to ensure that languages are fully utilized across the curriculum (DoE, 2003). In view of this, teaching academic writing to learners can facilitate their ability to express themselves confidently in both language and content and can therefore lead to good performance as a result.

It is in this regard that Maum (2002) observes that in the field of English Language Teaching, a growing number of teachers are not native speakers of English. This, in the

American context, makes their strengths and abilities underestimated by both their colleagues and students. Phillipson (1996) considers Non-Native English Speaking Teachers to be the potentially ideal English Second Language teachers because they have gone through the process of acquiring English as an Additional Language. They have first-hand experience in learning and using a second language, and their personal experience has sensitized them to the linguistic and cultural needs of their students. Medgyes (1999) shares the same view by arguing that such teachers have to adopt language learning strategies during their own learning process, most likely making them better qualified to teach those strategies and more empathetic to their students' linguistic challenges and needs.

In this regard, the researcher argues that qualified and trained Non-Native English Speaking Teachers are the ones who can contribute in a meaningful way to the field of English Second Language education by virtue of their own experiences as English Second Language learners and their training and experience as teachers. Thus, writing should be seen as a process, not a product where the whole idea is to see how the learners can be developed in their academic writing which is a lifelong process where learning takes place on daily bases.

Killen (2000) argues that in the new curriculum teachers plan teaching as part of the transformational process in contrast to the traditional view that a teacher is a transmitter of knowledge. Learners construct knowledge in a process of teaching and learning facilitated by the teacher, teaching is not teaching unless learners learn. Mau (1997) identifies three interactive components of educational instruction namely; planning, teaching and assessment. He further argues that what teachers need to achieve in each lesson should be identified during the planning or pre-instructional phase. Instructional activities that should enable the learners to achieve the intended goal in a lesson and the assessment procedures are planned. Planning requires a teacher to think more about specific goals or outcomes on the path to the achievement of the particular skill or content. The teacher can plan and give a full description of what the learners must be able to achieve at the end of the instruction and learning and how the achievement would be assessed. This is in fact the process that educators need to follow when they

teach learners academic writing because there are too many components that build up academic writing and an attempt to touch on all these components would rather confuse the learner than to help. In this regard the educator needs to pick up the weakest link of the writer and do well to improve the writer's ability in that aspect before moving on to another aspect.

Schlebusch and Thobedi (2005) insist that educators should aim at applying a variety of teaching strategies to give learners the opportunity to demonstrate the learning they have mastered. They further give an example of a strategy as engaging learners collaboratively in pairs or groups where the EFAL educator can facilitate and guide the process while learners provide outputs such as dialogues, role-plays and games. These kinds of classroom activities appear to provide the learners with the opportunities to speak (as they are involved in discussion of a given topic), listen, write and read. Grammar knowledge includes but not limited to; construction of meaningful sentences, choosing the correct tense, and using the correct punctuation marks. When EFAL learners engage in an activity, they get an opportunity to express themselves in English in the classroom situation.

In this manner one could conclude that the process of teaching and learning is therefore has been effective, because the learners developed an understanding and the construct of knowledge by engaging in the learning activity. Burger (2008) shares the same sentiment by explaining that effective or meaningful learning is conceived as occurring when a learner constructs his or her own knowledge base that can be used as a tool to interpret the world and to solve problems. She also puts emphasis on the fact that learners must be self-dependent and self-regulating, and that they need to be motivated to continually use and broaden their knowledge base. Segers, Dochy and Cascallar (2003) argue that learners need to develop strategic learning behaviour, which means that they must master effective strategies for their own learning. As the learning experience allows learners to develop and construct knowledge, educators should know how their learners learn and design a learning activity that should enable the learners to engage with the learning material.

It needs to be taken into consideration that although the general purpose of the approach for language learning should allow learners to use English for a variety of purposes (DoE,2003), the language skills the learners need for social interaction with their peers, should be different from those needed to function in the formal academic language class. Schlebusch and Thobedi (2005)argue that learners are more fluent in informal English than formal English communication. Learners should be allowed to use informal English during discussions with other peers but when it comes to writing and presenting the end product of the discussions, they should use academic language.As people learn to write in their Second Language, their written text demonstrate improved command over the target language which includes vocabulary and punctuation, planning and editing skills (Cumming, 2001).

2.6.2 Code switching as means of teaching EFAL

Makalloluwa (2013) opines that even though English is being taught in schools as a LoLT, the levels of learners' competency vary depending on the language they speak at home. Karuanratne (2009) alludes to the above argument by including variables such as socioeconomic factors and opportunities available for the learners in a bid to acquire the language. It is a concrete statement to state that many African learners start learning the basics of English at school, which makes them to be highly depended to the teachers in their English classroom (Karuanratne, 2009). Considering the circumstances like how the teachers talk, how they modify the input to take the learners' understanding to the maximum point, becomes a very essential factor. It is in such situations that teachers have to employ a variety of strategies to optimize language comprehension in the English classroom. One of the approaches teachers should use in the English Second language – EFAL- classroom is code switching.

Maraco (2005:63) defines code switching as an alternate use of two languages in speech which express a similar view. By alternate languages is meant two languages are used to explain or respond to the same sentence. Code switching is frequently employed in bilingual classrooms where the existence of the learners' and teachers' HL could in a most important manner be influential in their verbal behaviour (Makalloluwa,

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(2013). Maraco (2005) shares the same sentiments by arguing that code switching could only be found in bilingual classrooms and as such takes the shape of a natural character of a classroom interaction because teachers many atimes resort to it to tackle numerous classroom matters. Turnbull and Arnett (2002) are of the view that teachers for educational reasons, maintenance of social interaction with the learners and classroom management resort to using code switching. They assert that code switching is employed for learners' educational gains to help them understand grammatical rules and synonyms essential for translation. On the other perception Lui et al (2004) view teachers as embarking on code switching when they don't have enough knowledge to convey the intended message in the target language and that employing learners' HL saves tuition time.

Ahmed (2009) and Jingxia (2009) are of the view that when teachers code switch, they assist the learners low target language proficiency, because through code switching the target language is adjusted to accommodate the learners' language ability. Jingxia (2009) argues that the teachers also code switch to close the distance between the learners and themselves. They could do that by sharing an ice breaker on learners' HL that could create a good rapport or understanding with the learners. Further to that, using code switching in EFAL classrooms promotes cognitive and sociolinguistic aspects of the learners (De la Campa and Nassaji, 2009). This means learners are able to draw upon their HL so as to make meaning of their new acquired language and new concepts. The similar view had been expressed by Cummins (1981:39) asserting that high levels of HL proficiency assist in acquiring second language cognitive skills. In the South African context, the LiEP (1997) promotes additive bilingualism in which the learners' HL continues to be developed while the second language is being added. In this manner, learners' HL is viewed as a useful language learning tool that should be used when need arises (Nation, 2003). This means abandoning the learners' HL could be equivalent to abandoning the real objects in the FAL class. Nation (2003) furthermore asserts that when teachers use learners' HL in the classroom, it assists in their cognitive development that scaffolds them in their learning of the new language. It could thus be concluded that HL use in EFAL class could assist enhance the quality of what learners comprehend and assist in acquiring the new language. To demonstrate

the correlation that exists between the learners' HL and the target language which in this study is English, Harbord (1992:35) claims that:

"Rigidly eliminating or limiting the native language does not appear to guarantee better acquisition, nor does it foster the humanistic approach that recognizes learners' identities as native speakers of a valuable language that is as much a part of them as their names".

Cook (2001) supports the above view through his multicompetence theory which advocates for learners' positive impact of their HL when learning their second language. He further perceives second language learners as multicompetent in that their minds accommodates two languages and it is for that purpose that learners should not be denied their use of their HL in learning second language. It is in this manner that learners' HL could be perceived as a resource in second language learning and promoting learners' cognitive development (Maraco, 2001). It becomes clear that in a bilingual classroom, switching between the learners' HL and the target language of learning seems inevitable to a great extent because it is used for a variety of reasons including pedagogical, class management and preservation of the learners' culture.

In view of this, it is evident that second language learning is a complex process which aims at developing skills required for learning like; speaking, writing and listening so that learners could be able to express themselves with confidence in both language and content which then could lead to enhancing their performance. It then becomes imperative to pursue for what could make the learners develop the thirst to learn the second language without lamenting, hence the researcher resolved to lookat motivation as means to inspire the spirits of second language learners.

2.7 Motivation for Second Language Learning

Second Language teaching is a complex undertaking which necessitates the understanding of different factors which may influence academic achievement in the school context, which is the rationale for this study. Noting the complexities embedded in the process of learning a second language, Dornyei (2006) argues that second language learning depends on many variables other than learners' ability. Further mention is made of variables such as the role of an educator, curricular, learning goals, learning activities or tasks, individual learner's characteristics and the social and cultural contexts (Dornyei, 2006). One of the major factors as viewed by Jurisevic and Pizorn (2013) is the motivation of students because it is believed to determine the learning process and indirectly influences the quality of competency in second language. They also emphasise that the variable of motivation has an essential role as a determinant of whether a learner can start learning a second language and the manner in which the learning will develop.

In light of the above, it becomes imperative for the educators who teach second language to young learners to observe their learners behaviour in the classrooms so as to be acquainted with their motivational aspects. By so doing, educators should be able to consider such aspects in their lesson planning in the process of teaching while concurrently becoming aware of the developmental features displayed by their learners in their second language (Jurisevic and Pizorn, 2013). If such engagement takes place in the second language classroom, learners' developmental needs and competency in the target language can be assured. Dornyei (1998), Dornyei (2006), Bernard (2010), Kaboody (2013) and Jurisevic and Pizorn (2013) all agree that motivation is a widely accepted phenomenonseen to be a key factor in having an ability to influence the rate of success on second language learning.It is the motivation for learners to become successful in their studies that is giving them the urge to study academic writing and all other literacy skills. Thus, motivation should be seen as one of the major driving force for second or additional language acquisition and learning.

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For the purpose of the study, motivation is defined in context to second language learning as a specific type of learning motivation which manifests itself in second language learning in the school context (Jurisevic and Pizorn, 2013). In concurring with the statement, Dornyei (1998)views second language learning motivation as a provider of the principal drive that assists in initiating learning in second language, and afterwards becoming the driving force in sustaining the longand tiresome learning process.Such motivation is believed to assist in energizing the second language learning process and is responsible for encouraging it and giving direction for the finalization of the current learning activities (Dornyei, 1998;Jurisevic and Pizorn, 2013). Summarily, second language motivation could be viewed as the process whereby activities that are goal-directed are initiated and sustained in the lifelong learning of the target language. The role of second language motivation should also be seen as neutralizing the complexities encountered in the learning process thus assisting second language learners into achieving their optimum competencies. When writers proofread, polish and edit their writing because they want to score marks or to sound academic which is the rationale or motivation for the work put in place.

2.7.1 Theories on Second Language Learning Motivation

Dornyei (2006), Gardner (2007), Lovato (2011) and Orio (2013) say that motivations should be viewed as one of the most essential and crucial factors to contribute to becoming competent in second language learning. They further agree that motivation cannot be taken off as a link to language achievement in the sense that motivation is one of the driving forces towards language achievement. Orio (2013) affirms that there is a relationship between motivation and language achievement. This means, learners who are not motivated are most likely to fail in their studies than those who are motivated.Several theories contribute to an understanding of academic motivation and specifically on second language learning motivation. Thus, motivation acts as a burning desire to succeed in any given task that we undertake in our lives, no matter how complex it could be. Academic writing which is so complex has to be learnt in order to succeed in our studies, with the learning being motivated by the outcome.

2.7.1.1 Socio-educational model

This theory portrayed the attitudes and motivation in second language learning (Lovato, 2011).Dornyeiand Ushioda (2011) point out that Gardner (1985) a psychologist-designed a socio-pedagogical model of foreign language learning after studying the role of learning motivation in foreign language learning. The theory states that language learning takes place in many different contexts and that the natures of such contexts need to be taken into consideration (Gardner, 2007). Bernard (2010) asserts that language learning cannot be seen as a socio-culturally neutral ground for it is influenced by cultural stereotypes, language attitudes and geopolitical thoughts towards second language. The aforementioned argument indicates that the learners' cultural setting or environment has an influence in the learning of another language and can also have an influence in motivating one into learning it. It is in this account that Banda (2009) notes that many South African parents choose to send their children to English medium schools because English is the language of upward mobility.

Based on this, the socio-educational models of second language learning (Gardner, 2007; Bernard, 2010 and Lovato, 2013) posit four main factors namely;

1) **Social milieu**. That includes the learners' external environmental influences, which in it could comprise of the learners' culture. This confirms that language learning doesn't take place in isolation, it depends on one' socio-cultural activities (Lin 2013). The learners in the study are from isiXhosa speaking environments where English is only spoken at school. Their social backgrounds appears to have a negative impact in their second language learning,

2) **Individual differences among the learners**. This entails variables such as learners' intelligence- which is a determiner of how quick and how well the learner can learn the second language, language ability – the manner in which the language knowledge is internalised and used verbally for communication purposes, level of motivation- this determines the effort which the learner is putting towards second language competency and anxiety or concern – a variable that should be viewed as one of factors inhibiting individual second language learning.

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3) **The second language learningcontext**. This refers to a setting where second language learning takes place, whether it is formal or informal, or a combination of both. In the case of this study the setting is formal; meaning the second language which is English is learned in the school through the use of textbooks and other Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM).

4) **Outcomes in second language learning**. These are viewed as achievements in second language learning which include language skills and linguistic knowledge obtained in learning the second language. These aspects always manifest when a language learner is able to exhibit the skills of writing, speaking, reading in the second language. These learners should be regarded as having mastered the grammatical rules of the target language.

Kaboody (2013), Lovato (2011) and Gardner (2007)draw our attention to the fact that it iswithin the variable of individual differences that the concept of integrative motivation was introduced and is divided into two components; attitude towards the learning situation and integrativeness.

a) Attitude towards the language learning situation comprise of attitudes towards the school environment, reaction to the textbooks, language educator evaluation and the subject of language itself. It is frequent to observe that the nature of the learning situation always has an influence in the motivation of learners. In view of this, it should be emphasised that at all material time the teaching and learning environment should be conducive for the learners. Other factors which can play a pivotal role in motivating learners' attitudes towards second language learning might be an exciting curriculum which in many times should consider their experiences. Another factor can be an educator who has a good command of the target language. Thirdly an educator who plans his or her lessons carefully and constructively and finally assessment guidelines which accommodate second language learning.

b) Integrativeness: It is perceived as an interest in the second language group. In integrativeness, the learner demonstrates openness and identifies with the target language community together with their culture. This means a second language

learner should show interest and talks openly on the nature and features of the other linguistic group with no intentions of becoming a member of that language group. Gardner (2007) argues that integrativeness affects mostly those who are highly interested in other cultural communities or who are willing to learn other languages. One of the reasons by Gardner (2007) as to why other people would like to learn a language is that they need the ability to relate to the language different from theirs. Another reason which is called an instrumental motive is where learners learn the second language so as to gain something. In the South African context, the instrumental motive fits well due to the diversity of the country. Also it is in the curriculum that schools should promote bilingualism. Thus, English which is the second language or FAL for most of the learners in the study is also their LoLT. It is through the instrumental motive that they learn their second language to get good result and demonstrate high levels of competency to be marketable for jobs.

Having discussed the socio-educational motivation model, it is imperative that the researcher should also look at how learners are psychologically motivated towards their learning of the second language.

2.7.1.2 Psychological model

Kaboody (2013) argues that the psychological model views motivation as a more dynamic or self-motivating aspect, more cognitive in nature and well established in the educational contexts where second language learning takes place. This is an indication of the centrality of the context of the country whether monolingual or bilingual, where the study takes place because although the language could be used as LOLT, it can be foreign or additional to the learners. It therefore becomes imperative to prepare the learners psychologically for something that they are not familiar with (Orio, 2013). Having such circumstances, the educators who facilitate the learning process should pay attention on changing emotions of second language learners. Jurisevic and Pizorn (2013) argue that second language learners tend to be prone to a range of emotions during learning second language. They further argue that these diverse emotions

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demonstrated by learners can cause different affective reactions. On the same view of emotions, Scherer (2005) states that if learners are given a difficult task, but experience joy in accomplishing it, they tend to adjust their perception and are willing to try on new activities. Psychologically, they were provided with the motivational energy to direct their action and also to determine the continuity in all their learning.

In view of that, learners' emotions could have the potential to determine the results of their academic writing. It then becomes important that they be given writing activities that they could enjoy so that they could be motivated. That could lead to more difficult activities that they could attend with great enthusiasm.

2.7.1.3 The self-determination theory

The self- determination theory centres on the extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation deals with the behaviour performed in order to experience pleasure and satisfaction on one's curiosity. Extrinsic motivation on the other hand performing behaviour so as to receive some gains (Dornyei, 1997). Both types of motivation will be discussed below, so that the factors determining learner motivation could be spelt out.

2.7.1.3.1 Intrinsic motivation

As discussed earlier, intrinsic motivation is said to be factors such as enjoyment and satisfaction of oneself, more than that it is self-determined (Orio, 2013).Jurisevic and Pizorn (2013) highlight that the tendency of highly motivated learners is that of starting to learn independently and in their tasks they select the parts where they make combination of the knowledge acquired at school and knowledge gained in their out of school experiences. These learners might then show independence in the learning process by asking questions and are often prepared to deepen their knowledge by doing extra tasks. This could have a positive impact in their learning in that they can become successful in learning new concepts and understanding the subject matter. Dornyei (2006) suggests three sub-types of intrinsic motivation namely;

1) ***To learn*** – This is meant to engage in an activity for the pleasure of exploring new knowledge and understanding something new, satisfying one's inquisitiveness and exploring the world. Second language learning becomes a challenge to most of these learners. If they are motivated enough they can be able to do tasks such as dictionary skills to extend their vocabulary and constructing sentences.

2) ***Towards achievement*** – learners engage in an activity to cope with challenges, surpass oneself and create something. In a second language classroom, learners could be given a task on oral presentation. This type of activity requires the learners to research and come to class to present a well-researched topic. Motivated learners would try to give their best during class presentations.

3) ***To experience stimulation***- engaging in an activity to experience pleasant sensation. Such motivation can be demonstrated by learners when they perform a task which is associated with exploring new ideas and developing their knowledge. They would reveal the consciousness related to the attempt to achieve their goal by mastering the task.

2.7.1.3.2 Extrinsic motivation

In extrinsic motivation, learners have pressure from the social environment to learn a language. Kaboody (2013) claims that these learners endeavour to obtain better career opportunities, recognition or prove that they are better learners. He further argues that the implications of the external reward are that if the external pressure is removed, learners tend to lose their interest in second language learning. Bernard (2010) also concurs by pointing out that extrinsically motivated learners embark on activities in order to accomplish some goals. In this case, the learners would wish to learn a second language because they believe bilingualism might be a valuable job skill that might make travel easier and enjoyable. Furthermore, the competency in second language, could pursue their hobbies and interests.

This implies that some activities can be initiated extrinsically and later be internalised becoming extrinsically motivated, or else can be starts out of intrinsic interest and be

perpetuated so as to obtain extrinsic outcomes. This is in view of South African CAPS Grades 10-12 (2011) which states that learners need to use their FAL frequently for a range of purposes, citing; development of academic cognitive skills, develop imaginative abilities, and communication. It is also emphasized that learners should be developed to become lifelong readers and writers.

2.7.1.4 The process-orientated theory

It describes how primary aspirations are first transformed into goals and then into processed intentions which are then endorsed leading to the accomplishment of goals(Dornyei, 2005). This theory is also based on the notion that motivation is a dynamic construct which varies throughout time. The emphasis is on the vitality of its dynamic feature for the study of how it affects second language learning. This means that during second language learning, it can experience different phases, its dynamism becomes crucial. Orio (2013) claims that the process theory is divided into three phases namely:

1) *Pre-actional stage* which is also known as a choice stage. This kind of motivation has to be generated or created frequently. This might be the case taking into consideration the complexities embedded to second language learning. It becomes essential to motivate the rural learners to only use English at school.

2) *Actional stage* also called the executive motivation. This deals with the notion that the already generated motivation needs to be actively maintained and protected when the action takes place (Dornyei, 2006). Learners should be motivated continuously as they embark on the task so that what they are doing could be seen as achievable.

3) *Post-actional stage* this has to do with evaluation that learners have to make about the manner in which the task was accomplished. It is believed that the manner in which the learners are able to do and complete their given task might determine the kind of tasks they can be motivated to pursue in future. The assertion is that if the learners had bad experience in learning or doing a second

language task, they would not be motivated into doing it again. That means in postactional motivation, the learners evaluate the process of embarking on a given task, then if it was negative, they would not be interested in doing it again.

In conclusion, motivation has an influence on how successful one is in another language. It is clear that integrative motivation is the one that moves learners into achieving good command of second language since it encourages being part of the second language community. In the context of the study where second language is not spoken outside of the classroom and school premises, the learners are not integratively motivated since there are no second language communities outside their classroom contexts. By demonstrating the significance of the socio-cultural milieu in the second language learning, one is tempted to conclude that attitudes are sensitive to the contextual conditions of the learners' environment since these learners are disadvantaged in second language, the theory on integrativeness does not seem to apply to them

2.8   The role of writing in learning

2.8.1 Writing to learn

Teaching of writing is viewed as an essential aspect of any language curriculum in that writing remains a crucial skill in the learning process (Hawthorne and Glenn, 2011). In this regard, the essentiality of writing for learners manifests itself when they are to participate meaningfully and successfully in the modern world. Writing engages learners in carrying out meaningful tasks with written language which might later help them in comprehending what writing is used for and how to use it (Bloch, 2002).Hawthorne and Glenn (2011) concur that writing involves getting learners to understand exactly what it is they have to do to succeed. It becomes vital that learners should formulate their own thoughts, organise and write them in creating a record that could assist in future. Drowns, Hurley, and Wilkinson (2004) also argue that writing symbolizes an exceptional method of learning in that; it requires organising actively the learners' personal

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understandings by means of sentence writing. If these understandings are put in paper or through writing, it could be easier to make them available for the feedback, self-reflection and ultimately revision. In this manner, writing could be viewed as promoting learning in that, through it, ideas that learners understand are written down so that they can be assessed which then could lead to language development.

Graham and Perin (2007) are of the opinion that young people who have difficulties in writing cannot be considered fully equipped to meet the demands of post- secondary school life, like tertiary institutions or employment. This is true because a wide variety of jobs require employees who can produce written documents whether visual or text. This is an indication that competency in writing has become critical and indispensable in the workplace and directly affects hiring and promotion decisions. In view of this, it can directly affect the hiring and promotion decisions.

In the school context, competency in second language writing is pivotal since it is a skill that draws on the use of strategies like planning, evaluating and revising text, in an attempt to accomplish a variety of goals such as writing report or expressing an opinion. Secondly, writing is viewed as a tool for learning subject matter thereby extending and deepening learners' knowledge (Buckingham, 2008). On the same vein, it is important that FAL educators should be able to assist the learners to improve or grow in their abilities in writing.

2.8.2 Factors Impacting on learners' competency in writing

In language learning it becomes imperative to understand that the challenge of academic writing cannot be ascribed to a single aspect but a countless factors, which can include colonialism and apartheid, which were most influential in the marginalization of black people in South Africa. That ended up in awarding crucial resources being to the white minorities while other races received inadequate resources. Amongst that there were challenges of underqualified teachers, who brought along teaching of writing in schools which was not effective and as a result of that alsopresented smaller number of writing activities and less prospects for second language learning. The advent of

democracy in South Africa made rescued the previously marginalised and disadvantaged people by providing equal access education. Nevertheless, years after the end of apartheid, the majority of black learners are still insufficiently prepared by the schooling system to succeed at higher education and at work places. These sentiments are also echoed by Engstrom (2008) who argues that society is still struggling with the translation of the gains of access to quality education for all.

2.8.3 Socio-economic factors

Sanchez and Paulson (2008) observed that learners who study English second language often come from disadvantaged schooling backgrounds as a result socio-economic factors that they face have a negative bearing to second language learning. and contribute negatively to student learning, particularly to academic writing. Sanchez and Paulson (2008) observed that in the United States, students who are in transitional English courses often come from inferior schooling conditions. Van Rensburg and Lamberti (2004) allude to the above statement by arguing that it is a widely understood scenario that learners who attended disadvantaged schools especially in rural areas have difficulty in writing.

It can never be denied that learners' socioeconomic factors, though they can be viewed as out- of- school factors, contribute significantly in shaping them. It is clear that there is a link between the EFAL learners' disadvantaged backgrounds and their ability to write in that their backgrounds impact on their learning especially on their writing. Such socioeconomic factors could include learners' environment, school community, poverty level of the school community and infrastructure.

2.9 Approaches to educational writing

2.9.1 The study skills model

The study skills model puts more emphasis on surface features on rules of language learning such as grammar, spelling and punctuation. In this model writing is seen as a technical skill that can be transferred from one context to another (Lea and Street 2006). This means, the study skills model is centred and prioritises the surface language features at the expense of content and context. The model sees writing and literacy as primarily an individual and cognitive skill which focuses on written language ignoring the context and other factors influencing the individual learner writing. However, it is important to note that grammatical rules in language learning are still important in that there is no way good writing could be achieved without those basic language skills. Therefore, writing should be perceived as a product.

2.9.2 The socialisation model

This model has made an influential and meaningful contribution in the teaching of writing. Lea and Street (2006) claim that it is concerned with the learners' acculturation into disciplinary and subject-based discourses and genres. Further to that, Lillis (2006) asserts that the socialisation model operates as an institutional default model which assumes that learners can pick up writing as part of their studies without any teaching or practice. This model also emphasises the fact that learners can also be able to learn disciplinary discourses through engagement or immersion (Hawkins, 2004). This means that teaching language using socialisation model encourages the educators to focus on educational implications or teach in context not focusing on generalised grammatical rules and vocabulary. It is this kind of education that reduced anxiety at the same time see learning as a process.

2.9.3 The writing process model

The writing process approach emanates from the expressionist model and has been used as a teaching strategy mostly by English Second Language teachers for many years (Bacha, 2002). Granville and Dison (2009) perceive writing as having the following stages; construction or pre-writing, composition or writing, editing or rewriting and execution which is writing by hand or typing. The writing process also includes the thinking, planning drafting, revising editing and final writing of a task. CAPS (2011) capture the above elements as fundamentals in the writing process. It could be argued that for learners to present a balanced argument in an essay or transactional writing, they require skills and practices as essential components of writing. It also becomes important that process writing be practiced in context so that learners can be able to internalise and make relevant inferences. This is what Myles (2002) views as helping the learners move from the knowledge telling to the knowledge transforming approach to writing as a crucial and realistic educational objective.

In general, the approaches discussed above are important to teaching writing in that they provide a strong foundation for the development of writing in the classroom. They could assist in developing in-context writing of learners.

2.9.4 Writing strategies

2.9.5 Fundamental elements in writing

Graham and Perin (2007) claim that there is no single approach to writing which can meet the needs of all learners. They came up with 11 key elements which they claim can interlink and advice educators in their everyday teaching of writing, namely:

1) **Writing strategies:** This entails systematically and explicitly teaching necessary steps for writing which include planning, revising and editing a given text. The ultimate goal of the strategy is to teach the learners to produce good quality of writing. This may also involve teaching learners the strategy of brainstorming their

ideas before putting them on paper. This concurs with the content on Writing and Presenting (DBE CAPS, 2011: 35) which emphasises on the steps for process writing as planning or pre-writing where learners are expected to brainstorm before writing, using a mind map; drafting in which learners write a rough draft which is submitted to the educator to get feedback before revising, editing, proofreading and presenting for the preparation of the final draft.

2) **Collaborative writing:** This involves learners as peers writing as a team where a higher achieving learner would be assigned to be a leader and a slower achiever will do the writing. The learners work together to plan, draft and revise their essay or transactional writing. It is necessary that in such group, learners are mixed according to their abilities.

3) **Setting specific goal product:** Learners could be provided with specific reachable goals for the writing they are to complete. This should include the purpose of the task and characteristics of the final product. They can be given a transactional writing task on writing an obituary to commemorate and inform others of someone's death (CAPS, 2011:41).

4) **Word processing:** In this instruction, learners are expected to work on a writing task collaboratively using electronic learning support material such as laptop. If learners are asked to write a text using a computer with word-processing, they might definitely produce neat and legible scripts.

5) **Sentence combining:** This involves teaching learners to construct more complex sentences through exercises where two or more basic sentences are combined to form a single sentence. In this instance, learners may use conjunctions to join clauses in compound and complex sentences (CAPS, 2011:36). Teaching learners to write in this way can be able to enhance their writing ability and quality.

6) **Pre-writing:** It is envisaged that learners should be engaged in activities that are designed to assist them in generating or organising ideas for their writing activity so as to improve their quality of writing. Such activities may include doing a research with the aim of gathering necessary information for the presentation of their ideas. CAPS (2011:36) refer to this as planning in which the

learnersareengaged in researching for the topic for example in a library and selecting relevant information.

7) **Inquiry activities:** Learners are expected to examine and deduce or infer the qualities of a number of objects in order to describe them in writing. Learners can be given pictures to write an essay on what they see. In CAPS (2011:31,33 and 70), this is referred as a visual text for information such as map or diagram. This is also common in the Creative writing paper- which is Paper 3, where learners are being given visuals to write about.

8) **Process Writing:** Its emphasis is on the activities that require extended opportunities for writing, meaning writing for real audiences, self-reflection and personalised instructions and goals. This is also characterised by clear and specific instructions where a learner may be asked to write a descriptive, narrative, discursive or expository essay, with the intention of the writer providing his or her views or analysis.

9) **Study of models:** This is when learners are provided with two models of excellent writing that focus on given instruction. The learners may be expected to analyse and critique it and at the end being given a similar task to write which is usually a discursive essay.

10) **Writing for content area learning**: Here, writing is viewed as an effective tool for enhancing learners' learning of content subjects. In the approach, the teacher assigns writing tasks but does not provide explicit instruction in writing skills.

11) **Grammar instruction**: This involves the clear and systematic teaching of the parts of speech and sentence structures. To achieve the intended results, it becomes imperative to teach grammatical instructions within the context of writing, not in isolation. CAPS (2011:36) refer to this content as Language structures and conventions during the writing process.In other words, when embarking on writing, there are some riles that learners have to follow. Every time they write, sentences need to be structured or constructed properly and are able to be understood.

2.9.5.1 Second Language writing strategies

Wang and Wen (2002) argue that Second Language writing is a complex study of discovery which is different from the Home language writing. In Second Language writing, learners have more than one language at their disposal. Hirose (2003) andGoldstein (2005) both agree that learners who have read and written extensively in their Home Language would be able to use those competencies when writing English (second or additional language). To further harmonise the aforementioned claim, Home Language use is known to facilitate the process of thinking and writing in Second Language. As such Second Language learners should be encouraged to use their Home Language to generate ideas associated with the topic and also to develop strategies that can facilitate their Second Language learning (Leki and Cumming, 2008).To balance and encourage writing in Second Language, specific writing strategies have been identified and have received major attention; namely, planning, translation, restructuring and backtracking.

1) **Planning**: This encompasses deciding on the facts to be expressed and how these facts should be structured and embellished (Myles, 2002). In other words, planning entails building the meaning to be written about.

2) **Translation**: This strategy is mostly used by less skilled writers of second language and is grounded to high development of the learners' Home Language. It could be found advantageous to Second Language learners in that learners could find that the ideas could be easier developed, thoughts and opinions could be expressed more clearly and words could be easier understood (Leki and Cumming, 2008). This means when learners find translating texts less complex in that all the ideas, structure and meaning are there.

3) **Restructuring:** It is a phenomenon employed for linguistic and textual reason and also to seek out and express the learners' writing intentions(Myles, 2002). Therefore, restructuring helps writing learners to control the structure of their written task and to observe cohesion, style and register.

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4) **Backtracking:**Zhan (2008) defines backtracking as the actions performed by the learners during writing so as to take stock of the ideas and constraints of the text produced. Note is taken of Second Language backtracking as involving rereading the already written text. This could assist the learners in editing their work in preparation for assessment.

2.9.6 Scaffolding as enhancing writing

According to Saddler (2010) interventions in academic writing are supposed to begin at the primary or foundation phase and continue to all secondary level education so that when learners are at tertiary institutions or at working places, should not attend their writing with great effort. They further argue that employing some guidelines or scaffolding learners could assist in preventing writing complexities. The scaffolding could include activities that could supply commendable writing instruction to all the learners from the beginning, commencing from the primary school grades, and to afford early additional writing instruction which could be aiming at the prevention or at least lighten later writing complexities. On the similar notion Munro (2003) argues that reading comprehension at the secondary school level could be improved by implementing methodical and reliable literacy teaching measures in a variety of subject areas. To make an example, Munro (2003) recommends that journals should be used to ESL learners as a tool to enhance learning to write. Mojica (2010) agrees with the above view by stating that activities that can be employed to enhance learners' writing in English could include diary entries, writing down new words, memorizing words and their meanings and reading good materials.

Barton and Klump (2008:4) recommend that teachers should on weekly basis afford learners with the opportunity to embark on writing in all their classes believing that learners who write regularly are able to transfer their new gained knowledge into their own language and could learn addressing other learners effectively. Hawkins (2005:66) perceives the development of English language as happening in three ways, namely; practice opportunities, scaffolding and affiliations with school and schooling. She further argues that teachers need to develop methods to give learners support so that they

could acquire school-affiliated discourses and identities (ibid). Furthermore, Barkhuizen (1998:102) recommends the following to teachers to be aware of ESL learners' perceptions:

- Ask learners to keep journals
- Ask learners to write letters to the teacher
- Ask learners to write compositions or paragraphs about their language learning experiences
- Listen for suggestions from learners
- Ask for learner feedback after tests
- Distribute course evaluation forms at the end of a unit/chapter

Yong (2010) suggests teaching using persuasive or argumentative discourse during the primary and secondary school years since the learners are viewed as having few opportunities to engage in those writings, which are more demanded after school in tertiary institutions or in work environment. He further argues that written argumentative activities should be made in such a way they take account of the opposing voice because written arguments should activate a debate. On the same vein, Adams (2008) states that persuasive writing and writing to inform both forms a fundamental component of the writing for a variety of reasons.

Granville and Dison (2009) and Adams (2008) are some of the authors who assume a procedure or modeling in their expedition to teach effective academic writing. Adams (2008:1) argues from the teacher's point of view and says that that she facilitates her students be aware of the method of writing so that they can rally the prospects of their writing and move away from those standards as a tool for effective writing. She reports that Learners learn writing mostly by trial and error, by responding to the feedback from the teachers and when teachers model the texts that they have to write (Adams 2008:3). Granville and Dison (2009:56) suggest modeling as a teaching tool because it affords teachers and learners with an opportunity to collaborate together for successful teaching and learning of writing.

It could be through collaboration that teachers could be informed about their learners writing expectations and how they perceive writing so that they could be able to make informed decisions on the pedagogical approaches suitable to teach their learners. If learners do collaborate with the teachers in learning to write by being given opportunity to choose or select topics, that could serve as a motivating factor to the learners. Curry (2007:126) further perceives that the learners' knowledge and their prior experiences could used to scaffold new learning. It is important that the study should look at how in the classroom writing could be achieved through scaffolding.

2.9.6.1 Curriculum Cycle on writing

Judd et al. (2009) state that First Additional Language students should be given practice in creating effective, natural language that communicates their intended message. In order to achieve the skill or content which is Writing and Presenting and which states that the learner is able to write and present for a wide range of purposes and audience using conventions and formats appropriate to diverse context (DBE, 2003), educators need to use a full range of texts which learners need to understand and produce in creative ways. This means, educators should use a variety of texts to cultivate writing competency in the learners. Webber (2000) identifies two approaches to the teaching of writing, the process approach and the genre approach. The major theme in the process approach is that learners learn to write most effectively when they are encouraged to start with their own expressive language (Gibbons, 2002). In the process approach method to writing, learners explore a topic through writing, share their draft with the educator or each other and use what they have written to move over to the new ideas. Key to the process approach is planning before you write, drafting, revising and editing as you write and having a sense of your intended audience (Webber, 2000). The process approach stages include; brainstorming where learners need to give or write random ideas.

Putting these ideas in a mind map for planning purposes could lead to cohesion between the paragraphs. That should be followed by writing a first draft which could as a foundation to the final product. Wing (2009) claims that this step is important in the

writing process because it might assist the learner to stimulate thinking and reduce confusion.Another step is peer review where other learners should recheck and give others feedback on how they must write. It is seen as advantageous to the learners in that learners become more critical of each other and that their feedback is different from their teachers, in that it is mostly complementary (Berg,1999). After peer feedback, the writing could be ready for editing to eliminate errors. That might be followed by revision which will be the response to the feedback provided by the peers or teachers and the witting of the final draft (Judd et al, 2009).

In view of this, Gibbons (2002) claims that a significant challenge of school literacy is learning to write about, and reflect on, more than just personal experience. She argues that the genre theorists claim that factual writing is crucial to learning socially powerful forms of knowledge. The activities may include writing a report, procedure, recount a narrative and exposition. Gibbons (2002) identified four stages –the Curriculum Cycle- through which a particular text type can be made explicit to students. These four stages of the Curriculum Cycle are the following: building up the field, modelling the text type, joint construction and independent writing.

Stage 1: Building knowledge of the topic

   The main focus at this stage is primarily on the content of the topic with the aim of building up the background knowledge where learners are expected to collect information. This activity involves speaking, mostly in the mother tongue, reading more books to gather enough information and note-taking. At this stage learners are a long way from writing a text themselves. In this regard, this research hastens to suggest that for good writing to take place there should also be enough reading. Therefore, reading and writing go hand in glove.

Stage 2: Modelling the text

The main aim of the stage is for students to become familiar with the purpose, overall structure and linguistic features of the type of the text they are going to write. At this stage educators have to introduce some language that the learners should use when

writing the text. For example, if learners are to write a newspaper report, they would need to know the structure of the text, punctuation marks involved and the tense.

Stage 3: Joint construction

At this stage the learners and the teacher write the text together so that the learners can see how the text is written. The main focus is on illustrating the process of writing a text considering both the language and the content. At this stage the teacher and the learners together have to discuss the overall structure of the text, suggest more appropriate vocabulary, and consider alternative ways of wording and work on correcting grammar in the context of actual language use and at the point of need. The teacher encourages learners to focus on all aspects of writing. The stage should be teacher guided not teacher dominated. The teacher does not write her own text, her role is to take up ideas from learners. It becomes the duty of the educator to guide the learners in the writing process.

Stage 4: Independent writing

This is the final stage where the learners write their own texts individually or in pairs. By this time a considerable amount of scaffolding has been done, they have developed knowledge background about the subject, are aware of the linguistic characteristics of the text type, and have jointly constructed a similar text. The preparation for writing will help ensure that they have knowledge and skills to be able to write their own texts with confidence.

Deducing from the above discussions of the different approaches to teaching writing, one can conclude that the current thinking which is reflected in CAPS draws on strengths from the common ground between the three types of writing strategies.

2.10 Some obstacles in writing

In the pursuit for writing in second language, learners need to engage in an endeavour and conscious effort to achieve their desirable competency because writing is regarded

as one of the most difficult and challenging skills to be taught (Raja and Zahid, 2013). In addition Ahmed's (2010) argues that learners face multitudes of obstacles such as being intimidated by the target language while in the writing process.Therefore, obstacles may lead to learners having poor writing skills or committing numerous errors as they are writing.Msanjila (2005) asserts that many learners' obstacles in writing manifest themselves when they have to express themselves systematically and logically. Among the very many obstacles, Raja and Zahid (2013) identified the following problems encountered by learners when writing:

1) **Organisation:** In this case, learners are usually not clear about their writing task as a result they seldom organise their tasks in paragraphs. It is evident that if learners did not plan their writing task and ideas logically, their work could be a mess.

2) **Spelling:** This happens mostly when learners confuse the homophones and again tend to misspell words with the similar consonants such as *b*ored.

3) **Punctuation**: Learners do not often know when and where to use the punctuation marks. There are some punctuation marks that are confused by learners and those that are never used properly.

4) **Capitalisation**: It became evident that learners know that at the beginning of the sentence they should use capital letters. The challenge was in the proper nouns when used in the middle of the sentence, it was not capitalised. Note should be also taken on the fact that 'I' was not always capitalised.

5) **Vocabulary**: It was discovered that learners rarely make use of the same words in different forms or parts of speech and that learners seldom come up with a variety of words so as to make their essays much presentable.

6) **Grammar**: Grammatical correctness is vital in any form of writing because it assists in the generation of ideas in writing tasks. Learners do not often use parts of speech such as adjectives and nouns in a proper sequence.

In light of what had been discussed above, it can be concluded that learners demonstrate reduced writing skills. It is advisable that teachers should devise strategies

to tackle the identified problems in the best possible method beneficiary to the second language learners.

2.11 SUMMARY

The chapter describes the philosophical theories related to the constructivism and the role of language in learning. It also described general theories on second language acquisition and learning and also the South African language policies and how these policies are perceived by many schools. Literature relating to teaching languages and the importance of language in the South African constitution had been reviewed. It is through the constitution that Bilingual education is entrenched. One may also note that in other countries English dominates, giving it a status of an International Language. Theories on motivation concentrating on second language learning have also been reviewed. It had been reviewed that motivation could assist FAL learners to adapt to learning a foreign language. Having been motivated in FAL learning, they might be interested in independent learning in their FAL and use that as opportunity to better their careers. In relation to the study, the role of writing in learning was also reviewed. Different literature related to second language learning, writing in the FAL which is central to the study included; approaches, elements on writing, writing strategies and curriculum cycle on writing, including the obstacles in writing in EFAL had all been reviewed.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter departs from the literature review and would present a well justified research methodology in the quest to investigate the writing competency of Grade 12 learners in the rural Eastern Cape schools. It commences with a discussion of the philosophical assumptions underlying various methodologies and the one in which this study is positioned. The study was premised within the interpretivist paradigm based on a qualitative research method. It is a case study design. The population comprised of teachers and Grade 12 learners. Data collection tools encompassed interviews, focus group discussions, essays and free writings. The study also made use of the document analysis, analyzing essays and free writing, whereby the researcher checked how well the learners understand the language through writing and where they were expressing their thoughts and experiences without being intimidated. The researcher set up focus groups as means of gathering data from the Grade 12 learners. All the steps for data collection mentioned above, are presented and thoroughly discussed in this chapter.

3.2 Research Questions

The following were the research questions that acted as a guide and managed to give out richness and in-depth information to this investigation.

3.2.1 Main Research Question

How competent are Grade 12 learners in their First Additional Language (FAL) writing?

3.2.2 Sub-research questions

1. What challenges do Grade 12 FAL learners face in writing?

2 .What strategies are used in teaching writing?

3. What are the perceptions of teachers on learners' writing?

4. What are the perceptions of the learners on their writing?

5. What is the link between writing competency and performance?

3.3 Orientation of the Research

The study was located within the qualitative approach with the aim of describing and comprehending in a subjective manner, the nature of the phenomenon of writing competency among Grade 12 learners in two rural schools. The qualitative research approach is believed to have provided the depth to the study and was also believed to be suitable in revealing meanings that underlie learners EFAL writing experiences (Stroebe, et al., 2003). However, this study was underpinned within the interpretivist paradigm framework.

3.4 Research Paradigm

A paradigm can be defined as a cluster of beliefs and practices that are linked together with a particular worldview about how scientific practices should take place (Becker and Bryman, 2004). In other words, Gibbons and Sanderson (2002) also define a paradigm as philosophical frameworks that give guidance to the researchers when carrying out research. A paradigm according to Mungunda (2003) is a frame of reference or mental map through which the world is viewed. On the notion of world view, Mertens (2010) adds that a paradigm is composed of certain philosophical assumptions that direct and guide thinking and action as the researchers perceive reality; hence they represent what they think of the world. In other words, Ching (2008) reiterates that every paradigm

should be viewed as a different set of binoculars through which a researcher is able to view and work within the field. It is the choice of paradigm that assists in setting down the intent, motivation and expectations for any researchers. The choice of a paradigm that helped to guide the study was usually influenced by the nature of the problem being investigated. Said differently, it had to be suitable for the interests or purposes of the research undertaken. The main objective of the study was to investigate Grade 12 learners' EFAL writing competency in two rural public schools in the Eastern Cape. Without recommending the suitable paradigm as the first step, there could be no basis for the subsequent choices regarding methodology, methods, literature or research design (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006).

In this sense, a paradigm gave direction to the research endeavors; it also served to reassert itself to the exclusion of other paradigms and to articulate the theories it has already established. There were a plethora of research paradigms that could be employed in studies. However, it became the researcher's prerogative to opt for a paradigm that would be dictated by the research questions in the study. In view of this, the interpretivist research paradigm appeared to be ideal for this study as it best fitted the phenomenon which was the investigation into Grade 12 learners' EFAL writing competency in two rural public schools.

3.4.1 Interpretive paradigm

Gray (2005) argues that the interpretivist paradigm strives to be in comprehension of the human nature and how to describe it. The interpretivist approach to research intends to understand how human beings experience the world around them (Cohen and Manion, 1994). Following the description above, Gary (2005) further asserts that one can be of the view that this paradigm entails subjectivity and idiographic of knowledge because what is reckoned as truth is dependent on the context which happens to be the strength of this investigation. To complement the arguments above, both Creswell (2003) and Nieuwenhuis (2007) are of the opinion that reality is socially constructed, which implies that society plays part in creating experiences of human beings. In the case of the study, learners whose FAL is English, were the ones who

know the reality of writing in English, and were therefore the most appropriate to share their experiences.

Cohen and Crabtree (2006) view reality as socially constructed fluid and that what people know is always negotiated through cultures, social settings and relationships with other people. In view of this, learners who were at the centre of the study, were believed to have constructed their language which is embedded within their culture with their societies, as a result their environments have a great influence in their language learning. The interpretive paradigm looks at the social world from a subjective viewpoint and places emphasis on the subjective consciousness (Ching, 2008). This means the chosen paradigm looked at how the researcher's judgement could have been shaped by her/his personal feelings instead of external influences.

In the study, the interpretivist paradigm appeared to balance the theoretical framework on which the study is located because it claims that from a sociocultural perspective, learners' cognitive processes are influenced by the interaction and social environment (Lin, 2013). The learners in the study came from rural areas where they are only exposed to their mother tongue and the only opportunity to speak English was in the classroom. In other words, these learners did not have any interaction with English out of school matter. The study through the interpretivist paradigm sought to interpret learners' sociocultural settings or environment and how it influences their learning to write in EFAL.

Furthermore, interpretivists have a tendency of relying on the participants' views of the situation under study to recognize the impact of the research of their own background and experiences (Creswell, 2003). The interpretivist paradigm allows investigation of the subject matter by the natural sciences where human being can be in a position to interpret the environment, their experiences and themselves (Hammersley and Onwuegbuzie, 2000). In the case of the study, learners' writing experiences in the EFAL was weighed against the language they are used to from their environments so as to get a bigger picture of how they interpret the situation they are faced with. By making use of interpretivism, the people's knowledge interest doesn't remain technical or inform

interventions through the research but develop a deeper understanding of a situation, person, community or case (Rensburg, 2001).

While the interpretive research paradigm is often distinguished for its value in the provision of contextual depth, results mostly get criticism in terms of validity, reliability and the ability to generalize, referred to collectively as research legitimization. Nieuwenhuis (2007) argues that the other critique leveled against the interpretivist research paradigm is directed towards the subjectivity and the failure of the approach to generalize its findings beyond the situation studied. This means that the findings from the selected schools that inform the study could not be the same as that of other schools within the same setting or environment. Findings could be influenced by human bias and the notion of subjectivity and objectivity. As the problem statement as well as the background to this study indicate that learners are struggling with writing, it was easier to identify the problem from a small unit before generalization.

Thus, the subjective nature of the study could help to give a depth that statistics alone cannot. In view of that, it is therefore necessary to get the in-depth through a qualitative study before finding means of integrating other schools since these schools seem to face the same problem. In view of that, Foncha (2013) argues that matters of competence cannot be understood through numbers as competency varies in different contexts. Therefore the challenges encountered in writing can better be understood through the subjective views of the participants in the study more than through quantitative study. That is to say that some of the problems that they encounter might only be unique to that particular case and cannot therefore be generalized to similar cases from rural areas. Despite the above limitations, the study was guided by the interpretivist paradigm because it dealt with people and their experiences in a certain social setting which was a school. In that regard, it is reflective of the human nature that could never be predicted for sure.

3.5 Research Design

Trochim (2006) refers to research design as the structure of research that holds all of the elements in a research project together. A research approach or design can be qualitative, quantitative or a mixed method approach depending on the responses from the researcher to the following three questions that are suggested by Creswell (2003:5):

I.   What knowledge claims are being made by the researcher (including theoretical perspective)?

II.   What strategies of inquiry will inform the procedures? and

III. What methods of data collection and analysis will be used?

There is no single blueprint for planning research for it is governed by the notion of fitness for purpose. Cohen et al. (2006) argue that the rationale of any research is the one that determines the methodology and design of the study. The research design is the blue print for carrying out the study (Denzin et al. 2005). In other words, research designs could be viewed as constructed plans and strategies developed to seek, explore and discover answers to research questions. Taylor (2000) and Denzin and Lincoln (1994) also assert that these strategies are flexible and act as guidelines that connect theoretical paradigms to strategies of enquiry and methods of collecting empirical materials. The strategies can be experiments, or surveys in the case of quantitative studies; or they can be ethnographies, case studies, or phenomenological research if it is a qualitative study. The study focused on a particular case which was Grade 12 learners because it intended getting a detailed comprehension of their EFAL writing competency.

Maree (2007) views a research design as a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be done. Taylor (2000) has a similar view to that of Maree as he describes research designs as constructed plans and strategies that are developed in a bid to seek and discover answers to the research questions. Research design should therefore be viewed as an arrangement of procedures and methods of the research project that include sampling, data collection

and data analysis and interpretation of the results. Finally, a research design provides guidelines and structure to the research process in order to prevent haphazard procedures. Hence it was held in high esteem as the entire plan of the study and the research design that would be employed in the study would be discussed in detail below.

3.5.1 A case study

Gillham (2000) defines a case study as a unit of human activity embedded in the real world which can only be studied or understood in context. In this study, the cases that are being studied are two rural secondary schools where the LoLT and FAL is English with specific reference to writing both in EFAL and content subject within the schools. A case study is a specific instance that is frequently designed to illustrate a more general principle; it is the study of an instance in action (Rule and John 2011). It provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles (Cohen et al. 2006). The utilization of the case study in the research in the selected schools and educators demonstrated a general undertaking of the writing of the Grade 12 learners in their FAL. Rule and John (2011) identify two broad categories of case study namely, intrinsic and instrumental case studies. They make a distinction between the two case studies explaining that the intrinsic case study's focal point draws on the case because it is in itself is interesting. An instrumental case study examines the case so as to explore a broader issue in depth. In the study, an instrumental case study was used because Grade 12 is the final class that is used to measure the performance of the school in its totality. Again it is through writing that the learners sit for their final examinations so as to progress to another class or level of education.

According to Thomas (2011) the case study design is a kind of research that concentrates on one thing, looking at it in detail not seeking to generalize from it. When doing a case study, you are interested in that thing in itself as a whole. A case study is about a particular rather than the general. In this case, the study was looking specifically

at Grade 12 learners' EFAL writing competency, not the other skills like speaking, reading and listening. Yin (2003) defines the case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. Case studies explore subjects and issues where relationships may be ambiguous or uncertain. This approach was deemed useful for the study because it investigated Grade 12 learners' EFAL writing competency of particular learners in a particular school.

Interpretivists employing a case study design in their studies could be provided with several advantages. Yin (2003) draws out that the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events such as individual life cycles and organizational and managerial processes. Since context is central to the interpretive paradigms, Robson (1993) suggests that if the researcher's main concern is to understand what is happening in a specific context and if s/he can get access to cooperation from the people involved, then s/he must use a case study. That draws a rationale for selecting case study design for this study as it could assist in understanding the writing of Grade 12 learners in EFAL.

Human behaviors, thoughts and feelings are partly determined by their context (Yin, 2003). In the case of the study, if the researcher wanted to understand people in their real life setting, the Grade 12 learners writing competency in EFAL, then he/she needed to visit the participants. Based on this, Van Ransburg (2001:76) acknowledges that;

> *As interpretivist researchers, our design would reflect an interest in contextual meaning making rather than generalized rules. Instead of surveying large group, we would take a close look at individuals or small groups in naturalist settings using in-depth studies.*

Babbie and Moutton (2005), postulate that a case study facilitates an intensive investigation of a single unit which can be an individual study, community studies, social group studies, studies of organizations and institutions, studies of events, roles and relationships and studies of countries and nations.

Affirmation on the case study from Moutton (2004) is that case studies strive to portray what it is like to be in a particular situation to catch the closed-up reality and thick description of participants' lived experiences of thoughts about, and feelings for, a

situation enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles. The participants in the study were envisaged to portray their lived experiences of writing in EFAL. The researcher adopted the case study because it allowed him/her to gather large amounts of data and it also enabled him/her to get into greater depth and insight into the real dynamics of situations and people.

Despite the many strengths of the case study research design that are presented above, case studies also have limitations. Yin (2003) presents two types of arguments against case study design. Firstly, he argues that case studies are often accused of lacking rigour. Secondly, Yin (2003) further notes that too many times the case study investigators can be casual, and can allow unclear evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusion. In view of the above, the researcher, who was also EFAL Grade 12 teacher, had to bracket him/herself so that she/he could not exercise bias of any nature that could influence the respondents as that would not yield valid and reliable results of the case being studied. The researcher was strongly guided in this weakness by adhering to ethical considerations that would be discussed later in the chapter.

Cohen et al. (2006), also confirms the view that although the case study research design has strengths, it also has perceived shortcomings, like the following;

> ➢ The results may not be generalized except where other readers / researchers see their application.

> ➢ They are not easily open to cross-checking; hence they may be selective, biased, personal and subjective.

> ➢ They are prone to problems of observer bias, despite attempts made to address reflexivity (Cohen et.al 2006:184)

3.5.1.1 Setting

The new democratic state that came into existence in South Africa after 1994 was welcomed with numerous and contradictory demands (Naidoo, 2002). First, it was anticipated to provide a more unprejudiced and humane society in a climate of rising expectations in a bid to counter what the people of South Africa experienced during the apartheid regime. Concurrently, the state was further enthusiastically projected to afford the conditions for economic growth and development. Acacia (2000) adds that the state was therefore positioned as the revolutionizing mechanism for advanced capitalist accumulation in a context of increasing globalisation and financial sternness. On the second thought, it was assumed that the state would unify a divided society without threatening the white population which was perceived as the best beneficiaries of the former government. Thirdly, the state was also expected to be receptive to the will of the people and to assure a greater than before participation and outspread democracy in society (Acacia, 2000). Furthermore, in the discourses of the progressive anti-apartheid education movement, there had been a strong call for the democratisation of the state and the education system. Naidoo (2002) states that it was believed that the transition to post-apartheid society would usher in the installation of a legitimate political centre which would transform education to meet the needs of all, in particular, the historically marginalised and disadvantaged sectors of society.

To achieve these goals, it became essential that the education system of the country should undergo a drastic change towards accomplishing the constitutional obligation of viewing education as a right not a privilege (Patton, 2000). Macmillan and Schumarcher are of the opinion that the post-apartheid education transformation had been impressive in its scope, coverage and positioning. The new government methodically embarked on dismantling the previous segregated education racial directive as well as comprehensively reviewing the entire education policy environment at all levels of the education system (Patton, 2002). Through such processes, it is appalling to note that there still exist schools which are still disadvantaged due to their environmental locations, infrastructure and technology. While there were many gains, there was a clear recognition from both within and outside of the state that there was fundamentally

a two tier education system in South Africa, one catering for the wealthy -which also still remained white- and one catering for the poorer- which still remained black. What had been argued above, found its expression in the current study which is located in the public schools in rural areas. The following description of schools would endorse the aforementioned perceptions about the two tier system of education that exists in South Africa despite what the education policies envisage.

3.5.1.2 Remotely situated rural schools

The two districts where the schools were situated were rural and semi-rural, but the schools were public schools situated in the rural areas. There were close similarities in the schools where the research was conducted. As the researcher was approaching school A, she/he observed that the village where the school was situated was dominated by mud houses and rondavels with footpaths leading to the school. The school was surrounded by stock fence which is loose at some places. Buildings are three normal well-kept and painted school structures with a separate brick block used by learners and staff as toilets. At the school, the researcher had the privilege to be taken inside one of the classrooms where she/he met the learners' parents, and later conducted the focus group discussions. The classroom was a normal size with the tiles, chalkboard, well-kept windows and intact ceiling. School B was situated in the middle of nowhere, far from the tar road, near the miliefields and the villages are not close to the school. It is a big school with a high security fence. The buildings are normal school structures that are well-kept.

School buildings are the most basic needs when it comes to schooling, because without appropriate school buildings and stationery it becomes practically impossible for learners to receive adequate teaching. There are many rural schools that do not have adequate school buildings and stationery for learners to use, because of the partial subsidy the state provides for building costs (Naidoo, 2002). The rest of the costs including building mud schools are usually borne by the community. Most rural schools exist in areas with extreme poverty and therefore there is unlikely to be extra funds for buildings and resources (Karavakas, 2008).The isolation of rural schools from the urban

education mainstream could be viewed as another hurdle that the government has to overcome. Most rural schools are located in inaccessible areas, which then make it difficult for resources and facilities to reach them. Such schools also encounter limited transport resources to these areas, where scholars usually walk long distances to school. When it rains these rural 'gravel' roads become dangerous to travel on and because there are limited communication resources at these rural schools they get left behind and forgotten. This is one of the main drawbacks facing rural schools (Costello, 2000).

3.5.1.3 Lack of libraries

Many of South Africa's rural public schools are situated in areas that exist below subsistence levels and remain impoverished because they have no access to basic infrastructure essential for economic growth and development (Acacia, 2000). The schools where the study was conducted were no-fee paying schools. According to the Norms and Standards for school funding, schools have been positioned under Quintiles 1,2,3,4 and 5because of the poverty level and the school condition (Amsterdam, 2006). Quintiles 1, 2 and 3 means that the school community is relatively poor as confirmed by the previous census and were exempted from paying school fees. Quintile 4 and 5 according to the poverty rate are medium and high rated in terms of income (Amsterdam, 2006).

Furlonger (2002) points out that urban scholars have the advantage of computer centres, Internet access to information, experienced teachers and ample sporting and cultural facilities to choose from. The library is a common resource in most urban schools and areas. According to Masson (2002) most rural communities do not even know what a library is let alone what its function is. Establishing a library in schools in rural areas would help improve the illiteracy rate and enhance rural education. These libraries could eventually evolve to include computers to help train scholars in computer literacy (Barnes, 2006). In both the public schools under study, there were no buildings for libraries and science laboratories. The other building that caught the researcher's eyes was made of corrugated iron and was used for cooking school nutrition for the

learners. Rural scholars have no textbooks, writing paper, desks, electricity or even toilets. Furlonger (2002) further argues that research shows that 50% of schoolchildren drop out before high school, mostly in rural areas. With little or no command of English - the language they are expected to switch to in Grade 5 - their cause is nearly impossible. Rural schools presently face many challenges that are foreign to their urban counterparts. There is a worrying increase in the gap between rural schools and their urban counterparts when it comes to access to good quality education. According to Naidoo (2002) research has shown that rural scholars lag up to seven years behind their urban counterparts in basic skills like reading and writing. Costello, (2000) concludes the argument by stating that geographic location should not place limitations on access to information and the use of the internet, which are considered vital to the promotion of learning, training and business development in developing communities.

In view of the above school descriptions, it was the researcher's wish that the reader could have a picture and through the settings would understand the nature of the environments where the schools are situated. Further to that, the school setting could have an impact on learners' academic performance, in this case, EFAL learning. This is on line with this study's theoretical framework which advocates that second language learning does not take place in emptiness, meaning that there is interdependence of cognitive learning and sociocultural activities (Lin, 2013). It is in this view that language learning could also be understood as a social practice and learners considered as participants in constructing their learning and assist in investigating how different factors involved in the process of learning interact (Levy and Stockwell, 2006).

3.6 Qualitative Approach

Qualitative research approach is defined as an enquiry process of understanding, where a researcher develops a complex holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative research approach presents a researcher with the opportunity to visit

respondents in their natural surroundings as well as draw together information on their experiences. Since the study made use of the qualitative research, the researcher visited the learners and teachers in their respective schools so as to approach reality which could permit for multiple meanings of individual experiences (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). According to Creswell (2005), the main goal of qualitative research is to discover and understand a central phenomenon, which is the concept or process explored in a qualitative research study. Based on this, the main purpose of the researcher's visit to the schools was to dig deep and discover more about the learners' FAL writing competencies. The environments where the schools were located were rural, with no libraries nearby.

The sample size in a qualitative research is usually small and is also usually purposively selected from those individuals who have the most experience of the studied phenomenon (Ivankova, et al., 2007). In view of this, the researcher then purposively selected the two rural schools in remote villages, whose learners use the school as the major source of interacting with their FAL. There are many schools in rural areas, the schools selected by the researcher were also rural and situated in deep rural areas.

Ivankova, et al., (2007) declare that the qualitative researcher collects words and images about the studied topic. The data was collected from people immersed in the setting of everyday life in which the study is framed as in the interpretive paradigm above. It is through this paradigm that the researcher envisaged how people experience the world around them. In the study, the researcher's intentions were to discover how competent Grade 12 learners in writing in FAL are. The researcher served as an instrument of data collection and asked the participants broad, open-ended questions which allowed them to share their views and experiences which in the case of this study was the writing competency of Grade 12 learners.

In giving the characteristics of a qualitative research, Ryan, (2006) argues that qualitative research seeks to give a provision to an in-depth picture and generally deals with smaller numbers; it tries to deduce historically or culturally significant phenomena; and can be employed to dig out quantitative data. Moreover it tries to separate and define categories during the research process; and it is fitting when the questions raised

by the researcher are difficult for a respondent to answer precisely. In addition; it tries to shed light on aspects of people's everyday lives; as such it values respondents' perspectives on their worlds; and often takes the people's words as its primary data (Ivankova et al., 2007).There is a widespread claim that English dominates educational landscape globally and continentally and is used as LoLT. Since it is a foreign language, it becomes imperative to understand how its learning takes place and above all how learners cope with writing in that language. Using English as LoLT takes place almost at all schools in the Eastern Cape Province which is both rural and urban. From the rural schools, the researcher tried to get an in-depth portrait of how writing in the FAL can impact on Grade 12 learners.

According to Creswell (2003), qualitative research uses strategies of inquiry such as narratives, phenomenology, ethnographies, grounded theory studies or case studies. Denscombe (2005) argues that what actually separates qualitative research and gives it its distinctive identity is the fact that it has its own special approach to the collection and analysis of data, which marks it out as quite different from its quantitative counterpart. In light of this, Suter (2006) emphasizes that qualitative research aims at explaining complex phenomena through verbal descriptions rather than testing hypothesis with numerical values. In this case, the study was not concerned about the number of learners but whether they are competent in writing in FAL.

In this type of research, the researcher collected open ended emerging data with the primary intention of developing themes from the data. However, findings from a qualitative research are often not generalisable because of the small number and narrow range of participants used in the data collection process. The data that was collected appeared to be reliable in the sense that the setting where it was collected was the true representation of the rural schools in rural villages or environments. That was the case from many rural schools.

Mays and Pope (1995) summarize some of the criticisms of the qualitative approaches and suggests; first of all that qualitative research is merely a collection of anecdote and personal impressions, strongly subject to researchers' bias. Secondly qualitative research is so personal to the researcher that there is no guarantee that a different

researcher would not come to radically different conclusions. Finally, qualitative research is criticized for lacking generalizability. The study was mainly concerned about writing and had used Grade 12 learners in rural secondary schools to fill what the researcher found as a gap. What the findings of reflected, could be used as a stick to measure or determine the extent of FAL writing competency to other rural learners The researcher was firm not to be subjected by any circumstances in the schools; she/he tried not to judge the schools by their environments but gave them benefit that what happens inside the schools might not be influenced by the learners' environments.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998), qualitative research has actual settings as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument. For that reason, the researcher visited the schools several times and spent time in the natural setting; going to the selected schools and talking to the learners and EFAL teachers so as to be able to understand the context in which their perceptions of writing in their FAL are founded. According to Siege (2006), as opposed to quantitative research, the study concludes with the hypothesis and not begins with it. Qualitative researchers do not know answers from the outset of the study, they seek for the answers from the participants and the meaning in the qualitative research approach takes shape as information is gathered. To throw more lights, Key (1997) argues that some of the advantages of the qualitative research are its production of the more in-depth comprehensive information. It employs subjective information and participant observation to describe the context and also seeks the wide understanding of the entire situation.

In the case under study, the interviewees and the focus groups came up with their subjective views of how they perceive writing. Learners discussed their opinions and concluded their argument by expressing what they felt was the most common and appropriate answer to the questions. On the same point, Babbie and Mouton (2005) assert that qualitative research attempts to view the world through the eyes (perspective) of the actors themselves. Participants (actors) in the study were teachers who were sharing their world of experiences in writing in their different classrooms. Gary (2009) in the same regard, claims that qualitative research goes beyond giving a snapshot or cross section of events and can show how and why things happen by also

incorporating people's own motivation, emotions, prejudices and incidents of interpersonal cooperation and conflict.

Qualitative studies could be used in circumstances where relatively little is known about the phenomenon, or to gain new perspectives on the issues where much is already known (Gary, 2009).In this regard, much is written about writing in a second language or FAL, and the researcher sought to add to what is already known and therefore added what the participants experience in the rural public secondary schools.

3.7 Population and Sampling Procedures

3.7.1 Population

Population is the theoretically specified total number of study elements from which the sample is actually selected (Babbie and Mouton, 2005:173). Best and Khan (1993) and Tuckman (1994) have a slightly different view on population. They describe population in a research context as any target group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that is of interest to the researcher for the purposes of gaining information and drawing conclusions. Furthermore, Creswell (2009) perceives the population as that group which the researcher is interested in attaining information and drawing conclusions. Babbie and Mouton (2005) also define the population as a group of participants being focused on by the study and, in most cases, the groups being studiedcould be too large for all members to participate. The latter definition was the most appropriate for the study because the Grade 12 learners in rural public schools appeared to be the most suitable population and were the ones whose progression through examination depends on competent writing. The target population comprised of 24 EFAL learners from rural public secondary schools, 8 teachers of different content subjects and 2 EFAL teachers.

3.7.2 Sample and sampling procedures

Sampling refers to the process of selecting people or elements from a population for inclusion in a research study (Patton, 2002). Nieuwenhuis (2007) similarly defines sampling as the process used to select a portion of the population for study. Mason (2002) points that sampling is a systematic principle based procedure used to make well considered selection that enables a researcher to gain access to relevant data sources. Mason (2002) further explains that data sources relate to a relevant wider population and a researcher's choices requires to then be linked meaningfully to a wider context.

Mason's (2002) view suggests that researcher's choices should be based on well thought-out principles that are justified by the intentions of the nature of what needs to be examined in terms of depth, circumstance and the purpose to which the results need to be used. The question of relevance of information sources is paramount because in research, credibility counts and sources must be relevant for data yielded to be dependable. Patton (2002) illustrates that researchers do sampling because limited resources or time often prevent them from studying an entire population. The strengths of using sampling as stated by Karavakas (2008) are that it makes the research feasible and enables the researcher to organise the research with ease. He adds that sampling reduces the costs of research and saves on time. Curtis et al. (2000) maintain that qualitative samples are small, studied intensively and each one typically generates a large amount of information. A well selected sample, therefore, positively contributes to the credibility of the findings in any given research.

The current study adopted purposive sampling which is a non-probability sampling technique where the researcher identifies information rich participants for the reason that they are possibly knowledgeable about the phenomena under study (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006). The selection of participants, settings or other sampling units is criterion based or purposive (Mason, 2002; Patton, 2002). In purposive sampling, researchers have autonomy to handpick the cases to be incorporated in the study on the basis of their judgement of their typicality (Cohen et al., 2006).Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) acknowledge the importance of purposive sampling in research by

arguing that, a researcher purposefully selects certain groups of people or individuals for their relevance to the issue being studied. Information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research. Hence, in this study, the researcher targeted known rich information sources which were two secondary schools where EFAL is used as a LoLT.

The 24 learners were purposefully selected because they are doing Grade 12 which is viewed as an exit class in secondary schools; where learners are supposed to be competent in their FAL in preparation for tertiary institution. Among the eight teachers were two EFAL teachers who are thought to have firsthand experience of teaching and interacting with the EFAL Grade12 learners daily. Other teachers were teaching content subjects that are taught in English since it is the LoLT. All the teachers were purposively chosen due to their positions and knowledge in teaching and marking written scripts from EFAL learners.

To justify sampling, based on Best and Khan's (1993) observations, it is advisable at times to sub-divide the population into smaller standardized groups to get more precise presentation. It was therefore under such position that the researcher selected the teachers and learners because they had similarities and also because they belonged to the same environment. They share a lot in common. It could be difficult for the researcher to study all the people to draw conclusions due to the limited time for a PhD study. The researcher could also find it difficult to send questionnaires, observe or interview every member of the studied population, however, researchers agree that there is no clear- cut answer for the correct sample size; it depends on the purpose of the study and the nature of the population under scrutiny. Cohen et al. (2006) observe that if the sample is too large it might become unmanageable and too small a sample might be unrepresentative.

On the other hand, a well-designed sampling plan always makes a great contribution to both the reliability and validity of research findings. If sampling is done in accordance with the standard of sampling plans, it should be possible for another researcher to replicate the findings which is an important aspect of reliability (Cohen et al., 2006). Although purposive selection encompasses quite deliberate choices that should not suggest any bias in the nature of the choices made. The process of purposive sampling

requires clear objectivity so that the sample stands up to independent scrutiny (Ritchie et al., 2003). Thus, the teachers were selected because they possessed a deeper understanding of how competent learners are in writing in EFAL and learners as the ones engaged in writing in English. The participants were also chosen to ensure diverse perspectives. Through the face to face interviews, focus group interviews and documentary analysis, the researcher was able to get the lived experiences and perceptions from participants on the Grade 12 learners' writing competency in EFAL.

3.8   Data Collection Instruments

In this study the researcher solicited data through the use of interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. The adoption of the interpretivist research approaches assisted in emphasizing the understanding of how human beings experience the world around them. That entailed selecting data collection techniques that were appropriate to the philosophy of both the research methodology and the design. Also taken into consideration was the nature of the research problem, the research objectives, the size and geographical location of the study elements, and the availability of finances, human resources and time.

3.8.1 Interviews

Face to face interview was seen as ideal for this study as it sought to go deeper and find out writing competency in the rural secondary schools. The information was solicited from two EFAL teachers, five content subject teachers and twenty-four learners. An interview is a face to face conversation between the interviewer and the participants or a group of participants (Leedy, 1980; Wiersma, 2000). The researcher made use of the interviews because they could afford her/him an opportunity to pursue the responses of the respondents to clarify some incomprehensible points obtained during observation and the other tools for data collection. The researcher was able to ask for elaboration or redefinition if a response appeared to be incomplete or

ambiguous. More information was solicited through the personal contact between the researcher and the participants.

Gratton and Jones (2004) identify four categories of interviews namely; the structured, semi structured, focus group or group interviews and unstructured interviews. The study used semi-structured interviews as a primary strategy for data collection as it allowed respondents to express themselves at some length. Semi-structured interviews were based on an interview guide- a list of questions and topics that have to be covered (Bernard & Ryan 2010). Bernard and Ryan (2010) assert that the interviewer covers each topic by asking one or more questions and using a variety of probes (like "Tell me more about that") and decides when the conversation on the topic has satisfied and has covered the research objectives. Nunan (2006) emphasizes that semi-structured interviews consist of specific and defined questions determined beforehand, yet at the same time allows some elaboration on the questions and answers.

The semi-structured interviews that the researcher used allowed the participants to expand lengthily on their answers. (Yin, 2003) and Cohen et al., (2006: 268) concede that semi-structured interviews provide access to what is "inside a person's head", as it could make it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and, perceptions), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs).

These interviews were organized in the form of standardized questions like the following:

1. What can you say is a role of English as a subject towards teaching your subject?

   The researcher wanted to check the teachers' views on teaching their subjects in English.

2. Since English is the LoLT at your school, how do you think it is beneficiary to your subject teaching?

   The researcher intended to find out from the teachers the benefits of teaching their subjects in English.

3. Do you encourage code switching when teaching your subject, why?

The researcher's intention was to check whether teachers code switch when teaching their respective subjects.

The interview schedules were set up; for the learners and were crafted from the research questions. They were conducted after school when the learners were free so as to gather information in a more relaxed mode. The researcher went to the schools after tuition and was given a classroom where she/he conducted the interviews. That was the place the learners were used to and could feel free to speak. For the teachers interviews were scheduled on specific days agreed upon by the researcher and the teachers. The researcher encountered much challenge concerning interviewing teachers. More than once, the researcher would set appointments with the teachers but when the interview time come and the researcher went to school, the teachers would complain about being busy. Some even left the school without saying a word although they had seen the researcher. After some persuasion by the researcher some teachers were willing but others stated categorically clear that they are tired of researchers and were not anymore willing to participate in the study.

In the semi-structured face to face interviews, a participant is required to answer a set of predetermined questions that define the line of inquiry. Probing and clarification of answers is allowed. In this type of interview, the researcher needs to be very attentive to the responses given by the interviewees so as to identify new emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the phenomenon being studied. The researcher tried to probe learners with some questions so as to assist them to expatiate on what they were saying and had to give clarity on the questions learners did not understand clearly. In structured interviews, the questions are detailed and developed in advance just like in survey research (Maree, 2007). In the study the interview questions are detailed later in the chapter.

In this regard, perceptions and attitudes of participants were important to the researcher as she/he could gain insight on issues which could affect the learners' writing competency. It was of paramount importance for the researcher to be patient with the teachers as they were also key to the research. This the researcher concluded as she/he could hear some comments coming from the teachers every time she/he came

to the schools. Cohen et al. (2006:268) suggest that the interview might be used to follow up unexpected results. In the study, the attitudes of some of the teachers paved for unintended results in that they did not live up to their words until the researcher decided to leave them. The researcher would announce her/his presence to the teachers and they would act or continue with whatever they were doing as if she/he is not around. On seeing that she/he is not attended to, she/he would decide to leave and set another appointment. In spite of the above mentioned impediments, some teachers were cooperative and the interviews were conducted to confirm and authenticate the results from other research as well as to go deeper into the motivations of participants and their reasons for responding as they would (Cohen et al. 2005).

The researcher used an interview guide approach which gives specifics to the topics that are to be covered in advance in an outline form with the interviewer deciding on the sequence and wording of the questions through the course of the interview. The strength of this approach was that it increased the comprehensive nature of the data and also made data collection more systematic. Unfortunately, this method produced different responses and reduced the comparability of the responses. This manifested itself when the researcher interviewed the teachers.

At the beginning of each interview, participants were informed of the interview procedures. To help the researcher to focus on conducting the interviews, interviewees were asked to grant the researcher permission to record the interviews. The recording of interviews allowed for data transcription by the interviewer in the process for the purposes of presenting an unbiased view of the interview data. Interviews lasted approximately 1 hour each. Throughout the interviews, the participant's responses were recorded through the tape recorder and notes observing how learners conducted themselves during the interviews were taken as the interview progressed and a fuller report was compiled. After each interview session, the researcher transcribed the data from tape recorder into notes. That assisted the researcher in that she could not forget what the participants had shared.

Interviews were conducted with seven selected teachers of which 5 represented content subjects and 2 were English teachers. The teachers were selected in that they were teaching in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase, which includes Grade 12.

The following are the interview questions that were asked to the Content subject teachers:

1. How long have you trained as a teacher and can you also be kind and share with me your qualifications.

   The researcher wanted to find out whether the teachers have gone for teacher training and also their qualifications.

2. Can you please share with me when have you started teaching the subject.

   The researcher wanted to establish whether the teacher had experience or not.

4. What language do you use for the interaction with your learners?

   The researcher wanted to check on the language of communication between the teachers and the learners.

5. Why do you use this particular language?

   The researcher intended to find out the reason for the teachers to using that particular language as means of communicating with the learners.

6. What are your views on the use of the learners' HL in your subject?

   The researcher wanted to find out how the teachers view the use of learner's Home Language.

7. Do you think using English as a LoLT ideal for the learners in your school.

   The researcher's intention was to find out if teachers think the use of English as a LoLT was ideal for the school.

8. What can you say is a role of English as a subject towards teaching your subject?

   The researcher wanted to check the teachers' views on teaching their subjects in English.

9. Since English is the LoLT at your school, how do you think it is beneficiary to your subject teaching?

   The researcher intended to find out from the teachers the benefits of teaching their subjects in English.

10. Do you encourage code switching when teaching your subject, why?

    The researcher's intention was to check whether teachers code switch when teaching their respective subjects.

11. If you could encourage code switching when teaching, would you do the same when learners have to write their tests and examinations?

    The researcher wanted to check whether teachers could use code switching when giving tests and exams to the learners.

12. In your subject, do learners have to write essays? If yes, how do you teach essay writing for your subject?

    The researcher intended to find out if learners do write essays and how the teachers teach those essays.

13. What specific challenges do learners experience when answering in writing in their FAL?

    The researcher wanted to check on whether there are challenges encountered by the learners when writing.

14. What are your views in writing in English?

    The researcher's intentions were to find out teachers' views concerning writing in English.

The following were interview questions for EFAL teachers:

1. Can you please share with me how much do you know about EFAL, meaning your training and qualifications?

The researcher wanted the teachers to disclose whether they have trained and qualify as teachers.

2. How long have you been teaching EFAL, please share all that you would like to.

The researcher aimed at knowing whether the teacher was a novice or   experienced teachers.

3. Can you please share with me what role do you think the learners' Home Language (HL) play in learners' learning of EFAL?

> *The researcher wanted to find out the role the learners' HL play in learning in EFAL.*

3. Can you think of any specific example where you found yourself in the EFAL lesson using learners' HL? Was it beneficial, if Yes, how?

> *The researcher's intentions were to find out whether the teachers at any specific time do use the learners' HL and whether that was beneficial to the learners.*

4. In teaching writing in English, what strategies or approaches have you found to be beneficiary to the learners?

> *The researcher wanted to check on the strategies used by the teachers when teaching English.*

5. How do you perceive writing as a skill that needs to be taught in CAPS Grade 12?

> *The researcher intended to check on the teachers' perceptions on teaching writing as a skill.*

6. Generally, what could you say is your opinion on Grade 12 learners' writing competency?

> *The researcher wanted to find out the opinions of the teachers on the learners' writing competency.*

7. Basing this in your experience, how can you define a good quality writing in EFAL?

*The researcher intended to find out how teachers define good writing.*8. What specific challenges do learners experience when writing, for an example, an essay?

> *The researcher's intentions were to find out the challenges learners experience when writing essays.*

9. In teaching EFAL, what strategies do you use?

> *The researcher wanted to find out the strategies teachers use when teaching English.*

10. How does the Department assist in the challenges encountered by the learners in writing?

The researcher intended to find out whether learners encounter challenges by learners in writing.

11. Does the Department conduct workshops in the pursuit to assist you to deal with writing challenges?

The researcher intended to find out whether the department makes effort to assist writing challenge.

12. Do you in your EFAL writing lessons integrate the learners' sociocultural experiences? If yes, please explain the benefits of that integration.

The researcher's intention was to find out if teachers do integrate the learners' sociocultural experiences when teaching EFAL.

13. Since English is the school's LoLT, how do you think other subjects benefit from EFAL?

The researcher wanted to find out whether EFAL learning benefits teaching in other subjects.

14. What role do you think competent writing in EFAL play in the learners' study?

The researcher intended to check the role played by competent writing in the learners' study.

The interview questions were prepared in English since it is the LoLT and the researcher carried the interviews in that manner. The researcher noticed that although she/he had compiled the interview questions in English, all teachers were code switching in answering even those who are EFAL teachers. When she/he was transcribing, especially from the tape recorder, she/he had to translate what the teachers had said in isiXhosa to English.

3.8.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

In this study, twenty four learners participated in four focus group discussions, of which all four groups discussions were conducted in two public schools. Each focus group comprised six learners both male and female students and were representative of all groups according to their academic strengths (fast, mediocre and slow learners). These

learners were Grade 12s. The learners were at liberty to share their understandings and awareness on writing using their FAL.

From the definition above, Krueger and Casey (2009) views focus group discussion as a carefully planned succession of discussions designed with the intention to acquire perceptions on a well-defined area of interest in a tolerant and non-threatening environment. Focus group discussions with the learners was seen as an essential data gathering tool for this study in that its responses provided an in depth view about writing competency which might have been hard to obtain through individual interviews or any other data gathering instrument. In this case, the researcher created an environment that was conducive for the group discussions so as to solicit enough views on the subject under discussion. In view of this, Krueger and Casey (2009) assert that focus group interviewing is about taking into consideration to what people have to say and being non-judgmental of it. It is about creating a relaxed environment for people to share about it also entails being careful and systematic with the things people told you so that they might go away feeling worthy about having been listened to.

Focus groups in research are known to be especially effective in studying professional practices (Barbour, 2008).This gives a full explanation as to why the researcher opted for focus group discussions as one of the data gathering instruments because it concerns learners' writing competency. The learners were practically demonstrating through writing, their abilities to write in FAL. The group interactions during the focus group discussions were productive in widening the range of responses, activating forgotten details of experiences and releasing inhibitions that may otherwise discourage participants from disclosing such information about writing competency (Maree 2007). This yielded data that gave insights into the EFAL writing process in terms of time allocation; how the teachers approach teaching writing; the challenges learners face as well as suggestions on how to acquire and develop writing skills.

The focus group discussions were carried out with twenty four Grade 12 learners, twelve from each school, selected on the basis of their strengths (fast, mediocre and slow). The learners were interviewed by the researcher in their schools' classrooms. The researcher noted that whilst the learners were busy discussing responses to the

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interviews, they respected each other's opinions. If they did not agree on a point, in turns they will share their views and take what they thought was right and would represent the general views of the group members. In their discussions, they were also using their Home Language and after discussions would ask the researcher to listen to their point.

The following are the questions compiled to guide the discussions:

1. Which language do you use to study at school?

   The researcher's intentions were to find out the language the learners use to study at school.

2. Are you studying any other language besides the one you have mentioned? If yes, name it/them.

   The researcher wanted to find out whether the learners do study other languages other than their FAL.

3. What do you think is a difference between HL and FAL?

   The researcher wanted to find out if the learners could differentiate between the HL and EFAL.

4. When did you start doing EFAL?

   The researches intended to establish the time the learners started learning in English.

5. Why do you think it is important for you to learn your subjects in English?

   The researcher wanted to check on the reasons for learners to think it is of paramount significance to learn in English.

6. Which language do your educators use to communicate with you?

   The researcher intended to find out the language the teachers use when communicating with the learners.

7. Which language do you prefer to use when you are writing anything, from school work, personal things/ letters or smses?

The researcher wanted to find out the language commonly used by learners when writing.

8. How well can you write in English?

   The researchers' intentions were to find out how well can learners write in their FAL.

9. Do you mix the language when writing to your friends, or smses?

   The researcher wanted to find out whether learners mix the languages when writing casually to friends.

10. If you could be asked to write a speech for presentation in class, which language can you prefer?

    The researcher wanted to check learners' language of choice when writing in class.

11. Does your school assist you with language support programmes to help improve your writing?

    The researcher wanted to find out if the school support learners with support programmes that could help improve writing.

12. Do you think you need language support programmes that could help you improve your writing?

    The researcher intended to check if learners need support programmes intended on improving their writing.

13. Does the learning of EFAL assist you when writing other subjects?

    The researcher wanted to find out whether learning EFAL as a subject assist learner in learning other subjects.

14. Are you taught essay writing?

    The researcher's intentions were to find out if learners are taught essays.

15. Comment on writing as a whole.

    The researcher wanted to find out how learners view writing in EFAL.

However, using focus groups have the limitation of getting biased information as some members may dominate the discussions (Maree 2007).The researcher made an effort to overcome such a weakness by encouraging discussion from every member and maintaining focus on the topic of discussion. Before the focus groups started their discussions, the researcher together with the groups got to an understanding that whatever they would agree on should be a group effort, meaning should be discussed and agreed on by all of them. They first discussed their views and at the end came up with a common answer that they agreed on as a group. That made the data to be the true reflection of all the participants.

3.8.3 Document

3.8.3.1 Essays

This study used essays as an instrument for collecting data because document analysis focuses on all types of written communications that may shed light on the phenomenon which in this case is Grade 12 EFAL writing competency. Essays were able to show where the learners had problems and assisted the researcher in paving way for probing through interviews and focus groups. The researcher solicited information from learners' essays. Learners were given narrative and discursive essays to choose from for their writing. They were then marked using the CAPS rubric. Learners were given two types of essays to choose from and topics that they could relate to. After marking the essays, the researcher discovered that, the learners knew the structure of the essay. They could understand the content that they were writing about. The challenge was in writing as if they were writing in social networks and they used nouns and pronouns together. The researcher analysed the learners' essays so as to identify their strengths and weaknesses on writing in EFAL. In these documents data was sought on marking by the educators following the given CAPS orientated rubric on essay marking.

Analysis of documents in this study complemented interviews and focus group discussions in the data collection process. The analysis of documents also helped to

address questions which interviews and focus groups discussions could not answer and enlightened the researcher on some areas which needed clarification. Learners in their essay writing were practical into how they can actually write in EFAL, rather than what they thought should be done as was reflected in the FGDs. Although they made some mistakes, as the researcher read the essays she/he could understand what the learners were trying to say, meaning that the content was clear.

Cohen et al, (2002) describe documents in four categories; as public records, personal documents, physical materials and research-generated documents. The essays could be regarded as physical materials in that they portray learners' thoughts regarding a given subject, which in this case were the essay topics. Research needs to consider either primary or secondary sources or both should there be necessary. The sources of document analysis can be primary or secondary sources. Primary sources are those collected when particular events happen like minute books, clocking registers and learners' exercise books. The essays since they were written by the learners were also categorized as primary sources because of their originality.

According to Maree (2007), document analysis means focusing on all types of written material that could shed light on the studied phenomenon. In the study, the essays and learners' free writing were the documents that were analysed and brought light to the researcher on what learners do when writing. Borg, Gall, and Gall, (2003) posit that qualitative researchers often study written communication found in natural settings as data sources. Learners were physically engaged in writing essays and free writing. Document analysis is unassuming and non-reactive and can yield a lot of data about the values and beliefs of participants in their natural surrounding (Maree, 2007).

Document analysis has its own critiques. Creswell (2002) asserts that, given its social context and identity, the researcher gives a selective and biased understanding of a document and may even deliberately choose and select particular documents. Documents therefore need to be carefully used and should not be accepted as literal recordings of events that have taken place. Yin (2003) advises that when a researcher selects document analysis, one need to bear in mind that every document was written for some specific purpose and some specific audience other than those of the case

study being under study. In this sense the case study researcher was an explicit observer and the documentary evidence data becomes a reflection of communication by other parties in an attempt to achieve some other objectives.

3.8.3.2 Free writing

Cole (2001) views free writing as a writing exercise which is always given at the beginning of each class with the intention of getting the brain in gear. Cole furthers the notion of free writing as a method for developing a small hint of an idea into a fully grown one, and that on embarking on free writing one needs not worry about the grammatical, spelling and style errors. In view of this, free writing could be perceived as writing which allows for free flow of one's thoughts and feelings without any resistance or without being conscious of grammar, spelling and style. Elbow (1973) alludes by stating that free writing should be done as a way of effectively improving writing and for better results, should be done regularly.

Again as part of the free writing, Elbow (1973) also comes up with the notion of focused free writing which presents a selected topic for free writing. In view of this what needs to be written would be directed by the given title. In the light of this, the study had employed the focused free writing with the intention to guide the learners on what had to be written. The researcher also intended to hear the views of the learners that would be expressed freely, because those learners were assured that they were not going to be marked.

3.9 Triangulation

Triangulation is a way of cross examining procedures and instruments of data collection which enables researchers to check and gain confidence in the findings of an investigation (O'Donoghue and Punch, 2003). Cross checking of multiple resources was done to search for regularities to facilitate verification of data. Triangulation involves the conscious combination of qualitative methodologies as a powerful solution to strengthen

a research design where the logic is based on the fact that a single method can never adequately solve the problem of rival causal factors (Denzin& Lincoln 2005 p. 45).

In the study, the researcher decided to employ triangulation because it tests the evenness of findings gathered through different data collection instruments as she /he has employed a variety of methods for data collection such as interviews, focus group discussions, observation and document analysis (essays, and free writing) in order to develop credibility and trustworthiness so as to counterbalance the limitation of each method. Denzin (2003) describes triangulation as a plan of action that can raise sociologists and other social science researchers above the personal biases that stem from single methodologies. In other words it is a cross-validation of data because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality. Patton (2002) also argues that no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival causal factors. Triangulation was used to reduce the effects of the drawbacks of the qualitative research and it helped to make the data trustworthy and reliable.

3.10 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is of paramount significance in any qualitative research because it helps the researcher to be objective during data collection, data analysis and discussion of her/his findings. Reflexivity should be accountable for the usage of diverse designs for data collection (triangulation) during knowledge generation. Geertz (1973) defines reflexivity as a story narrated or told by them. The teachers and learners in the study were sharing their stories through the interviews and focus group discussions in relation to the Grade 12 writing competency. In view of this definition, Davies (2008) refers to it as social reflexivity for it could be a clear and a planned reflection of a people about themselves but that could only be reviewed through the interpretative insight of the researcher. However, this form of reflexivity can give a privilege and a non-reflexive position to the researcher (Watson, 1987).

In view of the above, social reflexivity and the reflexivity of the individual are combined to give the data produced as a cooperative product. This appears to be convincing because the information that the researcher got from the participants does not only

express a surface meaning but also an underlying one about the nature of their society. It is in this view that the study's theoretical approach is based, on seeing learners' cognitive processes are influenced by their sociocultural interactions, meaning that learners' language learning does not take place in emptiness, it is constructed by learners and their sociocultural interactions.

Whenever a researcher researches, there is usually an implicit assumption that she/he is investigating something outside him/herself and what he/she seeks to explore cannot come out of him/herself entirely or through self-introspection. On the other hand, Davies (2008) believes that the researcher cannot investigate something without having contact with, or completely isolated from it. This connection leads to the question whether the research is not subjectively linked to the researcher's presence and his/her inevitable influence on the whole research process. In relation to the study, the researcher was the EFAL teacher and was thus interested in the phenomenon under study.

Reflexivity could thus be viewed to be fundamental for social science in particular where the connection between the researcher, the research setting and the social world is clearly much closer. It is also where the research objects could be seen as "conscious and self-aware" through the influences of the researcher on the research process. Reflexivity in qualitative research seems to influence outcomes to be more likely and less predictable (Davies, 2008). Given that this study was a case study investigation, it could be very difficult for the researcher to avoid ambiguities even as an insider. This could be because of the more intimate relationship between the researcher and the researched, "long-termed and multi-stranded and the complexities introduced by the objects of research have even greater scope" (Davies 2008).

In view of the above argument, the researcher made a lot of effort to do away with his/her influence on the whole research process as much as possible. That she/he was able to achieve through the use of open-ended questions during the interview session, essay writing so as to promote and standardize the wordings of the questions and controlling responses from the participants so as to limit researcher's influence on the particular encounters.

3.10.1   Insider

In the study, the researcher was an insider since she/he regarded her/himself as one of the participants as they were EFAL learners. That simply meant that the researcher as an insider was able to engage research participants more easily to use their shared experiences to gather a richer set of data through observation. What the researcher also observed was that between her/him and the learners there were some similarities since both parties had their personal experiences which were the same concerning the subject under study. The researcher was uniquely positioned to understand the experiences of groups of which they are members (Dwyer and Jennifer, 2009). The researcher understood the participant's experiences because she/he came and teachers from one of the districts under study.

3.10.2   Outsider

Chawla-Duggan (2007) argues that outsider researchers are regularly valued for their objectivity and emotional distance from a situation, but may find it difficult to gain access to research participants. However, there are very few cases, as scholars have noted, in which someone can be characterized as a complete insider or a complete outsider (Dwyer and Jennifer, 2009). In practice, researchers' identities are often relative, and can sometimes even change, based on where and when the research is conducted, the personalities of the researcher and individual research participants, and the topic of the research (Mercer, 2007).

He further states that some characteristics, like race and gender might likely remain the same throughout researchers' lives, the significance of those characteristics can change, depending on the research situation. In this regard, the researcher became an outsider of the study during the interviews and the focus groups. The researcher was just observing the participants' behaviours and their social moral, team work spirit and their interaction during the discussion before they could respond to the questions that the researcher administered.

3.11 Validity and Reliability

3.11.1 Validity

The concept of validity and reliability are multi-faceted; there are many different types of validity and different types of reliability. Validity is an essential component of research which tenders the result to be valid or invalid and as such if the results are invalid the purpose of research becomes useless. Cohen et al (2006:105) argue that validity could be viewed as a requirement for both quantitative and qualitative or naturalistic research. Whilst earlier versions of validity were based on the view that it was essentially a demonstration that a particular instrument measured what it intended to measure, more recently validity has taken many forms. Cohen et al (2006) postulate that, in qualitative data validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the objectivity of the researcher.

In the study, the researcher highly considered the issues of validity as it chose interviews, focus group discussions and essay analysis as instruments of data collection. The essays were a true reflection of the manner in which the learners were able to express themselves through writing. Even the marking rubric which the researcher used for marking was CAPS orientated. The interviews were conducted to the teachers who were experienced and were currently teaching the subjects at the schools. These instruments brought about the participants' different perceptions on Grade 12 learners' EFAL writing competency in rural secondary schools.

3.11.2 Reliability

Cohen et al (2006:117) posit that reliability is basically a synonym for consistency and replicability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents. It is concerned with exactness and accuracy. Reliability can therefore, be viewed as a measure of consistency over time and over similar samples. A reliable instrument for a piece of research will yield similar data from similar respondents over time if the same methods

and instruments were to be used. For research to be reliable, it should demonstrate that if it were to be carried out on a similar group of respondents in a similar context, then similar results would be found. The researcher used simple language which was understood by the participants to check on the instruments' reliability. In interviews respondents were advised to seek clarity on issues they would not understand and also after the interview, the responses were made ready for the participants to ascertain that correct responses were recorded.

In qualitative research, reliability can be regarded as a fit between what researchers record and what actually transpired in the natural setting that is being researched, that is, a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage (Cohen et al., 2006:119). The researcher, for purposes of reliability, recorded the responses as they occur using a tape recorder and made or scribbled down back up by note taking. On focus group discussions, the researcher recorded the occurrences as they took place to avoid losing information due to the time factor. May and Pope (1995) concede that the main ways in which qualitative researchers make certain the retest reliability of their analyses is by maintaining careful or particular records of interviews and observations and by documenting the process of analysis in a detailed manner. However, one should take note that reliability can be influenced by the observer's characteristics, such as perceptions, motivation and attitudes. In the case of the study, the researcher tried to bracket her/himself from being influenced by the participants' responses.

3.11.3   Member checking

Member checking is the process of going back to the participants to find out if the analysis or interpretation makes sense to the participants and reflect on their experiences (Creswell, 2003). The researcher returned to the participants who took part in the study to comment on whether or not they felt that the data was interpreted in a manner congruent with their own experiences. This is an important aspect of research as Padgett (1998) argued that, it gives authority to the participants' perspective to

manage the threat of bias. It also helps in the establishing confidence in the findings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

The other way of doing it will be to allow the research respondents to review the findings from data in order to confirm or challenge the accuracy of the work (Creswell, 2003).

3.12 Ethical Considerations

The consideration of ethics in research is important especially in education because the participants in any study should be protected from harm. Heppner et al. (1992), suggest that harm can be in a form of, embarrassment, anger, irritation, physical and emotional stress, loss of self-esteem, exacerbation of stress, and loss of respect from others, negative labeling, invasion of privacy and damage to personal dignity. According to Heppner et al. (1992: 78), ethics are describes as expressions of our values and a guide to achieving them. They further proclaim that ethics are central to research. According to the Random House Dictionary of English Language (1987) ethics is defined as that subdivision of philosophy which relates to human conduct, with respect to the rightness or wrongness of certain actions, and to the badness or goodness of the moves and of such actions.

In conducting the study, the researcher was obliged to observe the right of informed consent for both elder participants and learners. For learner respondents who were minors the researcher sought permission from their parents. Also to be observed was the right of autonomy. According to Makore-Rukuni (2001:33), in conducting research, the ethical principle of autonomy is contained in the idea of informed consent where the client should be allowed to choose to participate, or not to participate in research, after receiving all relevant information about the risk or harm that could arise if they participate in the research. Informed means that the participant is made aware by the researcher of the pros and cons of participation, the benefits and the risks are clearly outlined, and there was no compulsion to participate in the study on investigation on Grade 12 learners' EFAL writing competency. The participants were advised that they have the right not to respond to any questions if they do not feel like it. The purpose of the study was clearly explained to them.

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For Grade 12 learners who participated in the study, consent was sought from their parents or guardians. The researcher issued the participants with the form of consent which included among other things, a statement that the study involves research, along with the title, purpose, the statement that participation is voluntary and general description of the study. Heppner et al (1992) suggest the following to be included in a consent form: a statement describing the extent to which confidentiality is maintained, and that participation is voluntary, and that the subject may discontinue participation without any penalty. The researcher adhered to the ethics of confidentiality, anonymity and the right to privacy. According to Neumann (2000), the researcher has to defend the anonymity of the research participants and the confidentiality of their disclosures unless they consent to the release of personal information.

The researcher explained to the participants the limits of confidentiality, as the information can be used only for research purposes. The researcher had to adhere to the right of privacy by using pseudonyms during interviews and numbers and letters of the alphabet for names of the schools. This view is shared by Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) who state that participants may be asked to use an alias of their own creation. They further argue that anonymity and the ethical codes state clearly that it is the responsibility of the researcher to accurately report and prevent misuse of results (Makore-Rukuni, 2001).

3.13 Data Analysis Procedures

Within the study, the researcher analysed the qualitative data and was interpreted once all data was collected, captured, processed and then results were condensed. The data was analysed by arranging it in a logical themes. Themes were identified so as to help cluster the data into meaningful groups. Interviews, focus group discussions and essay analysis, and other bits of data like free writing were examined for specific meanings that they might have in relation to the study. Data analysis in qualitative research typically involves the following steps (Creswell, 1998; Leedy and Ormrod, 20005).
1. Organizational details about the case.

2. Categorization of data.

3. Interpretation of single instances.

4. Identification of patterns.

5. Synthesis and generalization.

Nieuwenhuis (2007:99), posits that qualitative data analysis tends to be an ongoing and iterative (non-linear) process, implying that data collection, processing, analyzing and reporting are intertwined, not merely a number of successive steps.

3.14 Summary

The chapter outlined the methodology that will be adopted by the study. The interpretivist and the case study design were chosen as the researcher required to understand the 24Grade 12 learners' EFAL writing competency, 2 EFAL educators and 8 content subject educators sampled for the study. Data collecting instruments; interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis were also discussed. The chapter also included sample and sampling, measures of validity and credibility, ethical considerations and data collection procedures.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the data of the research conducted in two rural Senior Secondary schools in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The main subject that is being investigated in this study is the learners' FAL writing competency among the Grade 12 learners. The data that was collected is more about Grade 12 learners' response to the writing processes and is from small numbers of detailed reactions. It is in that manner that Sivasubramaniam (2004) argues that the process of teaching the development of detailed subjective response is simultaneously research into the nature of the response processes. The data in the study was collected through the following instruments, namely: interviews, focus groups, learners' essay writing and free writing entries.

The researcher's qualitative data was solicited from participants through open ended questions, semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews, using both note form and the tape recorder to record the data. The recorded data was played back to the participants, so that they could confirm its correctness. After the respondents' confirmation, the recorded information was then transcribed into written text. The interviewed respondents were seven teachers from rural public schools and twenty four Grade 12 learners who formed the Focus Groups; 2 EFAL teachers, 5 different content teachers, and 4 Focus Groups of 6 learners each. Other data was gathered by means of an essay and free writing entries. For interviews, the researcher decided to categorize the teachers into EFAL teachers and content subject teachers. The participants are identified as follows:

EFALT1: English First Additional Language Teacher no.1

EFALT2: English First Additional Language Teacher no.2

HistT: History Teacher

EconT: Economics Teacher

BST: Business Studies Teacher

MLitT: Mathematics Literacy Teacher

MathsT: Mathematics Teacher

The focus group discussions were also used to collect data and learners were divided into four different groups in order to manage them properly because they were many. Secondly, it would have been difficult to get objective views from the learners because of the power relation between them and the researcher. In the focus groups, the researcher gave the learners a question, since they were a group, the researcher pre-empted that they might come up with different answers. The researcher suggested to them that before they give an answer, they should discuss it first in her presence – but without her interference- and as a group should agree on one answer that the majority see as the most suitable. In the presentation, the researcher has indicated the answers where the learners agreed to disagree

Data from the analysis of documents in the form of essays and free writing is also presented. The researcher checked how sound the learners understood the language through writing where they were expressing their thoughts and experiences without being intimidated. Such information is also analyzed simultaneously with the interviews and focus group discussions and put under common themes as determined by the research questions.

4.2 Tabulating Research questions

Presentation and analysis of data was done in line with the research questions of the study. The major research question was:

How competent in writing are the Grade 12 learners in their EFAL as LoLT?

The sub-research questions were:

1. What challenges do Grade 12 learners face in writing in EFAL across all subjects?
2. What strategies are used by EFAL and content subject teachers in teaching writing in Grade 12?
3. What are the perceptions of teachers and learners on writing competency?
4. What is the link between the learners' writing competency in EFAL and the performance in both EFAL and other content subjects?

The interview questions for the EFAL and content subject educators were formulated as guided by the research questions above. Included, are also the questions that were used to guide the Focus Group discussions. The following interview questions are clustered according to the research question they sought to answer:

1. What challenges do Grade 12 learners face in writing in EFAL across all subjects?
   - **Content subject teachers**: Are you aware of any challenges that the learners experience when writing exams?
   - **EFAL teachers**: What specific challenges do learners experience in writing?
   - **Focus Group Discussion**: How well can you write in English?
2. What strategies are used by EFAL and content subject teachers in teaching writing in Grade 12?
   - **EFAL teacher**: In teaching writing in school, what strategies do you use?
   - How beneficial are these approaches?
   - What strengths do your learners display in writing?
   - Do you integrate in your writing lessons learners' sociocultural experiences?
   - Explain the benefit of this integration.
   - What dangers do you envisage in the integration of learners' sociocultural experiences?

- **Content subject teacher**: Do you think that the teaching of writing to your learners is useful?
- Why do you think so?
- Do you give essays to your learners?
- **Focus Group Discussion**: Do you learn or are you taught essay writing?

3. What are the perceptions of teachers and learners, on learners' writing competency?

- **EFAL teachers**: Generally what can you say is your opinion on Grade 12 learners writing competency?
- **Content subject teachers**: What are your views on the use of the learners' Home Language to teach your subject?
- Since English is the Language of Learning and Teaching at your school, how do you think it is beneficial to your subject teaching?
- **Focus Group Discussion**: Why do you think it is important for you to learn your subjects in English?
- Comment on writing as a whole.

4. What is the link between the learners' writing competency in EFAL and performance in both EFAL and other content subjects?

- **EFAL teachers**: How do you perceive writing as a skill that needs to be taught?
- Basing in your experience, how could you define good quality writing in EFAL?
- Since English is the LoLT in your school, how do you think other subjects benefit from writing?
- What role do you think competent writing plays in the learners' studies?
- **Content subject teacher**: What do you think is the role of English as a subject towards teaching your subject?
- How do you think English could be beneficial in teaching other subjects?
- **Focus Group Discussion**: Does the learning of EFAL assist you when writing other subjects?

- If you could be asked to write a speech for presentation, which language would you prefer?
- Does your school assist you with language support programmes to help improve your writing?

4.3 PRESENTATION OF THEMES

Descriptive codes were derived from the data. These include situation codes; perspectives held by subjects; ways of thinking about people and objects; process codes; activity codes; event codes; strategy codes; relationship and social codes and method codes. The following analytic tasks as suggested by Spradely in Cohen et al (2007: 479) were undertaken:

- Selecting a sample of verbatim interview and field notes
- Looking for the names of things
- Identifying possible terms from the sample
- Searching through additional notes for other items to include.

Themes were developed from these codes and categories. Codes formed nodes which are a collection and categorization of similar codes. Categories were formed from the grouping of concepts, constructs and features of the context. This allowed for the showing of links between the various units of analysis. The process of categorization involved putting collated data to provide descriptive information.

Below is presentation and analysis of the data that was collected from the interviews, focus group discussions, essay and free writing. It will be analysed under the themes derived from the research questions of the study.

4.3.1 Challenges grade 12 learners face when writing in EFAL across all subjects

It emerged from the data that writing in EFAL could be challenging to the learners. Such challenges include grammatical errors, incorrect spelling and confusing homonyms. The following are the responses from the participants in the study that reflect those challenges.

Main Theme	Sub-themes	Issues raised
Challenges Grade 12 learners face in writing in EFAL	The influence of learners' HL in writing in EFAL	Learners are exposed to EFAL which is the school LoLT. It is expected that at this time their HL is fully developed and thus assist with learning their additional language.
	Language and editing	Learners make mistakes in EFAL grammatical rules, confuse homonyms, write incorrect spelling and lack vocabulary.
	Anxiety	Learners become anxious every time they have to engage in EFAL writing.
	Influence of social media	Learners use short text writing and acronyms when writing sentences. Such is not accepted in the formal classroom learning.
	Lack of motivation	Learners are not motivated in writing using EFAL because of their backgrounds or environments which use isiXhosa.

Pertaining to the issue of the challenges the EFAL teachers experience in their classrooms where they teach English, the teachers gave the following responses:

EFALT1 had this to say*: Learners have a challenge of expressing themselves due to lack of vocabulary.*

EFALT2 shared the following:

Lack of understanding the necessity of punctuation marks, when and how to shorten a word from the upper line to the next line and how to start a sentence.

The EFAL teachers in the study agree that the learners do have challenges when it comes to their FAL. Looking at what they have cited, one can conclude that such challenges are mainly grammatical related. What the teachers have cited form the core of the writing process and as such need to be addressed adequately.

The following responses came from the content subject teachers on the challenges they were experiencing when teaching their subjects in English which is the school's LoLT.

EconT expressed his feelings on the view by citing that*:*

I think writing is not an easy skill. When learners are to write tests or exams, I observe that they develop anxiety in different forms; some do not sleep or eat well for not knowing when, what and how will they tackle exams or tests.

HistT concurred with the EconT by adding that*:*

To me writing in a language foreign to the learners is a major barrier or challenge which leads to many other challenges. Again, I have observed learners panicking before they write which in most instances leads to them not finishing what they had prepared. To write in English is a challenge on its own because the environment where our learners stay is dominantly isiXhosa area. To such an extent when they are writing and feel they don't precisely understand or have forgotten the concept, they write it in isiXhosa, and put that word in brackets. I give them the benefit of doubt and award a mark.

BST alluded to the notion of learners having challenges by stating that:

Learners are unable to express their thoughts in proper English and that causes them to lose marks. Even if this is a content subject, they are required to write correctly or we deduct marks, leading to high failure rate.

Responses by content subject teachers on the challenges that learners might pose when writing in English indicate some seriousness. They highlight the psychological effects that learners have especially when they are to write exams or tests, such as anxiety and panic. This, they believe is caused by the fear of the language that the learners would be using when writing those tests or exams. Such learners are aware of the effects their LoLT can have on them if they don't do well in their tests. The teachers also cite that to overcome that problem, learners end up writing concepts in their Home Language.

On the premise of learners' responses on writing in English which is their school LoLT and not their HL, the learners stated that, as much as they love writing in English, they encounter some difficulties. They even cited the most obvious areas where such challenges are common.

FGp 2 said the following:

Although we love writing in English, we encounter many challenges. We are used to the sms language to an extent we think it as a correct way to write. Another challenge is with spelling some of the words because some English words which we commonly use sound the same whereas the spelling differs- words like meet-meat, weak-week, and see-sea. Also the construction of sentences becomes a major problem because it is not easy to do compound sentences, we wish we could stick to simple sentences only. The other challenge which we feel you need to know is the challenge of thinking in isiXhosa and having to write your thoughts in English.

The researcher asked a follow up question to the group. How do you overcome that challenge because at the end you are bound to write in English?

FGp 2 responded by saying that*:*

What we normally do is to write the words which we cannot translate to English, put them in brackets with the hope that the teacher who will be marking and is also a Xhosa would give us the marks because we have shown that we understand the question and know the answer but challenged by the language.

Focus Group 3 learners also shared the same sentiments and added planning which they saw as assisting in their challenge with writing on EFAL.

FGp 3 gave the same view and added that*:*

If we have planned the work especially essay writing, it becomes easier for us to write the paragraphs and how should they follow each other. The challenge we have is the vocabulary since we use English here at school because the reality is that we don't use English after school hours. At home nobody is interested in following or understanding what we are trying to write about.

Focus Group 4, like the other groups above, had the same challenges on spelling, homonyms and the use of social networks' language.

FGp 4 shared the same sentiments by saying that*:*

Since we are doing most or the majority of our subjects in English- which is 6 out of 7 subjects, we are forced to try our best in writing using English. The most obvious mistake that we do when writing, is the spelling. Some words are long and others sound the same which ends up distorting the whole meaning of what one was trying to say. Also, we are so used to writing in the mixit or sms language that we think it is an accepted way of writing. Every time we write an essay or summary, there will be a word or two written in mixit language especially the words that are commonly used like; because(bcoz), you(u), why(y), the (da) and from (4rm).

The above responses express that learners struggle to write in English. They highlight the lack of English vocabulary, confusing homonyms, sentence construction and their over use of the mixit or sms language. Again they cite having to think in one language and writing in the other which leads to them writing the isiXhosa word and putting it in brackets for the teacher to consider when marking. They also agree that planning one's work is good for them because they can follow a structure that they have planned and stick to using simple sentences.

FREE WRITING

Here, under the same theme, the researcher was trying to narrate stories from the learners' writing experiences. This account is a literary engagement and the learners' responses to writing in their FAL. It embodies their enjoyment, commitment and learning in writing. It is such a literary engagement that the researcher believes could assist the learners' enthusiasm in learning more in their FAL. It is in this view that the researcher's interest rests; in understanding the learners' free writing as a space where various interpretations could find existence. Based on the points raised above, the researcher would present and analyse the learners' free writings in the following three stages that were discussed and agreed upon by the learners in the presence of the EFAL teacher:

Stage 1: The researcher asked the learners to keep books for free writing where they will have to write down their journey with learning to write in English. This is the stage where the researcher wanted to check how the learners felt towards a classroom where they were told that for the first time, they would write in another language- EFAL.

Stage 2: Learners were asked to do free writing based on their families, friends role models, places they have visited, their habits or whatever they have read.

Stage3: This is the stage where the researcher expected the learners to demonstrate their critical thinking by elaborating in giving reasons on learning and writing in EFAL.

After the researcher marked the learners' free writing entries, she was able to categorize them according to their strengths and weaknesses and resolved on the

following categories: Fast (FL1, FL2 and FL3), Mediocre (ML1, ML2, and ML3) and Slow Learners (SL1, SL2 and SL3).

STAGE 1

Most learners shared their fears, confusions and difficulties on their first encounter in writing using their FAL, a language completely foreign to them. They shared how they felt the moment they were told by their primary school teachers that they were going to write in English. The following are the responses on the different emotions experienced by the learners.

FL1 shared her/his experiences by stating that*:*

At the classroom, everyone was quiet; we were paying attention to our teacher because we wanted to hear every word and everything. I was curious because I wanted to know those words that were new to me, that helped me because when it was time to write, it was easy to me.

FL2 also on the notion of fear alluded by stating that*:*

I was terrified and excited at the same time. The reason why I was scared was that I did not know English very well and I have never written in English before. I was also happy at the same time because I like a challenge and I was willing to learn.

FL3 also re-affirmed what other learners have said by sharing that:

I was afraid at the first time because English is not my home language. I was also ashamed because I was afraid of speaking and writing wrong spelling in English.

ML1 stated that*:*

I was so frustrated because I didn't even know how to write or speak English, also I couldn't read or analyse what was written in English.

ML2 concurred with the above learner by citing that*:*

I was so afraid and nervous about this subject. At that, I was asking myself what am I going to write because it was my first time to hear about writing in this language.

ML3 agreed with the other learners by sharing that*:*

I was lost and also scared because I did not know how to write and was not ready to apply that in my mind. When I was in class, I was afraid to look at other children because I was thinking they might laugh at me.

SL1 described her/his experience by saying*:*

The funny thing was that, I thought English was the language of White people only. To me English was the hardest subject, and I told myself that I would never know English.

SL2 also had the same experience and said that:

I was so feeling afraid because I did not know the thing that I was writing, and I did not know the meanings of the words I was writing.

SL3 shared the same sentiments as other learners by citing that:

I thought I was not even going to cope with English because I didn't know what was English.

From the above responses, learners show that they never knew writing in English until they were at school. The responses also indicate that English is not their Home Language. This manifests itself from the fear and frustrations that they displayed when they were told to write in English.

STAGE 2

Having given feedback and asked the learners to write corrections in Stage1, the researcher in Stage 2 looked at the learners' improvement towards their previous mistakes made and corrected in Stage1. The researcher's focus was on the learners' growing awareness in their writing in EFAL. The free writing entries showed little

improvement on writing especially to the Mediocre and Slow learners. From their content's point of view, the researcher noted that they were not writing under pressure and were writing about what was closer to them, what was their everyday living. Because of that, the researcher observed that they were overwhelmed and as a result, took little notice of their mistakes. On the other hand, what the researcher was looking for, which is; whether the learners could write entries expressing their everyday lifespan or entries that they could relate to.

Below is the researcher's presentation of the learners' stage 2 on free writing:

FL1*: School is very important and very helpful. I used to remember my mother's words saying that you cannot go anywhere without school.*

FL2*: I have my own principles and live by them. I am a dreamer and I do whatever it takes to achieve my objectives.*

FL3*: When I grow up, I just want to be a pilot so that I can have money and help people who are suffering and help those people who want to go on with their studies to achieve their goals.*

ML1*: At some point, I thank my parents because they teach me how to deal with life and also they told me that life is a journey, you need to work hard so that you can get what you want. When I get back to school, I always read some books because I like to read stories.*

ML2*: When I came back from school, my grandmother says to me I must wash my school tunic, she doesn't want to be embarrass at school. I don't have time for books, that's the problem I have to overcome immediately before the trial examinations.*

ML3*: I made a mistake once in life but my family and friends made an effort on playing a big role into my life by supporting me each and every step of the way.*

SL1: *I don't wanna lie, I did give up at school. But the situation of my family make me realise and ask myself a question, like if I give up now who will build a dream house*

of my mother, who will change the situation of my family. So I decided not to quit the *school at all.*

SL2: *My life is easy because I have people who motivate and support me at all time. My mother is a strong person and is not give up with life because she not working.*

SL3: *At my community, am not a talking person but if you say you going to come to me and say whatever that you want to say then you going to get what you deserve.*

The above responses reflect the learners' personal life and their social surroundings. The researcher found out that in this instance learners were free to write talking about themselves, their families, school life and hobbies freely because they were promised that whatever they will write will never be disclosed to their classmates. Again, the researcher tried to mix the responses to cover most of the characteristics of the learners' life, not focusing on one aspect.

Stage 3

Stage 3, could be seen as carrying the fundamental contributing factor to the learners' writing competency. Since it was the guided free writing, in this stage learners were expected to respond on why they think English could be the appropriate language for writing.

FL1 responded on the view by stating that*:*

I think that English is so vitally important because it is spoken in so many parts of the world; businesses, educational domains, academic and even areas that deal with security.

FL2 agreed with the first learner and added that*:*

The reason why we learn in English is that all subjects that we are doing are done in English. The textbooks are the same as those from the model-c schools. We have the

cell phones and we use internet, so we have to use English so that we can get access to the internet.

FL3 share the same sentiments with the above learners by stating that:

So that we can push our careers forward if one wants a good job in business because if you don't know English you'll never find a job. English is an international language when we want to know what is happening on the other side of the world; we get news in English only.

ML1shared her/his views by saying that*:*

By learning English, someone will also learn other cultures and write down what your culture says. Few experiences could make someone grow as a person, and then learn the values, habits and a way of life in a culture that is different.

ML2 was also of the opinion that*:*

English is like education, it can open doors for you because if you can't read and write English at all, then you can't study because all the books that you will use are written in English. When you do presentations in class for other subjects, you write and do them in English so that that can help you to be able to do interviews when looking for a job.

ML3 supported the aforementioned arguments by stressing that:

English help us to communicate with other people outside the world. There is a time when you will have to leave your country and meet different people that speak different languages.

SL1responded by writing the following*:*

English is the most useful language to the whole world. It help people from other countries be able to able to speak and write with other people who speak Chinese, Japanese or Afrikaans so that's the thing that makes English appropriate language.

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SL2 supported the above learner by stating that:

We must learn English because English is very important, is the language that put all people together. We learn in English because in this world we live in, we cannot get permanent jobs or colleges without speaking English.

SL3 also reaffirm the other views by citing that:

English is part of that and all the world testify that English is the one to go ahead with cause everyone pass by writing English.

From the data collected from the learners' free writing entries; the researcher can conclude by saying that the fact that their free writing entries were not to be disclosed to other learners boosted their morale or highly motivated them to write their sincere thoughts and experiences.

4.3.2 Strategies used by EFAL and content subject teachers in teaching writing in grade 12

The information was solicited from the EFAL educators on the strategies they use to teach writing and to what extent are these strategies beneficial to the teaching of writing. From the responses shared by the teachers it became evident that there are strategies that they employ when teaching writing. Below is the table that tabulates the summary of the themes, sub-themes and issues raised on the strategies used by EFAL and content subject teachers in teaching writing in Grade 12.

Theme	Sub-theme	Issues raise
Strategies used to teach English writing	Writing as a process	Teachers are confident that using process writing could assist learners in other subjects and beyond secondary school.
	Integration as a writing strategy learners could be introduced to.	Integration is viewed as beneficial to learners' writing because it is embedded with their sociocultural knowledge.

Pertaining the strategies that are employed by the teachers when teaching writing, teachers shared the following:

EFALT1 shared the following:

Brainstorming, free writing and journal writing, summary, creative and transactional writing.

EFALT2 concurred by citing that:

Firstly, the learners have to understand the content of the intended task, for example an essay, letter or dialogue, summary or transactional writing. After that I have to ascertain their language proficiency level-in this case; grammatical competency and expression.

The data collected revealed that EFAL educators agree that the strategies they use in teaching writing, such as brainstorming, summary writing and creative writing are beneficial to the learners because when taught, the learners understand the structures

and register applicable to teach writing. Such strategies do have their challenges that come with them like confusing the homonyms and spelling.

On the idea of how beneficial were the approaches that the EFAL teachers were employing in their classes, they both felt that learners do benefit because through them, learners have to understand different registers that could be useful beyond their school years.

EFALT1 perceived the use of the approaches to writing as:

They are all beneficial as they all have a cycle; also each has its own significance.

EFALT2 re-emphasised the above statement by saying that*:*

Learners get to understand different registers applicable to a particular content. Also their proficiency level helps to pitch one's lesson to the relevant competence.

It emerged from the data that the writing strategies or approaches employed by the EFAL teachers are beneficial to the learners in that, they develop them in a wide range of knowledge. This variety of register could assist the learners beyond Grade 12.

The information was sought on the strengths displayed by learners when writing. The comments made by the EFAL teachers in the interview were the indication that in spite of the countless challenges the FAL learners experience, they display much determination and as a result some are able to produce good essays.

EFALT1 made the following comment*:*

They are able to write essays and some of them are good.

EFALT2 also echoed the same sentiments and added that:

They display determination because some of them do write even though they will confuse the homonyms for example; moan- mourn or week and weak.

What the teachers perceive as encouraging even to them, is to see the determination the learners display in trying to write good essays and transactional writings in English.

It is through such strength and determination that they are able to write tests and examinations even in other subjects using English, and at the end progress to the following grade.

Since the learners come from the environment that barely or doesn't use English language at all, it became imperative for the researcher to enquire on the usage of the integration strategy where teachers would be expected to integrate the learners' sociocultural background when teaching. The teachers responded by stating that they do the sociocultural integration.

EFALT1 made known to the researcher that:

Yes, it is important as they write about things familiar to them.

EFALT2 confirmed the above argument by saying that:

Yes, when they write, they are given topics on communities, backgrounds or interpret the current situations.

Regarding the benefits of the sociocultural integration, EFAL teachers gave the same views citing that learners use the vocabulary freely and can relate to the given text which then makes it easy for them to write about.

EFALT1 shares the following views:

Learners are able to express themselves especially when writing about things happening in their environments using the vocabulary they are familiar with.

EFALT2 echoes the same view by stating that*:*

Learners relate well with the texts they are familiar with, which makes it easier for them to express themselves on such topics.

Information solicited from the EFAL teachers depicted that they do employ the approach of integrating their lessons with the learners' sociocultural backgrounds, because learners write freely about things they are familiar with.

In spite of having positive results on the integration, the teachers also highlighted some challenges that could come with the approach. Below are the responses of the teachers on the challenges that could come with the approach of integrating learners' sociocultural background when teaching.

EFALT1 perceived dangers on sociocultural integration in the following manner*:*

Such dangers may include not having to look or be interested to learn other people's cultures and day to day situations.

EFALT2 alluded to the above statement by adding that*:*

One of the dangers could be keeping the learners in the container where they could never know how other people outside their communities view the world or how other people participate in their cultures.

According to the EFAL educators, sociocultural integration in learning to write could discourage learners' interests from what goes beyond their communities and around the world.

Concerning the issue of teaching writing to the learners, the content subject teachers agree that it is useful because they felt it is through writing that learners do express themselves well so that at the end of the year they are able to progress to the following Grade.

BST shared the following views on the idea of teaching learners to write*:*

So that educators can see what the learners have written in trying to express themselves, in answering what was asked from them.

HistT re-confirmed the above statement by stating that*:*

To me, learners pass to the next Grade through writing. Some learners may be shy in class when it comes to speaking but could surprise you when writing a test. Therefore, it is through writing that learners are able to give their educators feedback and also exhibit

understanding of what they had been taught. In my subject, assessment is only done through writing, that's why I see it as an integral part of teaching and learning.

EconT alluded to the aforementioned sentiments by citing that*:*

When learners are taught to write, that makes it easy for them to read and reproduce what they have read through writing. Learners who write well tend to score more marks than those who struggle to write. You can be a good speaker, and answer questions in the class, but if you can't write, there could be a problem.

It emerged from the data that content subject teachers agree that it is imperative to teach writing to the learners so that they could be able to express themselves, sharpen their speaking and reading skills and at the end of each academic year be able to write examinations so as to progress to the following Grade.

The information was sought from the content subject teachers on whether they ask their learners to write essays and the reasons why they have to do that if they do. They agreed on that since it was the requirement for their School Based Assessment (SBA).

BST made known to the researcher that:

The curriculum requires that the learners should be given essays so as to display their ability to analyse, interpret, develop, and show insight to the subject in English using its terminology.

EconT agreed with the above argument by citing that*:*

It is a requirement that needs to be followed in CAPS which at the end prepares the learners for essay-type questions at the end of the year exams.

HistT also share the same sentiments as above and stated that*:*

Essay questions are part of our assessment; they are SBA requirements as well as part of each paper the learners have to write at the end of the year. For practice, learners are given such questions to test their understanding, their ability to answer on line with what is asked and test their ability to think critically before writing essays.

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It emerged from the data that the content subject educators embark on essay writing as it is a requirement for the School Based Assessment (SBA) and for examinations.

On the premise of teaching essay writing since it forms part of their curriculum, content subject teachers had one thing in common, that they don't embark on teaching essay writing. They believe learners are taught essay writing in the language classroom.

BST on the notion of teaching essays responded by saying that*:*

Yhu! I can't lie, I never thought of even trying that.

EconT shares the same views and said that*:*

Not at all, I simply ask them to write essays…teaching them ha a, I don't.

HistT also gave the same views and added that:

No, I don't. You know, although the department requires us to give or assess learners in essays, there is no space in our curriculum specifying that I must teach essay writing. Maybe it is because History is a content subject and essays belong to the language learning and should be taught by language teachers, even for our content subjects.

All content subject educators agree that they don't teach essay writing although it forms part of their assessment. They believe that teaching essay writing to the learners reside within the language teachers, in this case the EFAL teachers.

Pertaining to the issue of being taught essay writing, the learners were frank into saying that the skill of writing an essay is only taught by their EFAL teachers. They point out that during such lesson they acquire writing skills like planning and structuring their essays which become useful to writing essays in other subjects as well.

On the notion of being taught essays, FGp 2 responded by stating that*:*

Yes, we do. For us, there is only one teacher who taught us essay writing- our EFAL teacher. What we do is to take the style of writing essays in EFAL and do the same in

History. For example, in EFAL we are taught to plan using brainstorming and mind-maps which help us remember the points to write about clearly. We then do mind-maps in History because we see how it helps us in EFAL essays, although we are not asked to do them in History as we are in EFAL. What we are taught in EFAL essay writing that each paragraph should discuss one idea also helps us when writing essays in other subjects.

FGp 3 confirmed the above argument by saying that*:*

We are taught essay writing in EFAL only although in other subjects we write essays. Teachers who for example teach Business Studies (BS) or History do not teach us how to write essays. So when in the subject we are asked to write essays, we know there should be introduction, body and conclusion.

FGp 4 also shared the same view and cited that*:*

Essay writing is only taught to us during EFAL lessons. That helps us because when we have to write History and BS essays, we try to remember the structure that we were taught in essay writing.

All the interviewed learners state that it is during the EFAL period that they are taught essay writing although other subjects require them to write essays. They further tell that they use the skills like planning and paragraph writing which they are taught in EFAL to write essays for other subjects.

4.3.3 The perceptions of teachers and learners on learners writing competency

On the notion of Grade 12 learners' writing competency, the EFAL teachers observed that although some show good level of competency in the language, the majority still struggles with vocabulary which indicates a low level of reading. They believe that writing as a skill needs to be taught and enhanced through reading. The following table demonstrates the theme, sub-themes and issues raised on how teachers and learners perceive writing competency.

Themes	Sub-themes	Issues raised
Perceptions of teachers and learners on writing	Writing as encompassing other language skills.	Writing needs to be enhanced through reading to improve learners' spelling and expand their vocabulary.
	Teacher perception on employing code switching.	Code switching becomes inevitable to teachers because through its usage, their core goal of imparting knowledge to the learners is achieved.

On the perception of teachers and learners in writing, teachers had the following to share:

EFALT1 stated her views by highlighting that*:*

For one to be able to write, one has to know the words that are obtained from reading, meaning that, having a lot of vocabulary helps in writing. I can say those who have a lot of English vocabulary are able to write better and should be commended for such an effort.

Confirming what the other teacher had said, EFALT2 shared the following*:*

Learners differ, but the majority show low level of competency in writing. This could be due to their environments where English is not commonly used by their communities, thus leading to them having less vocabulary.

The above responses confirm that theEFAL educators are of the notion that most learners at Grade 12 are not competent enough in writing in their FAL-most show low

levels of competency. Their emphasis is that learners need to be taught writing seriously and couple it with reading which will allow them expand their vocabulary.

Concerning teaching writing, the EFAL teachers emphasized the need to teach writing because they believe that it is through writing that learners are able to prepare their speech presentations. Further to that, they are also of the view that FAL learners, need to be encouraged to read more for the extension of their vocabulary.

On the notion of teaching writing, the EFALT1 responded by saying:

Writing is a skill that needs to be thoroughly and seriously taught. It is a life skill, one that that the educators should take seriously in their teaching profession. To teach writing needs other skills especially reading, and we also need to teach motivated learners who are curious to extend their vocabulary. Every good speaker starts by writing.

EFALT2 concurred with the above statement and added the notion of motivating the learners by making the following statement:

Teaching writing forms the basis for learning, educators need to teach learners that writing is a vital skill for their and after schooling life. As second language learners of English, our learners need to be motivated in learning to speak and read in English so that their writing could be improved. From what I see, they lack that intrinsic motivation which should drive learners to conquer their circumstances or obstacles on writing in English.

It emerged from the data that was solicited from the EFAL Teachers that, it is of high regard to teach writing to the learners so as to sharpen other skills like reading and speaking. In addition to that, the EFAL teachers suggested the idea of motivating the learners so as to improve their writing.

The information was sought from the content subject teachers concerningtheir views on using learners' HL in teaching their subjects. Some agree that it is useful in that it assists in explaining difficult concepts and through the usage of HL; they get to the level of learners.

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EconT's views concerning using HL when teaching were as follows*:*

Home Language helps learners when explaining concepts and making examples that they could easily understand. Also by using HL, you get to the learners' level.

BST shared the same view on the matter and shed the following*:*

The subject is written in English; therefore learners must be able to use the language so as to understand its terminology. Learners 'HL can only be used to explain certain aspects of the subject. Since their LoLT is not their HL, it becomes difficult for them to understand certain concepts.

MLitT expressed contradicting view on the use of HL when teaching his subject warning about disadvantaging learners by not giving them practice through the LoLT that their examinations and tests will be written. He emphasized the importance of allowing learners to strive to understand English for their own benefit by stating that:

I think using learners' HL in a class that is supposed to be using English terminology; a class where learners are to be taught and examined in English, could be disadvantageous to the learners- learners should strive and learn in English, it all starts with me.

The responses above are an indication that some of the educators who when teaching in their classes use learners' HL justify using the HL by asserting that Home Language give learners the advantage to understand better when explaining the concepts. Again, they also acknowledge that what they are doing could also be disadvantageous to those learners in that, the school LoLT is English, as a result, learners are expected to write examinations in English. Even those who are strict in using English during their lessons, finds themselves explaining some difficult concepts in the learners' HL.

Content subject teachers gave the same views on the notion of using English as a LoLT in their schools. Their inputs on the issue complemented each other looking at the life of the learners beyond their secondary schools, where some of them could be heading for tertiary institutions where studying in English will be compulsory.

MLitT gave the following response when asked on using English as LoLT:

Yes, because English helps prepare the learners for tertiary education.

BST also alluded with the above argument stating that:

Yes, it helps boost their ideal of talking, expressing themselves and reading which ultimately contributes to good results after examinations.

In also concurring with other teachers on the idea of using English as LoLT in the school, the HistT shared the following views:

It is, in the sense that the books- the textbooks that learners are using, School Based Assessment (SBA) and examinations are all written in English. Teaching using English provides learners with some practice on the language that at the end they will be required to answer their exams in.

It emerged from the data that educators agree on the use of English as a LoLT in their schools, because even the books and all what is related to their learning are written in English. Further to that they were mentioning that English will help learners even after finishing Grade 12.

The information was sought on the language the learners preferred to write in. Responses from most of the learners indicated that they prefer writing in English. They understand the complexities that come with writing in English but know that to achieve their goals, they need to conquer them.

FGp 1 commented on their preferred language stating the following:

English mostly, we use our HL when speaking so when we write we prefer English. We mostly write for presentation in class then English becomes the best language for that. For example, when we are to do presentation, we collect information on our own, we present in front of the class what one has written. That boosts even those who are shy and struggling to express themselves in English. As Grade 12 learners we have to be exemplary in showing that no matter how strenuous writing and expressing oneself in

English could be, one has to struggle using it especially for writing because we write exams to pass to another grade.

FGp 2also shared the same sentiments and responded by saying*:*

We prefer English. As much as isiXhosa is our HL, it has complicated vocabulary. Having to write in English- which is not our HL- and on our own helps us to be confident. When we are asked to write an essay or letter or summary, we collect the information on our own without the help of the teacher. That really improves our confidence in the language, just to know that you are writing in a foreign language and sometimes, you present that in front of your classmates what you have written on your own.

FGp 4 had different views on their preferred language of writing. After the group debated the issue for a long time, they agreed to disagree on the issue. Some group members agreed on the usage of English for the writing purposes and the others preferred their HL which they believe they know better. The researchers acknowledged both views from the groups and tabled them.

FGp4 (1) shared the same views with other learners and preferred the use of English for writing stating that:

We are comfortable in English because it is not so difficult to write in especially if you stick to simple short sentences. If you do that, all you will need to do is being able to understand sentence construction and make or write your sentences in a manner which you understand it. Again as EFAL learners, there is not too much demand on writing idioms and other figures of speech when writing essays, since English is not our HL. All one needs to do is to stick to the speech, summary or essay topic and write it simpler.

FGp4 (2) learners had totally contradicting views concerning their preferred language of writing. To them isiXhosa was the most popular, they shared the following views:
When writing in isiXhosa, the vocabulary is easy and we are all used to it. Writing in isiXhosa also caters for those who are challenged in understanding English well, especially the instructions when we are writing tests or exams.

Information from the data collected depicted that not all learners prefer using English for writing. Those who prefer writing in English state their reasons as being academic in the sense that their examinations are written in English and that beyond the secondary schools; they will have to pursue writing in English. The fact that English is their school LoLT is believed to be boosting their confidence because they state that they write and present in English that helps boost their confidence. Learners who prefer to use their HL when writing argue that they have fewer challenges in their HL than in EFAL.

Regarding their preferred language when writing their personal things, all learners agreed that English is the most suitable. They further argue that writing in their HL could be time consuming and easy because one has an option of shortening words. They also cite the difficulty of some IsiXhosa words. Some prefer using English to impress their peers.

FGp1 shared the following on their preferred language for writing their personal matters: *We prefer English because we want to know the language further. Using English also helps boosts one's standard; you are not looked down upon. It also shows that there is another language that we can communicate in. Sometimes we communicate with people who are not amaXhosa, so English makes it easier.*

FGp 2 concurred with the above argument and further stated that*:*

We use English because isiXhosa can take many pages because we know it perfectly and that could lead us into writing everything even if it is unnecessary. In English, we have a limited scope of vocabulary, so we prefer using it. Again in isiXhosa, spelling is very difficult, for example, there's too much use of clicks like qangqulula, nkqonkqoza and ingxangxasi which are very difficult to spell. Even though we are isiXhosa first language speakers, they are not easy hence we prefer using English. When writing in English, we can also use shortened words especially when writing smses, words like – great (gr8), because (bcoz) and cousin (czn).

FGp 3 also shared the same sentiment with other learners saying:

English because its words are shorter than isiXhosa. Using English helps in time and financial management. You also get used in writing in English, your vocabulary increases and you also gain confidence in the language.

The above information revealed that learners prefer writing in English when writing for their own purposes. They cite the complexity of their HL words they end up unable to spell. To them writing to their peers in English assist in boosting their confidence. They also cited that mostly when they are writing personal issues they use the social network vocabulary which shortens words and English does that better. Some of them claim that writing your things in English also help increase your vocabulary.

On the idea of the importance of studying in English, the learners found that as important for communication purposes in the global world. Some cited economic reasons and equality among the ethnic groups.

FGp1 argued on the importance of learning in English stating that*:*

It is because we get used to speaking in English- we are able to communicate. In our country, there are any languages, so it becomes important for us to learn English so as to be able to communicate with other fellow South Africans. Economically, South Africa works with other countries that use English. If we speak or are able to express ourselves in English, we can easily do business with other people from other countries.

The above argument was also shared by FGp3 and stated that*:*

English is a medium of communication; it forms a link between schools in terms of communication. Learning English equalises every learner throughout the country, it makes education to be equal for us all. Again, English is an economic language- meaning when you want a job, you must be able to write and speak in English.

FGp 4 re-confirmed the above arguments and also added the issue of globalisation citing that*:*

Jobs and tertiary education applications are all done in English. Even beyond the secondary school, we will be forced to go to school which will offer courses in English.

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Only English is the language used in the computers and cell phones, there's no isiXhosa in them. Through being taught in English, we feel we are equal to other ethnic groups in S.A., groups like Coloureds, Whites and Sotho's. Also, in our school, there are teachers from Zimbabwe and Ghana who cannot speak isiXhosa, so it becomes easier for them when we communicate in English.

From the data solicited from the FGDs, it became vivid that learners welcome learning in English. Through the discussions they bring forward, it is evident that they are aware of English as means international means of communication, that it also carries economic power and is also a means of uniting the ethnic groups in their country.

Commenting on writing a whole, learners feel that it is a good thing because it caters for the shy ones in class and helps them progress to the following grades.

FGp1 responded by arguing that:

Writing helps us write examinations and progress to the next grade. Some of the things we are taught in writing like; formal letters and CV will be useful to us when applying for a job or tertiary after Grade 12. We think for everyone to be a learned person, one must be able to write so that our history, like the Whites should be written and kept safe for future generations.

FGp2 concurred with what was said in the first group and stated the following*:*

Writing in English is not easy for us because we don't speak or use English. It is a good thing for our teachers to teach us how to write because if we can't write, we will never progress to other grades.

FGp3 also share the same sentiments with other learners by saying*:*

Writing in English should be taught at school in all grades because it is a means or way of expressing our thoughts in a paper. In a class, one may be shy to speak during orals but when it comes to writing, gets higher marks. For as long as it is the only means to pass the examinations, we will always say, tough as it is, writing is important.

It emerged from that data that learners view writing in English as a skill that should be taught because it is through writing that they all can express their thoughts and for progression. They also highlight that it is through writing that their history and culture could be preserved for generations to come.

Essays

Having marked the essays written by the learners, noting their circumstances, notably the environment where they stay which is isiXhosa dominant and also not having a library at school the researcher can conclude that the learners are making a good effort to write in their FAL. Although they manage to make meaning of what they are writing about, there are still some common errors they make. Such prevalent errors are as follows:

1) **Unnecessary usage of pronouns**: Grammatically a pronoun is meant to substitute a noun. It had been common to find learners using nouns after they had already used the pronouns. They began their sentences like this; People they, the girl she. This could be influenced by their HL, IsiXhosa which allows for the use of both noun and pronoun consecutively, for example; umama yena, and abantu bona.

Learner 3*: This couple they was very honest and care about them.*
Learner 4*: This two couple they have bad situations but they always loved each other. But his boyfriend he promised to take good care of her.*
Learner 5*: My friends they all want me to go to the school without eating always they telling me that the is food at school I must not worry.*

2) **Use of IsiXhosa words**: Many learners have a tendency of writing IsiXhosa words if they are not sure of the spelling of the word. This happens mostly when they confuse the homonyms ending up writing a

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wrong spelling. They write the wrong spelling and in brackets put down in IsiXhosa for example; reconsolation- supposed to bereconciliation (uxolelwano), morn- supposed to be mourn (ukuzila), meet instead of meat (inyama) maybe with the hope that they could be credited by the educator since he or she will understand the meaning. The challenge could be when the EFAL educator is not the speaker of IsiXhosa.

3) **The influence of technology or social media networks**: It has been discovered that many learners struggle to write full words when they are writing their essays. Many words are shortened as if writing a sms or mixit. Words like, because-bcoz or cause, great-gr8 and you-u. One could argue that that kind of writing could sometimes distort the meaning of what the learner wanted to say. All these words and others leave learners unable to write proper English words.

Free writing

The responses expressed indicate that learners below perceive writing as a skill that needs to be taught at school from the lower grades. They view writing as a means of progressing to the following grades.

FL1 views writing in English by arguing that:

In an increasingly globalised world, it becomes important for many countries to do business with the major capitalist states like the United States which is English dominant, it is helpful for those countries to learn to write and speak in English. This is not to say other languages do not possess the same amount of importance and talent, yet the knowledge of writing in English, could help open many professional and literary doors. We progress to the other or following classes through writing in English.

FL2 agreed with the above learner by stating that*:*

English is not an easy subject, but we have to learn it so that we can be able to read and write. Many jobs require English, and the machines also are written in English. as learners must familiarise ourselves with English.

FL3 is also of the opinion that it is essential to write in English by citing that:

It is important for us to learn our subjects in English because English is everywhere; English is an international language. It is also used for interviews and jobs. It is important to know the language that most people know.

ML1 feels strongly about writing using her/his FAL and states that:

If you don't know how to write English, you are in big problem because lots of things want English, even the radios and TV's.

ML2 shares the same viewpoint and writes that:

As you go around the country, you will see foreign nationals and they speak English, so how will you talk to them if you don't know English? Sometimes on the radio they speak English. So if you don't know anything about English, then the world has turned its back on you. English is not an easy subject, you must practice it by even reading newspapers.

ML3 support the notion of writing in English mentioning that:

If you can write in English, there're lot of opportunities for you to find the appropriate school and pass the courses.

SL1 perceives writing in English by saying that:

English is a very important language because all people feel educated when they speak in English. English is the language that makes people stand together.

SL2 shares the same sentiments with the above learner by stating that:

Knowing English can make us have something in our stomach and you can provide your family by keeping it out of poverty by finding jobs speaking English.

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SL3 also concurs with other learners and says that:

We have to be taught in English at school and even have to practice on our own and not depend on the teachers all the time. Now it is our duty to learn more in English because English is the one that can make you progress.

The data collected reveals that learners believe that what they had been taught at school could be useful even after school. Writing to them also helps those who are shy because that's where they are able to express their understanding of what was taught. In spite of that there are still new challenges that hamper the learners in their efforts to write in their FAL. Such hindrances include their Home Language which constructs sentences and allows for certain structures to take place, the commonly confused homonyms and the influence the technology and social media have on writing.

4.3.4 The link between learners' writing competency in EFAL and performance in both EFAL and other content subjects

Regarding the teacher perceptions on writing as a skill that needs to be taught, EFAL teachers agreed on the essentiality of teaching the skill so as to enable the learners to transfer their thoughts and appreciate the language. The table below summarises the theme, sub-theme and issues raised on the link between learners' writing competency in EFAL and performance in the content subjects.

Theme	Sub-theme	Issues raised
The link of writing in English to other subjects	Writing as a skill that needs to be taught.	Teaching writing enhances learners' development of language so as to transfer their thoughts.
	Good writing should be considered by content subject teachers.	Content subject teachers could be provided with learners with good writing skills.
	Writing as beneficial to other subjects.	Since English is the LoLT for the schools under study, most subjects could benefit from teaching writing in EFAL classrooms.
	How competency in writing could affect other language skills.	If learners could be competent in writing, other language skills could be easily developed.
	Writing competency as an end product	Competency in writing becomes the learners' end product because through it they progress to the following grade.
	Writing support programmes	There are no departmental programmes hence the need for them to enhance the development of learners' writing.

On the link of writing in English to other subjects, the teachers expressed themselves by sharing the following:

EFALT1shared her /his perception on the issue as follows:

It is one of the most important skills as one is able to put down one's thoughts through it.

EFALT2 confirmed the above argument by adding that:

Writing has to enrich learners' expression. Through teaching the skill, learners could be helped to appreciate how a particular language is informed by the geographic area of the speakers.

EFAL teachers agree that it is important that the writing skill should be taught so that learners could appreciate the diversity of language and be able to express themselves.

On the idea of the role that competent writing should play in the learners' study the EFAL teachers are of the view that competent writing to learners enhances other skills like reading and presentation. Further to that, writing becomes an end product to their education at large.

EFALT1 commented on the role of competent writing to learners by saying that:

Writing forces learners to read more and at the end of the day, for everything they have learnt, the end product is to write it down.

On the same notion, EFALT2 reaffirmed the above argument by stating that:

They are able to analyse texts, understand language in general and are able to express themselves and reinforce understanding of note taking and presentation. It is through writing that the learners are assessed and able to progress to the following grade.

It emerged from that data that EFAL teachers view the role competent writing in the learners should play as very vital even in enhancing other skills like reading, analysing and understanding language in general. Further to that if learners could be competent in writing; it could be easier for them to progress from one grade to another.

The information was sought on how EFAL teachers think other subjects benefit from the writing they teach. The both agree that it is highly beneficial in the manner that learners in EFAL learn skills that they easily transfer to other subjects.

EFALT1 made known to the researcher that:

In all subjects, it is standard that learners have to translate and narrate what they have learnt by writing down what they have understood.

EFALT2 alluded to the aforementioned argument by stating that:

As English educators, we teach essay writing, answering of summaries, closed and open ended questions. Those content subjects like History for example- that have essay type questions benefit a lot from the skills we teach from the EFAL classroom.

Information from the EFAL teachers depicted that other subjects do benefit from teaching writing, making mention of subjects like History which require essay writing and where learners have to transfer the knowledge of essay writing learnt in EFAL to writing History essay. All subjects need the writing skills that are taught in EFAL.

Concerning reasons on thinking writing could be beneficial to other subjects, EFAL educators were strong in stating that even when looking for jobs, learners will use writing skills acquired through learning EFAL.

EFALT1 shared the following:

As it is a skill for every job, learners should be able to write; taking minutes in a meeting requires writing skills including all types of writing.

EFALT2 echoed the same views by revealing that:

It enables learners to capture what he or she has learnt easy and helps sharpen the learner's memory.

At all schools visited for data collection, EFAL teachers view writing in English as of great benefit even to other subjects since it is the school LoLT. They even argue that

the skills they, as EFAL educators teach to learners- assist in other subjects when writing essays, seeking jobs and beyond their school years.

The information was sought on the role English writing plays towards teaching other subjects, since it is a school LoLT. Content subject teachers agree that knowing skills from the EFAL class benefits their subjects because learners use such skills in their subjects.

EconT commented on the link between English and hers/his subject by stating that: *Integration between subjects is a very common aspect in the teaching and learning. Using English in explaining Economics concepts becomes easier because learners know English from their EFAL class, so knowing English becomes fundamental to knowing other subjects.*

MLitT agreed with the other teacher by citing that:

Maths Literacy involves a lot of reading which is a skill taught in the English language class. By being able to read Maths Lit word problems in English, learners can be able to derive formulae to solve these problems. The end result will be writing for good results.

BST shared the same sentiments as other content subject teachers and state that:

By learning English, learners can be able to express themselves in the content of their subject. They can be able to write essays using Business Studies terminology not just generalize. If learners know English, their marks improve and the subject is boosted.

The information from content subject teachers depicted that there is a strong link between their subjects and what is taught from the English classes. They state that skills taught and learnt from the English class help the learners to cope with what comes from their curriculum.

Regarding the notion of teaching writing in English being beneficial to learning other content subjects, teachers view that as helping in that English is the most common

language understood by many people. For them, it is equally essential to know that learners are able to write in English because it is the skill needed for their subjects.

MathsT responded on the idea by saying that*:*

For me, if all other subjects should be taught purely in English because it is the most used of all the official languages in the country and the one most people understand. Having to teach in English could benefit learners in and out of school even beyond Secondary school.

HistT confirmed the above argument by stating that*:*

It could be beneficial for the learners because learners could not be in a position to think in one language and answer in another when they are writing. Learners can easily understand the subject matter and can dramatically improve their performance in the exams.

BST echoed the same views as other interviewed content subject teachers by saying that*:*

English is the most common language of communication used even in other countries abroad. Teaching learners to be fluent in English, you simply not prepare them for examinations but for their existence in what is called the 21st global village. At school, this could help the learners understand the content of their subjects and be confident in writing them in English.

The responses expressed that educators agree that teaching and learning in English is very vital in the 21st century in that people are living in a global village. It is good to prepare learners' communication skills using English since it is the most used of all the official languages. If it could be strictly used even by the educators learners will not find it too hard to understand or confuse with their HL. It could assist learners in improving their reading, writing and listening skills and help learners understand the content of their subjects. If learners are competent in English, they can easily master concepts or terminologies from the specific subjects, will be able to write to improve their marks and at the end get good results.

On the premise of whether learning to write in English assist learners in learning other subjects, in their FGDs, learners shared the same views that they benefit. They benefit in the sense that English is the LoLT in their school; all subjects are taught and examined in English.

Regarding the benefit learners get from learning EFAL, FGp 1 cites that:

It helps a great deal because in our school, we do all subjects in English. If we learn something in English, we are able to understand other subjects because we firstly understand English.

FGp 3 support the idea that as learners they benefit from EFAL learning and argue that: *Yes because in our school, all subjects are taught in English. Even the textbooks that we read are written in English, so studying English helps us understand and are able to write other subjects better.*

FGp 4 also concurred with other learners by stating that:

Yes, because all our subject at school except isiXhosa are taught in English. EFAL learning helps us to write and understand what is required from other subjects. In all, we can say, without the writing skills that we get from EFAL lessons, we think it could be hard for us to understand and be able to write other subjects.

From the responses given by learners, it became clear that they are concerned about their own writing competency that's why they are eager to be involved in programmes aiming at improving their writing.

FGp 1 on the notion of school writing programmes had this to say:

Yes. We normally go to other schools for writing competition. Again, here at school, since Grade 10 we are involved in a writing competition done by the whole school, one per term.

FGp 2 supported the above argument by stating that:

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Yes. There are some competitions organise with neighbouring schools where learners have to compete in essay or any longer transactional writing.

FGp 3 concurred with the aforementioned views by arguing that*:*

Yes, our school programme comprises giving us essays to write and to spell words correctly so that we write correct spelling.

Regarding their need for language support programmes that could help improve their writing, learners felt strong about needing them and that such programmes should include other skills like reading.

FGp 1 made known to the researcher that:

Yes and such programmes should include more competitions in writing and spelling so as to improve our vocabulary. Other programmes should also include more reading. We think that any programme that could make us able to write so that at the end of the year we get good levels. Programmes such as the one where we read a short paragraph and are asked to write down facts of all that we had understood.

FGp 3 agreed with the above argument by stating that*:*

Yes so that we can improve our English vocabulary. These programmes should include writing of CVs, so that when we are out of school we can be able to apply and get jobs or share the knowledge we gained from school.

FGp 4 also support other learners' views on writing programmes by saying that*:*

More programmes should be on reading, writing and spelling. Some other programmes should include watching TV where at the end of the story we will write down what we were listening to. Also programmes where learners will embark on a journey and write their observations and experiences at the end of the journey and share them with the classmates.

It emerged from the data collected that learners are aware that writing also encompasses other skills like listening, reading and presenting. Again it is also eminent that improving their vocabulary in English is crucial to them, so that their goal of progressing to another grade is accomplished.

Essays

From what the learners have written in their essays, the researcher found that learners demonstrate that writing in English could assist in learning other subjects. The following are the examples of that:

Learner 4 in her/his essay wrote the following*:*

Passion in this story is most important part between these two couples. Where as the friends come to this couples with bad influences like influencing their love creating bad things to other couple. But all of these influences are like the rain in the rain coat, because their love become powerful.

Learner 5 put her/his views on the given essay topic as*:*

Teenagers should not be forced to get married because when they are not happy with their husband no one helps them to sort out the problem they sort it by themselves even if it's not easy to do that. Most of the teenagers are surrounded of poverty because they become marriage in early time also they don't even go to school.

Learner 6 also wrote in the following manner:

In my own belief a person getting married should be at least at the age of 25 or more because that person has got something to tell about life. In the case of a teenager getting married that is out of the picture because a teenager is still un aware of the problems that come with marriage.

English FAL happens to be the LoLT to all the schools under study. This means that all subjects in those schools with the exception of isiXhosa are done in English. Learning

English becomes of paramount importance in such situations because it could assist even to other subjects. In the essays that the learners wrote, they demonstrated their flexibility of being able to write in different genres. Some of those genres where past tense could prevail could assist learners in answering History essays as they may require planning and paragraphing. Again learners demonstrated knowledge of what is happening in their surroundings which could be an essay in the Life Orientation.

Free writing

Ascertaining from the learner responses, it is obvious that the LoLT in the schools is English. Learners acknowledge that English learning is not a waste of time to them for it is helpful into learning other subjects.

FL1 puts her/his thoughts down by saying that*:*

In practical sense, one can survive without the knowledge of English, but with the current globalised nature of the world and commerce, knowledge of English becomes very essential and assists in other spheres like science and technology.

FL2 agreed with the above learner by stating that:

The reason we learn in English is that all subjects are written in English. The technology is changing every day and requires English.

FL3 also supported learning in English by citing that:

To learn our subjects in English will help us pass other subjects. If you know English, you will be able to understand the question that you are being asked in the exams.

ML2 concerning learning in English is of the view that:

If you can't read English at all, you can't study because all the books that you will use are written in English and when you do presentations, you do them in English. Every subject is written in English so that we get used to it.

ML3 supported the argument by citing that:

English is becoming very important because you learn other subjects better and in an easy way.

Essay writing is in many schools taught during EFAL lessons. Essay writing skills which are taught during EFAL lessons help the learners to know the structure of essays even in other subjects. Through being taught essay writing they know that even in other subjects they have to write one idea per paragraph.

4.3.5 English as a language of learning to write for a variety of reasons

Essays

When marking the essays, the researcher observed that learners strived to write meaningful texts using their FAL. That on its own was an indication that up to the grade they are in now, they are able to understand their FAL, meaning that in their HL, they can add another language and able to use it.

Theme	Sub-theme	Issues raised
Writing for a variety of reasons	Using writing for broader communication.	Writing is useful as part of communication at school and in the outside world.

The following responses are extracted from the learners' essays:

Learner 1 writes the following*:*

When you are in love you have to keep the space for disappointment. Love can break your heart. You can also fall in love many times but they will be times when you feel hurt and heart broken. All you need you have to let it go even when it is hard to let it go.

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Learner 3 shares her/his views by stating that*:*

There are important things to do out there not getting yourself in a marriage you don't belong to. Marriage is for the people who have all the thing that he/she want to have. People who get marriage is those people can stay in there marriage even if it is hard or if they are fighting all the time.

Learner 6 write down citing that:

A teen still has a lot to learn about responsibility, care and commitment other than that, a teen has their future to think about and getting married is out of question to a teen that wants to be regarded as something one day, but if the teenager is married that cannot happen in the near future.

Free writing

FL1 responded by writing that:

In terms of the appreciation of language and literature knowledge, English is extremely important and offers the best writings.

FL2 is also of the view that EFAL is important and writes that:

English is our First Additional Language, our Home Language is isiXhosa. The reason why we learn in English is that the subjects that we are doing are written in English.

FL3 supports the above learner by stating that*:*

To learn other subjects in English will help us to pass our subjects and be able to find a job and meet new friends because most of the jobs need people that are able to speak English. If you learn in English, it will be easy for you to be able to understand the question that you are being asked in your exams.

ML1 also views learning in English as essential and states that:

Also English is the most common language in the world, and also to study English is very important because it increase the chances of getting good jobs.

ML2 shared the following:

Every subject is written in English so that we can get used to it even though it is not our home language but I think is the best thing.

ML3 support other learners by arguing that:

English is becoming very important because you also learn other subjects better using English.

SL1 also wrote the following:

The next thing some people like South Africans who want to work overseas, if the English is not there, you will not be able to communicate. At least if you know English, people will be able to understand you and you get help immediately that's why English is the most useful language.

SL2 support the statement by stating that:

We must learn to speak English and write in English so that it can be easy to get jobs or go to school, so that you can make your future bright.

SL3 shared the same sentiments as other learners and say that: *English is the one that you need to lean and do all your best in because even at primary we learnt that learners should learn in English so that they can get easy in secondary and even at university*.

Information from the data depicted that learners acknowledge the usefulness of learning in English for a variety of reasons. They further see English as the international and economic language and as a LoLT in their schools fell strongly that they need to be competent in their writing so as to progress to the following Grade.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher provides a discussion of the information presented, analysed and interpreted in chapter 4. The discussion is mainly grounded on the themes that formed a cornerstone of the study and which were derived from the study's research questions namely; challenges Grade 12 learners experience when writing in EFAL across the curriculum, strategies used by the EFAL and content subject teachers in teaching writing in Grade 12, the perceptions of teachers and learners on learners' writing competency and the link between the learners' writing competency in EFAL and in other content subjects. Coupled with the above themes, because the study has its roots planted on the curriculum issue which is writing in the learners' LoLT, the researcher felt it could be equally important to look and discuss the issues pertaining directly to all the subject teachers under study. Such issues include; training of the teachers, their qualifications and experiences.

5.2 Capacity of the teachers

It is very important to pay particular attention to the training and capacitation of teachers because they form a major determinant of quality education (Asikhia, 2010). This means teachers as people who have to deliver curriculum and impart new knowledge to the learners need to be knowledgeable pertaining to the subjects they teach. On that notion, Schweitzer and Kelly (2009) assert that the masters to the subject matter are the competent teachers who in their teaching would exhibit great expertise and present their lessons in an enthusiastic manner which could aim at instilling a desire in the students to learn more. Asikhia (2010) further argues that there are factors like; professionalism,

communication and the ability to work as a team which teachers are trained in anticipating that they could contribute to bringing favourable results. Based in the study, the teachers' capacity will be in the following categories: their training, specialization on the subjects and their experiences.

5.2.1 Teacher training

The lack of content training, knowledge and other relevant instructional delivery strategies could compromise quality teaching and learning (Grayson, 2003). This means that if teachers are under qualified, they could lack confidence and could face challenges in the interpretation and delivery of the subject matter. Lack of such competences in teachers could have detrimental effects in the learners' performance. Pretorius (2008) confirms the above argument by stating that the quality of teaching provided could be the major cause if schools pass or not do well. Summarily, this is an indication that the quality of teachers is a vital determinant of learner performance.

The study established that the learners were taught by teachers with diplomas and degrees that were relevant to the subject content they were teaching. It need not be emphasized that the role of teachers is that of being the chief implementers of syllabus and as such have a vital role of imparting new knowledge to the learners because they have the responsibility of interpreting the national curriculum according to the individual teacher's level of professional training, personal qualities, intelligence, school, and environment and according to the learners' individuality (Ornstein and Hunkins 2004). Thus the level of teacher competency in any subject could have an influence in teaching one's subject. However, it has to be noted that the quality of teaching writing in the EFAL in rural schools centers on a number of variables. Those include infra-structure like libraries, sociocultural relevance to learning, content and teacher qualifications. These variables mostly have a tendency of having a symbiosis rapport, that is, if one of them malfunctions, that could have the potential to affect the rest (Mbele, 2005). Therefore, teacher qualification and experience on their own could not convey about successful teaching of the writing skills and develop confidence to being competent writers among the learners.

The findings of the study disclosed that teachers got full teachers training hence it becomes easy for them to impart knowledge to the learners. If teachers are trained in teaching specific subjects, they make learning effective, meaningful and transferrable by engaging direct with the content. In such instances, the teacher becomes a strategist who continuously formulates decisions about the essence of instruction, about the procedures needed to acquire a function, and about the conditions under which it is appropriate to apply a given function (Grosser, 2007:39).Regardless of which theoretical observation one has of education, there is no doubt that teachers influence learner' learning as better teachers foster better students (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004:321).

It is a widespread reality that if learners are being taught by a trained teacher, the performance of learners becomes of high-quality because in the teaching and learning process the teacher is regarded as the most vital element (Khurshid, 2008). In view of this, it could be concluded that there is a direct relationship between the teacher training in specific subjects and the learner performance.

5.2.2 Teachers' subject specialization

The Association of Physics Teachers (2009) disclose that in an ideal situation, a qualified teacher would have learned basic content knowledge through methods of enquiry which they could put in full use when guiding learners in understanding the contents of the subject. This means for every subject there should be a teacher that has specialized on that field because it is believed will have more expertise and could be confident in boosting or making her/his learners comprehension of the subject. Rogan and Grayson (2004) assert on the essentiality of specializing in the subject by arguing that the school subjects could be affected by the teachers who have not specialized in their subjects.Goodland (2004) views the goal of teaching as to assist learners in developing intellectual resources that could assist them in participating in the major domains of human thought and enquiry.

Therefore, if teachers have knowledge of their subject matter, they could be able to assist influence the learners' efforts to learn the subject matter and explain why it could be worth learning and knowing and how it could find integration with other subjects. This

means specialized subject teachers could impart relevant knowledge and skills to the learners easy and through their knowledge and dedication learners could produce good results.It is true that a good and effective school is made up of good and effective teachers who are committed to their calling. Teachers' qualities determine the success of the programme. Ozigi (1983) argued that:

No matter how efficient and well intentioned you are as a school administrator, you can hardly achieve success without the support and co-operation of well qualified, dedicated and adequate staff. It is through them that the actual education process takes place, indeed high quality teachers are your very best resource asset. (pp.18)

The study found out that all interviewed teachers both for EFAL and content subject have specialized in the subjects they teach. That could make it easy for the teachers to impart relevant knowledge and skills to the learners. The success of quality teaching of the relevant skills could be achieved by these specialized teachers as they also have to be dedicated to the execution of their duties, for them to produce good results.

5.2.3 Experience of the teachers

There is also an issue of experience which perceives the teacher as a resource person who should effectively execute her/his duties (Ross, 2001). Huskins and Ornstein (2004) declare that relevant teaching methods in class are being used by the experienced teacher and the teacher is also the one who understands the learning needs and interests of the learners which then compel her/him to use relevant teaching approaches in class. This means teachers who lack experience could find it a little difficult to do their duties effectively as they could struggle with the interpretation of the core business which is the syllabus.According to Richards (2011) experienced teachers are able to develop routines that enable them to perform effortlessly in a variety of situations with different kinds of children. They are willing to depart from their established procedures and use their own solutions, are able to improviseand have a wide repertoire of routines and strategies that they can call upon.

The study reveals that the teachers were not beginners; they were all experienced in the teaching of the respective subjects. These teachers belong to what Carey's (1986)model call experienced teachers because they each had more than eight years teaching experience. Carey's (1986) model puts teachers who have 3-8 years teaching experience under the category of practicing teachers. This practicing teacher has to be assisted if she/he has to be effective and conversant with the latest developments in the field (Carey, 1986).

It was also found out in the study that the teachers had been teaching the same Grade and same subjects for a number of years. In most instances, teachers of such caliber are mostly perceives as being conversant with the numerous teaching approaches and are able to interpret the syllabus clearly (Ross, 2001).

5.3   Challenges Grade 12 learners face in writing in EFAL

Writing could be defined as a complex language form that most language users practice for their everyday communication, educational and social purposes (Ferris, 2009). It could also be viewed asa product that takes writers through the journey to discover something to say (Ferris, 2009). Weigle (2014) also argues that writing is a set of skills and knowledge residing within individual writer and embedded with sociocultural literacies shared by a particular community. Although English might be seen as a popular language to learn around the world, it is not a simple language to master because there are quite a number of challenges that the second language learners could meet or face with when learning English. One of the challenges such learners could encounter when writing in English could be to produce sentences with a lot of grammatical mistakes which could be caused by their HL interference in the target language. The challenge of academic writing cannot be attributed to one factor but a myriad of factors, below are some of the challenges that were revealed in the current study.

5.3.1 The influence of HL in writing in EFAL

Hawthorne and Glenn (2010) view writing as the most crucial skill in the learning process. Through writing, learners are engaged in carrying meaningful tasks which might at the later stage get them to understand what they need to do to succeed. It therefore becomes imperative that learners should formulate their own thoughts, organise and write them so as to create a record to assist in future purposes. If learners are encouraged to put their thoughts on paper, it could be easier to make them available for the feedback, self-reflection and revision (Drowns et al, 2004).

It is equally imperative that to comprehend that young people who have difficulties in writing could not be considered fully equipped to meet the demands of post-secondary school life (Graham and Peril, 2007). The validity of the above statement could be clearly endorsed by the jobs requiring written documents like report writing skills, minute taking and together with the visual literacy.

Pertaining to the study which is located in the rural Secondary Schools where English is only a school language, learners are exposed to more than one language, having English as their school LoLT. Such learners should be obliged to use their HL o generate ideas associated with the development of the topic at hand (Leki and Cumming, 2008). This is confirmed by what the study revealed that learners are challenged when thinking in their HL and having to write in EFAL. They also further their responses by stating that they normally write isiXhosa words in brackets so that their teachers could consider them when marking. This is in line with what Ahmed (2010) argue as learners being intimidated by the target language while in the writing process.

South African constitution and the LiEP advocate that all learners should be fluent in two official languages; that the learners get access to the second language while maintaining HL. If the learners' HL is fully developed, it could be easier to transfer such skills to EFAL. Grade 2 learners are still struggling with writing, had to think in isiXhosa and write in English. To them there is no connection between the two languages. Their HL should be fully developed at this stage wherein according to the constitution and the LiEP transferring such skills as gained in their HL could be easy. The data collected

reveals that those learners are still at their exit grade, struggling with writing in English, hence resorting to write isiXhosa words in brackets.

5.3.2 Language and editing

In any writing, it becomes essential that grammatical rules should form the basis of language learning (Lea and Street, 2006). This means there could be no way that good writing could be achieved without grammatical instructions. In the writing process, CAPS (2011) captures the following fundamental elements as forming the core of writing; planning, drafting , structure, editing, revising and final writing. Myles (2002) considers the writing process as assisting the learners to transforming their knowledge into writing. Further to that, this process to writing could be viewed as crucial in developing writing in the classroom.

This view contradicts Gibbon's (1998) notion that if teachers focus on grammatical rules, learners may not understand the content. According to Gibbons (1998) English as the additional language to learners should serve two complementary goals namely content and language learning. In this manner, if one of the goals i.e. grammatical rules supersedes content learning, learners will have a challenge. Gibbons (19980 emphasises teaching English across the curriculum not having to consider or focus too much on grammatical or language rules. Learners at the end should produce texts that have correct grammar and failing to do that could lead to them not progressing because they could be seen as not fully developed in the target language. Even the CAPS marking rubric requires certain features of essay or transactional writing. Teaching EFAL writing is teaching the learners the correct way of writing based on correct grammatical usage.

The study embarked on giving learners free writing and essays as a true reflection of what the learners have engaged in during the research. It was through such documents that the researcher was able to thoroughly scrutinize what learners do when writing. The study revealed that Grade 12 learners struggle with writing in EFAL. Their competency

in writing manifests itself through confusing homonyms, incorrect spelling, incorrect use of punctuation marks and the lack of vocabulary.

5.3.3 Anxiety

Krashen (1982) in his affective filter hypothesis claims that if the second language learners are anxious or their emotions are negatively disturbed, their acquisition of the target language could be prevented. It should also be taken into consideration that learners should be the active participants in their own learning so that they could learn successfully (Steyn and Wikinson, 1998).In the study conducted by Besman (2013), it was revealed that learners become silent and not participate in class during the EFAL period until the teachers have to call them by their names. Katz (1996) argues that learners experience anxiety by simply knowing that they will be asked questions in the foreign language.

It emerged from the study that learners could not be competent in their writing because whenever they know they would be embarking on writing a test or examinations, they come to class panicking and anxious. They revealed that they had the same feelings from the very first day-in primary school- they were told to write in English.

The findings of the study are shared by Cheng (2004) and Horwitz (2001) when arguing that anxiety and negative emotions have the potential to pose as hindrances for second language learners particularly when they have to write. This could be due to a series of emotions the learners go through when they have to engage in writing which on its own Lin and Ho (2009) regard as one of the most important but complex skills to learn. In spite of the complexities in writing in the second language, it should be considered that learners' success of learning writing in second language somehow affects their grade progression. The fact that learners know that for them to progress to the following grade depends on writing in their second language could naturally cause stress or anxiety (Lin and Ho, 2009).

Lee (2001) and Rollinson (2005) opine that the solution to learners' second language writing anxiety could be solved through embarking on peer feedback and preferring

topics that could have a positive effect on learners' writing. This solution could have its challenges because even the learners' peers are not competent in writing because they are also second language learners.

5.3.4 Influence of the social media.

The findings of the study disclosed that learners' writing is highly influenced by the manner in which they write in their cell phones. The texting which is used when writing smses or in mixit dominates the way the learners write. Such texting language includes shortening of words creating other words which are not acceptable for academic writing.

5.3.5 Lack of motivation

Kabody (2013) argues that motivation should be viewed as a paramount driving force for EFAL because it has the ability to influence the learners' academic achievements. Dornyei (2006) is also of the view that for learners to be motivated to learn in EFAL, there are other influential variables like; the curricular, role of teachers, individual learners' characters and sociocultural aspects. This means if the curricula or syllabus could be too complex for the learners, they could be easily demotivated. Teachers whose role is to impart knowledge to the second language learners should be motivated first, so that they could have eyes and clear minds to notice where learners are not motivated. They should on discovering that, consider including motivation in their lesson planning. Orio (2013) argues that learners should be motivated by the desire to succeed through writing which for the second language learners is acknowledged as a complex phenomenon.

Further to that, Bernad (2010) is of the opinion that another strong motivating factor is the learners' sociocultural background. This is in line with the study's theoretical framework which positions second language learning to sociocultural influences (Lin, 2013). In this approach, sociocultural background of the learners is viewed as having to play a pivotal role in motivating learners in learning in their FAL.

What was revealed in the study refutes the aforementioned arguments. The study revealed that most learners were not motivated in using English because the communities where they come from speak isiXhosa. The learners even cite the lack of motivation even from their homes where parents are illiterate and cannot assist them with their homework. Lack of motivation could hamper their development in writing.

5.4   Strategies used to teach English

There is a strong need to emphasize that teachers are the chief curriculum implementers because they interpret the national curriculum according to the individual teacher's level of professional training, personal qualities, intelligence, school, and environment and according to the learners' characteristics. Thus the teacher level of competence can influence the learners' ability to write. However, note should be taken of the fact that the quality of teaching writing hinges on a number of variables. Those could include infra-structure, relevance, content and teacher qualifications. These variables tend to have an interdependence relationship, that is, if one of them malfunctions, the rest becomes affected. The teachers still have an important role in developing the writing skills as they must teach content and processes required. By the engagement with the content learning becomes more effective, meaningful, integrated and transferrable. In the teaching and learning environment, the teacher becomes a strategist who constantly makes decisions about the elements of instruction, about the procedures needed to acquire a function, and about the conditions under which it is appropriate to apply a given function (Horton, 1988 cited in Grosser, 2007:39).

It then becomes imperative that teaching strategies or approaches should be devised to make learners autonomous and free them from constraining supervision. For achieving good results, emphasis should be placed on the direct motivation and involvement of the learners. The culture of the classroom- what goes on in the classroom- and the impact of the teacher and teaching has been identified by numerous studies as the crucial outcomes variable for improving learning (Rogan and Grayson, 2003). The manner in which the teachers teach is critical in any reform design to improve quality

(Sall, Ndiaye, Diarra and Seck, 2009:54).Regardless of which philosophical view one has of education, there is no doubt that teachers influence students' learning as better teachers foster better students (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004:321). Teachers form the integral part to the thinking that drives programme creation and implementation as they are reflective (Giroux cited in Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004). Hence, the researcher sought to establish strategies used by the teachers in their lessons to teach writing.

5.4.1 Writing as a process

Graham and Perin (2007) argue on the importance of teaching necessary steps to writing which encompasses planning, revising and editing. It is equally important to teach learners to brainstorm their ideas before they start writing as part of their planning. Teaching writing to leaners is further confirmed by the CAPS (2011) which put emphasis on the steps for process writing as follows:

1. Planning: Learners are taught to select and organise their ideas that they will use when writing especially an essay. This they can do through brainstorming and drawing the mind map.
2. Drafting: During drafting, learners have the opportunity to explore their topics and assist in organizing their facts or ideas into a meaningful sequence.
3. Revising: Learners have to focus on the ideas together with the structure. Their ideas should be linking and written in a form of paragraph. There should be clear development and coherence of ideas.
4. Editing: The learners have to attend to the issues pertaining to grammar, spelling, register and style.

A number of researchers value the use of the writing process (Granville and Dison 2009; Lloyd 2007; Bharuthram 2006; Ellis *et al.* 2005). Building on the writing process approach, Lloyd (2007:50) further coined the PROCESS (Planning, Referencing, Organization, Composition, Engineering, Spelling and Structure) framework that could be adopted by learners in pursue of good or towards competent writing. Further to that, Lloyd (2007:54) is of the view that the presentation of a balanced argument through

critical analysis or evaluation in a given activity be it a project, essay or transactional writing necessitates skill and practice and is a crucial component of academic writing. She cites Moore (2003) who recommends that embarking on writing retreats and groups could be supportive and beneficial to some academic writers.

The findings of the study disclosed that there were strategies teachers were using when teaching writing. Such writing strategies included brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising, editing, summary and paragraph writing. Teachers are confident that if they embark on these strategies when instructing their learners to write, they yield good results in that learners understand the register and the structure of the texts. What teachers see as beneficial from the strategies; are believed to assist the learners even beyond the secondary school or Grade 12.

The process approach to writing appears to be taught for the first time in secondary schools, in the FET phase (CAPS, 2011) and possibly that could be one of the reasons most of the learners entering secondary school education usually do not have knowledge of what the process writing entails. For instance, a common practice at schools is that teachers give homework today and expects learners to submit it the following day. If learners could have practiced the process approach at home, would not be well-organized within such a limited time and without or few adults to assist in the writing of homework. However, Silva (1986) perceived that the writing process was critiqued for being practiced in a de-contextualized method as it does not prepare learners for the working world and for not considering individual differences and situations. Nonetheless, the process approach to writing could be viewed as making a substantial contribution to the academic writing teaching and several writing models still subscribe to it.

The strategies that the EFAL teachers confirm they are using, concur with what Webber (2000) and Graham and Perin (2007) refer as key to the process approach to writing which are planning, drafting, revising and editing. Wing (2009) furthers the notion of stages on process writing by adding a mind map which could be viewed as leading to paragraph cohesion, which is a vital step in the writing process for it is believed to assists in reducing confusion. Most of what takes place during writing is not noticeable.

It occurs inside the writer's head, in the case of the study; the learners. Much of this thinking revolves around the basic processes of writing: planning, drafting, revising, and editing (Graham, 2006). It then resides within the teachers on how best they can assist in developing the learners to make use of these processes effectively.

Harris and Schaible (1997) argue that the responsibility of teaching writing to the learners lies to all subject teachers; it should not be a burden of the EFAL teachers. This argument could have found home in the English Across the Curriculum (DBE, 2011) concept and also from the fact that most South African schools use English as a LoLT. For all learners to progress to the following grade, the majority of their subjects, six out of 7, should be written in English. Peha (2003) reaffirms the notion of writing across the curriculum by stating that it should not lie on the shoulders of English teachers because for every subject, learners are obliged to themselves and their subject knowledge through writing and ultimately progress through writing examinations.

What had been revealed by the study refutes the aforementioned claims. Content subject teachers in the study reveal that they leave the obligation of teaching writing to the language teachers. It is revealed in the study that content subject teachers ask learners to write essays which form part of their assessment programmes without teaching them skills on essay writing. This has also been confirmed by the recipients of education, the learners- that they are only taught about the writing skills in the EFAL classroom although content subjects require them to write essays.

Could the content subject teachers be held accountable for not teaching writing skills? Is teaching writing part of their syllabus as it is outlined in the CAPS policy document. Are they not supposed to be concerned with the content that is to be assessed at the end for the learner progression?

5.4.2 Integration

Foncha (2013) views language as embedded to within sociocultural activities of all individuals. It is in this context that language is not perceived as only bearing grammatical rules but also as a carrier of any culture. It is imperative that to understand

the writing competency of the learners whose HL is isiXhosa and their LoLT is English, their sociocultural context should be taken into consideration. Foncha and Sivasubramaniam (2014) argue that EFAL learners should actively participate in class and assisted to becoming autonomous by being afforded opportunities that boost their English usage. Language learning is rooted in social events and takes place through the interaction with people, objects and events

Gardner (2007) perceives integration as an instrumental motive which sees the second language learners as having hope to gain something. This could be viewed as fitting well in the S.A. context where even the rural schools embark on choosing English as a LoLT due to the diversity of the country and so as to be on line with the country's constitution which promotes bilingualism. The notion of integrativeness is also confirmed in the socialization model where Lea and Street (2006) are of the view that this approach could be meaningful in teaching writing in that learners' cultures form part of the subjects and genres to be taught.

The study found out that apart from the strategies mentioned in 5.4.1, teachers also employ integration where the learners' sociocultural knowledge is considered. They regard the integration as beneficial to the learners because when they are given activities that integrate with their sociocultural aspects, they participate actively. Further to that, learners' vocabulary comes easy and they stop being anxious.

The study also revealed that teachers have their own fears in using integration. They envisage that learners' scope could be limited to only what they could relate to and become less interested in exploring the unknown world.

5.5 Perception of teachers and learners on writing

Brown (2005) is of the view that second language learning could not be achieved by listening to the teachers only, learners need to be exposed to other opportunities and activities like reading and writing to sharpen their competency on the language. Barker et al (2000) assert the notion by stating that learners of second language should be

exposed regularly to activities that sharpen their competency in the target language so as to increase their vocabulary and spelling. The DoE (2003) also perceives that the language skills that learners need for their social interactions with their peers should be different from those they need to embark on in their formal or academic or school settings. Schlebush and Thobedi (2005) confirm the DoE argument by stating that in many instances learners show they are more fluent in informal English than in the required register for school activities.

Drowns et al (2004) also view writing as an exceptional learning method that aims at promoting learning in that the ideas the learners write down and understand assist in their language development. Learners who have some difficulty or show some incompetence in writing could not be considered fully equipped for meeting post-secondary school demands (Graham and Perin, 2007).

5.5.1 Writing as encompassing other language skills

Writing in the second language is a complex study of discovery in which learners have more than one language in their disposal (Wang and Wen, 2002). Second language learners have to deal with the complexities of writing in English, having less vocabulary, spelling errors and confusing words in the target language. Hirose (2003) argues that more competency in writing is highly exhibited by learners who read and written extensively. This means learners' writing competency should be complemented by other skills like reading, which could assist learners on grammatical issues like vocabulary and sentence construction. Hence EFAL teachers are encouraged to embark on different teaching strategies that could assist in the development of the learners' writing. Krashen (1982) suggests that the learners could acquire new language knowledge that is beyond their level of understanding if they could be given more reading material and some extra linguistic support.

The study made known that writing is a complex skill that needs to be taught and enhanced through reading, so that in what learners seem to struggle with- like spelling and vocabulary- could be improved and expanded. Teachers view writing, though is a

complex skill, as through it that the learners prepare their presentations and write their examinations for progression. To achieve this, teachers also disclosed that learners need to be motivated to improve their writing.

Graham (2008) is of the opinion that to become competent writers, learners need to attain knowledge about the characteristics of good writing or what constitutes good writing as well as the diverse purposes and writing procedures. One of the most common ways of acquiring knowledge about writing is through engaging in reading. To read well-crafted literature normally provides a model that could illustrate the features of good writing (Graham, 2008). This comprises of how authors make use of the diction to advocate for specific images and feelings, manipulate sentences to fast track or slow down the flow of text, organize ideas, and set and change the mood of text, or use illustrations to reinforce and sharpen a reader's understanding.

While students are clearly in the process of acquiring some knowledge about writing through reading, it is not known how much they learn (Jubhari, 2009). It therefore becomes the responsibility of the teachers to further develop the writing process by engaging learners in a discussion of what an author is trying to achieve, and then have to ask them to apply the same methods when doing their own writing. For an example, having read a story, learners' attention should be directed towards how the author had used the words to evoke a certain feeling. Then the teacher should afford the learners with the task or activity where they will use the new learned or acquired words to trigger the same feeling in their writing.

The aforementioned example takes us to the understanding that writing cannot be dealt with as a standalone skill from reading. (Rose 2004; Munro 2003)are all of the views that the two skills complement each other. Rose (2004:96) argues that parent-child reading that normally takes place before sleeping, and before formal school is the first stage in a curriculum of reading skills that inspires the content and processes of teaching and learning in each stage of schooling. He further argues that the parent-child reading is not practiced in rural areas where the indigenous people of live and where some schools are located (Rose 2004). Jubhari (2009) also reports that the aboriginal people of Australia only received basic reading and writing and are not fully functional in

Australian society because they were not introduced to cultural values embedded in the use of the English language.

This situation could be compared to the majority of South Africans who live in rural areas and whose children in school use English as the LoLT. Adding to that, Rose (2004) is of the view that writing activities in schools lean towards being regarded as secondary and are dependent on reading proficiency. Further to that, he suggests that for learners to improve in their writing and become better writers, they have to master reading from an early age. This suggests that in order to have learners who are adequately prepared after Grade 12 for tertiary education or job seeking, as far as competent writing is concerned, the whole schooling system from early childhood development to high school should be revised so as to infused with systematic reading and writing activities and learners would have a smooth synergistic transition to tertiary education (Munro 2003).

However, Jurecic (2006) cautions the teachers by arguing that teaching writing in secondary school viewed as challenging in this era because the reading culture has been eroded by television, movies, videos and games, amongst other factors. He maintains that learners should embark on reading more to be prepared for reading and writing in different disciplines (Jurecic 2006:10). He also suggests that learners also need more practice in using writing in exploring some ideas, develop positions, discuss about problems and contradictions, make arguments and create new thoughts about the world (Jurecic 2006).

Consequently, reading and writing could be perceived as reciprocal as learners read what has been written and include that as part of their writing. In conclusion, research suggests a strong link between reading and writing, thus indicating that these academic literacies components are pivotal in developing competency in writing.

5.5.2 Code switching

Flyman and Mattsson (1999) are of the view that for teachers, code switching becomes inevitable because they want to achieve their core goal of transmitting knowledge to the

learners. The argument is confirmed by Tornbull (2001) by stating that in the case of teaching a second language, learners' HL is considered as a resource because it is used in the second language class when teachers see inefficiency in the learners. Gort (2006) argues that the issue of code switching manifests itself in the second language learners writing competency which is always questioned for lacking correct grammatical rules and other features. The manner in which learners write is viewed by Gort (2006) as the strategic representation of the two languages.

The teachers in the study revealed that their use of HL when explaining concepts becomes useful because learners understand their meaning and use. Other teachers expressed contrary views pertaining code switching. They reveal that the use of HL when teaching their subjects disadvantage the learners because at the end when writing examinations and tests only English appears in the papers. To those teachers, learners should be allowed to strive to listen and write in English for their own benefit. Further to that even the textbooks the learners have to read are in English.

The learners revealed that although they prefer to use English when writing their informal personal things, in their actual writing, they display many mistakes especially on vocabulary, spelling and sentence construction.

5.6   The link of writing in English to other subjects

5.6.1 Writing as a skill that needs to be taught

Hawthorne and Glenn (2011) are of the view that writing should be considered as one of the essential skills in language learning because it allows learners to participate meaningfully and successfully in the world. Drowns et al (2004) further allude by stating that writing compels learners to actively their personal understandings. It is through writing that learners show development in the second language because after every time they have written something, they get written feedback and do revision thus enhancing their development in the language.

Pertaining to the issue of writing, the study made known that it is essential to teach the writing skills so that learners could be able to develop the appreciation of the language and could also be able to transfer their thoughts in writing.

5.6.2 Writing as beneficial to other subjects

Brown (2005) argues that second language learners need to have exposure to second language activities and opportunities so that they get full practice of the language. Barker et al (2000) confirms the above statement by stating that it is through second language learning exposure that most vocabulary happens which ultimately assist learners comprehend the newly found words that they have heard or read. Further to that, Cummins (2000) asserts that demonstration of grammatical competency should not be the only means to measure language knowledge but also the learners' correct implementation of that knowledge in appropriate situations. This means learners could be taught and master grammatical knowledge during EFAL lesson and should be able to transfer that gained knowledge when answering in other subjects.

The DoE (2003) also states that language teachers have the responsibility to ensure the utilization of languages across the curriculum. This means teaching academic language to the learners could help facilitate their ability to express themselves confidently in both language and content which could lead to their good performance. The above view is also supported by Scarbough (2010) by saying that writing highly increases learner's ability to think about the subject they are embarking on and that improvement in content learning is highly influenced by writing. In this manner, writing could be viewed as the other means to improve learning English across the curriculum. Peha (2003) alludes to the statement by expanding on the fact that it is through writing that the learners express their knowledge of a given subject or topic- whether it is on language or content subjects.

The study found out that since English in the schools under study is used as a LoLT, most subjects do benefit from teaching writing. It was also disclosed that most content subjects are expected to assess learners in essay writing which is never taught by the

content subject teachers. It is in such instances that learners who had been taught essay writing skills exhibit their knowledge by transferring such skills when writing essays and using paragraphs in content subjects.

5.6.3 Writing competency as the end product

Scarbough (2010) argues that effective writing practices have a proven record of success in that; they have been revealed to be successful in enhancing learners' writing on multiple circumstances. Primary sources for such practices are scientific studies examining the effectiveness of specific teaching techniques. Such techniques provide a trustworthy approach for identifying an effective practice, as such investigations provide direct evidence both that the intervention works and of how much confidence can be placed in its effect.

Furthermore, Graham (2008) opines that writing practices are likely to be even more effective if they are embedded within a framework of what is known by the learners and how they can move from being novice writes to becoming competent in their writing through gaining the necessary writing skills. According to Alexander (1997) and Graham (2006), the road from being a novice to competent writer is smoothed by variations in learners' writing knowledge, motivation for writing, strategic writing behaviors, and basic writing skills.

The study revealed that if learners could be competent in writing, other skills like reading and presentation could be easily enhanced. Competency in writing could be viewed as a skill that has its foundations in the cognitive dominion and encompasses learning and synthesizing new knowledge (Defazio, Jones, Tennant and Hook, 2010). To them effective writing involves more than complying to conventions or grammatical rules. Therefore, competent writing could be perceived as a skill that encompasses multiple variables that at the end are envisaged to result in a complete or finished written product in a form of essay or document. Scarbough (2010) alludes by arguing that effective writing could be viewed as an attempt to put on paper one's thoughts while

simultaneously trying to master the rules of writing such as sentence construction, spelling and grammar.

The study also made known that competency in writing becomes the learners' end product to their education at large thus enabling them to progress from one grade to the other. Young people who do not learn to write well are at a considerable disadvantage. At school, they earn lower grades, especially in classes where written tests and reports are the primary means for assessing students' progress. They are less likely than their more skilled classmates to use writing to support and extend what they are learning in content classes. There is considerable evidence that writing about content in science, social studies, and other content areas enhances how much students learn (Bangert-Drowns, Hurley, and Wilkinson, 2004; Graham and Perin, 2007). The opportunity to attend tertiary institutions and get jobs is reduced too, as writing is now used to evaluate applicants' qualifications

Since writing is perceived as a complex skill, it becomes important that teachers should take or impart important steps which could turn around the current writing situation (Perin and Graham, 2007). They further argue that teachers should make sure that all learners are taught how to write using effective practices that could yield positive cognitive results. This means learning to write in the learners' FAL, requires considerable effort by both the teachers and learners and time to master. It should also be considered that competency in writing by the learners could never be achieved bya single effective teacher who could be viewed as having a strong impact on a learner's writing development, but the determined efforts of a collective or an entire organization. If a single teacher can make a difference, imagine what could happen when learners are taught to write well starting from the first grade and all the way through secondary school.

It is especially significant that learners get off to a good start in writing because waiting until later grades to address literacy problems that have their origins in the primary grades is not particularly successful and could not yield the intended results (Slavin, Madden, and Karweit, 1989). As learners progress towards the secondary school grades, the teaching of writing becomes more complex, because as it no longer

revolves around a single teacher at each grade, numeracy and other content subjects are introduced and taught using English as LoLT. Writing and writing instruction become a shared responsibility across all the subjects including language teaching and the content subjects. It is therefore advisable that the content subjects should embark on teaching writing if learners are expected to be competent writers.

Graham (2008) argues that one of the useful methods for identifying effective writing practices is to identify recurring patterns in the instruction of teachers and schools that produce exceptional literacy achievement. It is reasonable to assume that practices that are peculiar to a specific teacher or school are potentially less important than those that are employed across all or most studies of such teachers and schools (Graham and Perin (2007).

5.6.4 Writing support programmes

The findings of the study reveal that there is a need for language support programmes aiming at developing learners' writing and reading. This is coupled by the notion that it is through writing that learners manage to progress to the following grades.

5.6.5 Writing for a variety of reasons

Young people who are not competent in writing could meet with challenge of not being considered fully equipped to meet the post-secondary or employment requirements (Graham and Perin, 2007). This could emanate from the view that many jobs require employees who have good writing skills-whether they would produce visual texts or documents. That on its own becomes an indication that writing competency is critical and indispensable in the working place and therefore could influence in the hiring and promotion decisions. Writing skills like planning, drafting editing and revising that had been learnt from school find expression in tertiary level and at the work place.

The DoE (2003) affirms that by stating that the learners should be taught language so that they could be able to write and present for a variety of reasons and audience using

a wide range of texts that the learners could need to understand and produce displaying their creativity. In this manner writing could be viewed as a process which will engage even the learners' peers or one's superiors at the working place.

Teachers who achieve outstanding success in teaching writing are acquainted with the importance of frequent and sustained writing (Graham and Perin, 2007). A good rule of thumb is that learners should spend at least one hour or more each day in the process of writing, planning, revising, and editing the text. This could consists of writing projects that go beyond a single paragraph or day-to-day projects that may take weeks or even months to complete.

These teachers further recognize the need for learners to learn to write for a variety of reasons (Graham and Perin, 2007:46), including:

- Communicating with others (e.g., personal letters, business letters, notes, cards, email)

- Informing others (e.g., writing reports; explaining how to do something; describing an event, object, or place)

- Persuading others (e.g., expressing an opinion about a controversial topic)

- Learning content material (e.g., summarizing, learning logs, journal entries)

- Entertaining others (e.g., writing stories, plays, poems)

- Reflecting about self (e.g., writing about personal events, autobiography)

- Responding to literature (e.g., book evaluations, analyzing authors' intentions).

- Demonstrating knowledge (e.g., traditional classroom tests, high-stakes tests involving writing)

The findings of the study disclosed that writing could be useful for a variety of reasons including life after secondary school, communication with the outside world, writing application letters and filling application forms and also writing for presentation.

Graham and Perin (2007) argue that learners should use writing for these purposes at all grade levels, both at the primary and secondary school in the South African context,

until their tertiary education. During their Intermediate phase to the secondary school, learning to write for a variety of reasons should involve a determined effort by numerous teachers whose sole obligation will be to impart new knowledge from different subjects to the learners (Graham and Perin, 2007). For example, an English teacher may have learners who use writing to entertain, respond to literature, demonstrate knowledge, and persuade. A social studies teacher may use writing to demonstrate knowledge, but address other purposes including self-reflection, learning (Graham and Perin, 2007), informing, and communicating, whereas a science teacher may focus mainly on using writing for learning, demonstrating knowledge, and persuading. In addition, writing activities need to become more complex from one grade to the next.

5.7 Conclusion

In this chapter the major findings disclose that teachers, who teach EFAL and other content subjects are well trained, qualified and have a lot of experience. Grade 12 learners' writing competency encounters numerous challenges such as influence of learners' HL in writing in EFAL, language and editing, anxiety, the influence of social networks or media and lack of motivation. Such challenges have negative effect on the learners' writing competency since they have to write tests, projects and examinations in order to progress to the following grade. The learners' writing skills are positively influenced by the EFAL teachers' teaching strategies which are employed when teaching writing. Writing strategies include; writing as a process which entails teaching necessary steps to writing and integration which views sociocultural activities as embedded in the language. Entailed in the chapter are also perceptions of teachers and learners on writing. Those perceptions involve writing as encompassing other language skills, code switching which is viewed by some teachers as a resource which assists in the EFAL classroom, whereas other teachers refute that claiming it has the potential of retarding the learners' progress towards acquiring EFAL which is their LoLT. The findings in the chapter also revealed that there is a link in learning and teaching writing in English to other subjects. That could be the reason the study found out that writing is a skill that needs to be taught; that the writing skills taught in English becomes

beneficial to other subjects; that writing could be viewed as the end product; that there should be writing programmes in place and that learners could write for a variety of reasons.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter draws together the major elements, lessons and questions from the study. The chapter is divided into five sections; summary of findings, recommendations, contribution to the new knowledge, issues for further research and reflection.

6.2 Summary of key findings

This section summarizes the major findings in line with the research questions of the study. The section thus summarizes the findings on the writing competency of Grade 12 learners in EFAL. The following ideas were explored in the study;

1. Teacher qualifications and experiences
2. Challenges Grade 12 learners face in writing in EFAL
3. Strategies used to teach writing in English First Additional Language
4. Perceptions of teachers and learners on writing in English
5. The writing link between in English and other subjects
6. Writing support programmes and
7. Writing for a variety of reasons.

The researcher employed a qualitative research approach aiming at giving a clear description and understanding of the Grade 12 learners' writing competency in English. This approach assisted in describing the perceptions on Grade 12 learners' writing competency from the perspectives of the sampled school learners and teachers. The choice of respondents in the study was highly influenced by the environments where

they were teaching, where schools were located, and their engagement with the studied phenomenon, that is, writing using the school's Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT), namely: English, hence their views were sought. Qualitative research methods enabled the researcher to gather data from a variety of data collection instruments. The researcher used interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis.

The researcher was able to ask different interview questions to the EFAL learners and content subject teachers. She/he also subjected learners who were grouped into manageable numbers, questions which they were given an opportunity to discuss as a group and agree or disagree on an answer. This answer was later handed to the researcher for recording. Furthermore, learners were given essays and free writing activities which were used as practical evidence that during the study writing activities were undertaken. These free writing activities were later used as materials for document analysis. Learners' written essays and free writing activities allowed the researcher to dig deeper in the learners' writing competency.

Generally, the methodology that was employed in the study was appropriate and valid in that it managed to accomplish the desired objectives. For, it portrayed the current state of the Grade 12 learners writing competency. The researcher was able to observe and make inferences about the rural schools' EFAL writing situations. Below, the major findings of the study are discussed.

6.2.1 Qualification and experiences of teachers

The study disclosed that teacher training, qualifications and experiences are the fundamental components for delivering curriculum. The study revealed that all teachers who constituted the sample of the study had the required teacher qualifications which were: the Secondary Teachers' Diploma and professional teachers' degrees, and that they have specialized in the subjects they were teaching. This means all the teachers were knowledgeable in respect of the subjects they were teaching. The other aspect of teacher capacity that the study revealed was that the sampled teachers were not just trained in teaching, but that, they have also specialized in the subjects they were

teaching. The subject specialization could mean they have more expertise in the subjects which could assist in boosting learners' confidence in understanding the subject, a fundamental contributor to assisting in the development of learners as intellectual resources. Subject specialization both in the EFAL and content subjects, could be central to the success of imparting relevant knowledge and skills to learners.

The teachers in the study are experienced in teaching the subjects and are therefore perceived as resource persons, who due to their experience, are expected to execute their teaching duties effectively. Their experience in teaching allows them to develop a multiplicity of roles that enable them to attend to different learners' situations and can employ a variety of strategies in their teaching.

6.2.2 Challenges Grade 12 learners face when writing in English

Writing in the second language is perceived as a complex experience which involves a set of skills and knowledge that resides within the individual learner. English, although is a popular language and is used as a LoLT in many public schools in South Africa by learners from previously disadvantaged schools, it comes with numerous challenges.

Grade 12 EFAL learners are expected to engage in a variety of meaningful EFAL tasks that have to get them to understand what they need to do to succeed. It, therefore, becomes essential that they should formulate their thoughts, organise and write them, and at a later stage make them available for feedback. Learners in the study whose schools are situated in rural environment are confronted with the challenge of having to use their internalized Home Language (HL) to generate ideas that they have to write in EFAL. The finding of the study reveals that to address their challenge of lack of English vocabulary, they put isiXhosa words in brackets to be considered by teachers when marking.

Learners in their writing are envisaged to produce texts that have correct grammar and content so as to progress to the following Grade. For the completion of their writing they are taught to follow a writing process which involves planning, drafting, editing and

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revising which is perceived as assisting in transforming their knowledge. Their writing skills in the study were demonstrated through the essays and free writing that they embarked on during the study and which also served as tools and transcripts for document analysis. The findings of the study made known that Grade 12 learners struggle with writing in the EFAL because what they wrote demonstrated their lack of vocabulary, confusing homonyms and incorrect use of grammatical rules.

Furthermore, another challenge that the study revealed as a hindrance in learners' writing competency in EFAL, was anxiety. The study found out that whenever learners knew they had to prepare for writing, they usually come to class anxious. The negative emotions and anxiety pose as serious threats to learners when they have to engage in writing English which is in its nature one of the fundamental but complex language. Learners could be anxious and panic when they have to write in English because they know their strengths in writing. Also, knowing that for them to pass all six out of seven subjects, they have to write them in English exacerbate anxiety. Even arrangements for peer feedback as proposed by Rollinson (2005) could be another challenge because their peers are also second language learners who still have the same challenges and accordingly still need guidance.

Since social networks have become the integral part of people's lives, especially the teenagers, they pose as bad influence in their education. Learners' writing is influenced by social media which makes their writing worse. Social networks are perceived as encouraging learners to use informal text language which is not required in class. Through the texting language learners spell wrong words, and use acronyms causing their writing to worsen because they cannot write formal English which is required in the classroom. The study also find out from the essays and free writing learners activities that that social media has a negative influence on learners' writing. On numerous occasions in the tasks they were using text language, acronyms and shortened spellings. That was a revelation that as teenagers who are the perceived as high users of the social networks, their writing is influenced by those social networks.

Coupled with the above challenges that EFAL learners have in their writing competency, is the revelation by the study that learners lack motivation which could be viewed as a

paramount driving force in influencing their achievement through writing. One of the strong motivating factors is the learners' sociocultural background (Bernad, 2010), meaning that the learners' sociocultural backgrounds add an important bearing in motivating the learning of English. The findings also revealed that learners lack motivation even from their families who are not bilingual; hence their development in writing is stagnant.

6.2.2 Strategies used to teach writing in English

It is important to note that teachers as chief curriculum implementers, through their interpretation of the curriculum should influence the learners' writing competency. There are a number of variables that could have an inspiration on quality teaching of writing, namely: infrastructure, relevance, content and teacher qualification. The teachers have a fundamental obligation of teaching the writing skills and content at the same time. That is the reason why teachers should devise strategies to teach learners writing in a method that could yield good results.

Teachers have to employ the writing process which includes planning, drafting, revising and editing (CAPS- EFAL, 2011). The findings of the study made known that EFAL teachers employ the process writing when teaching their learners and are confident that after using the process approach, learners produce good results. The responsibility of teaching writing to the learners lies in the subject teachers (Harris and Schaible, 1997). The notion of process writing is in line with the English Across the Curriculum (EAC) concept which is advocated by the DBE (2011). Pertaining to teaching writing in the study, it was revealed that content subject teachers leave the pedagogical duty of teaching writing on the EFAL teachers' hands. All what they do is to ask learners to write essays which contain content as it is what they teach and have to assess. Learners confirmed what their content subject teachers said by disclosing that writing skills are only taught during EFAL lessons but they have to take that knowledge and use it to write essays in the content subjects.

Language should not always be understood as bearing grammatical rules but embedded with sociocultural activities of all individuals (Foncha, 2013). This leaves with the understanding that learners' sociocultural contexts should be considered in the development and teaching of writing. It was disclosed in the study that teachers employ integration as one of their strategies for teaching writing. Integration strategy caters for the learners' cognitive development as it is the carrier of their sociocultural circumstantial. The findings also reveal that integration is beneficial to the learners because they actively participate in the activities which integrate their sociocultural facets. The finding also revealed the fear that teachers have on integration as it could have the potential to limit the learners' scope to what they only know and surround them.

6.2.3 Perception of teachers and learners on writing

Second language learners ought to get the exposure to opportunities and activities which include reading to sharpen their writing competency skills (Brown, 2005). Writing is an exceptional skill which aims at promoting learning because learners are afforded with the opportunity to write down their ideas which assist them in their development of the language. The complex situation that the EFAL learners find themselves in is that they have more than one language in their disposal, that is, their internalized Home Language and their Language of Learning and Teaching, EFAL which is foreign to them and that has to be taught. More competency in writing is perceived as highly demonstrated by learners who read and write extensively (Hirose, 2003). It was disclosed in the study that writing needs to be taught and enhanced through reading which will expose learners to expanded vocabulary. The study also revealed that learners need to be motivated for the improvement of their writing. Summarily, the study revealed that reading and writing are mutual and each should complement each other in striving for the development of EFAL writing.

The study also found out that some teachers perceive code switching as the best alternative when explaining concepts and literature to the learners whose HL is not English. Those teachers are of the view that learners' HL is a resource and that it

becomes inevitable to use it if they want to achieve their core goal of imparting knowledge to the learners. On the same notion, other findings of the study disclose that some content subject teachers identify code switching as one of the factors that could contribute into retarding the learners' progress towards acquiring their LoLT which includes listening and writing in English for their own benefit. The findings also made known those learners who prefer to write in English encounter vocabulary and grammatical problems.

6.2.4 The relation in writing in English to other subjects

Learners need to be taught the writing skills from their primary education to assist them in the development and communication of ideas through writing. That could also assist content subject teachers with the learners who can transmit such skills on writing activities in their subjects. To achieve their optimum competency in writing, Graham (2012) advises that they be provided with sufficient time for writing per day. The findings of the study made known the necessity of teaching skill to learners in a bid to develop their appreciation of the language and ability to transfer their thoughts and what they had been taught throughout that year in writing.

If learners are taught grammatical rules and knowledge during language lessons, they should be able to transmit that gained knowledge even to other subjects. Teaching academic language to learners could assist in facilitating their ability in expressing themselves in both languages and content classroom and with good performance (Scarbough, 2010). In the study, it was found out that most subjects benefit from teaching writing in English because it is the LoLT and the strategies used by EFAL teachers like process writing are of great assistance to the content subject teachers whose assessment requirements include essay writing. The study further revealed that competency in writing could enhance other skills like reading and presentation because it is a skill that is perceived to encompass multiplicity of variables that ultimately result in a complete product. Such variables include motivation for writing, strategic writing behaviours, and basic writing skills.

It was also made known in the study that writing becomes the learners' end product to their education since it is the enabler of their progression to higher grades. It is through writing that their opportunities to attend tertiary institutions get recognized. Teaching writing should therefore be a shared responsibility between EFAL and other content subject teachers in an attempt to promote competent writers.

6.2.5 Writing support programmes

FAL learners whose competency in English is limited need language assistance to access and benefit from the curriculum in totality. It is equally essential that those learners should be afforded with opportunities and the development and improvement of their writing skills by engaging them in programmes that will enhance their writing abilities. The findings of the study reveal that the provincial Department of Education (DoE) does not offer writing programmes aiming at promoting and developing learners writing and reading competencies. Writing in a new language is different from writing in one's HL (Samway, 2006). Hence, it becomes imperative that there should be writing programmes in place so as to assist learners achieve their competency.

6.2.6 Writing for a variety of reasons

Writing skills such as planning, drafting, editing and revising that are taught and learnt at the secondary school usually find expression in tertiary institutions and at the work place. The findings of the study made known that writing could be useful for a variety of reasons including life after secondary school, communication with the outside world, writing application letters and filling application forms and also writing for presentation. The learners should be taught language skills like reading, writing and presentation so that they can use them for a variety of reasons and audience (DoE, 2003). Such tasks should include writing projects that may take weeks to complete. The study revealed that writing could be useful for a variety of reasons including writing application letters, filling forms and writing presentation.

6.2.7 Conclusion

The findings of the study reveal that FAL writing is a complex phenomenon or learning skill that needs to be taught. In an attempt to achieve learner writing competency, it becomes imperative that teachers who are perceived as fundamental components for delivering curriculum have to be capacitated to withstand the pedagogical obligation. It was disclosed in the study that all the sampled teachers were trained and qualified to teach the subjects. Furthermore, all the teachers in the study had specialized in their subject areas. Their subject specialization could mean that they are in possession of more expertise in the subjects that they could employ in assisting learners develop their confidence in the comprehension of the subjects. Coupled with that, is the teachers' experience in teaching the subjects which then distinguish them as the resource persons who are expected to execute their teaching duties effectively by employing a variety of strategies in their teaching.

English, although perceived as an international language due to its dominance and power it holds even in the previously disadvantaged schools as a LoLT, comes with plentiful challenges. Learners whose LoLT is English, are expected to formulate, organise and write their thoughts in English in a bid to accomplish the tasks, find themselves lacking vocabulary and resorting to writing isiXhosa words, put them in brackets so that they can be seen and considered by teachers when marking. The study also revealed that learners' competency in writing is hindered by anxiety. The learners become anxious every time they have to engage in any assessment tasks or examinations because they know that for them to progress to the following grades, they have to engage in writing.

It was also disclosed in the study that the social networks or media negatively contribute to the learners writing competency. The texting language and their use of acronyms – which they demonstrated in the essays and free writing- are concrete evidence that their writing is not what is required in the classroom. Consequently, learners were disclosed in the study as lacking the fundamental driving force in influencing their writing which is

motivation. They further revealed that they were even not motivated by their illiterate parents who were not bilingual.

Key to the findings of the study was the strategies used by teachers when teaching writing. The process approach was found to be the most used because they believe it yields good results. The process approach to writing was also found to be beneficial even by the content subject teachers whose learners used knowledge gained knowledge to answer essays in their subjects. Integration is another strategy that the study found out as being employed by the teachers in the belief that it provides for learners' cognitive development as it takes along their sociocultural milieu. Although teachers viewed the strategy as beneficial to the learners, they disclosed their fears that it could probably limit the learners' scope to what they only know and not want to explore other avenues.

Due to its complex nature, writing in the second language is perceived as a skill that needs to be taught. This is because of the fact that EFAL learners have two languages in their disposal. And their LoLT is foreign to them. It was disclosed in the study that writing needs to be taught and enhanced by extensive reading. The study also made known that learners need to be motivated in their EFAL writing. In the study, code switching was perceived by other teachers as appropriate when teaching EFAL for it serves as a source for explaining difficult concepts. The study also found out that some content subject teachers disagree with code switching when teaching stating that it limits the already limited learner vocabulary and retards their progress towards acquiring English which at the ultimate end they will use to write their assessment for progression.

The findings of the study revealed that if learners could be taught the writing skills earlier in their primary school, content subject teachers could also benefit because learners could transmit those learned skills when answering or writing content subjects. The findings of the study disclosed that learners need to be taught writing skills to develop the language appreciation and assist in transferring their thoughts in writing, and express themselves in both the language and the content classes. Since English is the LoLT in the school, the study revealed that other subjects especially the content

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subjects, benefit from EFAL teaching of writing. The study also made known that writing becomes the learners' end product because it allows for their progression.

The findings of the study revealed that the department does not offer writing programmes. For learners to be competent in writing, they need more programmes that aim at improving, developing and promoting writing. The study also made known that there is a need for writing for a variety of reasons including giving those tasks that could take a long time to finish. Finally, form the findings, the researchers could conclude that there is a lot that needs to be done to improve learners writing competency.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study engaged on the Grade 12 learners' writing competency in the EFAL in rural public schools. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher advances the following recommendations in respect of the language policy, infrastructure, creating a writing culture, EFAL policy makers, and codeswitching.

6.3.1 Language policy

The DBE should make awareness campaigns aiming at educating communities about the Language-in-Education Policy (LiEP) and all what it entails. These campaigns would probably conscientise the communities about choosing the LoLT suitable for their environmental education needs and assist schools with the crafting of their own language policies. These campaigns should not be centralized but take the form of the road shows to reach even the most rural parts of the South African provinces.

6.3.2 Infrastructure

The building of the well-equipped libraries in the rural schools should be in the DBEs priority list. Not having libraries in rural schools, which are far from the towns and in communities where English is only known as a school language, maintain the learners'

status of being in the disadvantaged schools. Libraries are a source of information to all the learners and could assist in enhancing their extensive reading which will increase their vocabulary which they ultimately will use when writing. Having libraries in rural public schools could also encourage learners' interests, enjoyment and motivation towards reading in English.

6.3.3 Creating the writing culture

1) It is imperative to develop the writing culture in the early stages of EFAL learning. Learners should be introduced to the process writing approach in primary schools as a technique of building a proper foundation for writing before they come to the secondary school. This could assist in increasing the EFAL learners' positive attitudes towards writing in English and thus, be able to master it and move towards becoming competent and successful writers both in class and after school.

2) Time allocation for EFAL teaching and learning should be increased. The time factor becomes a major challenge since it could be seen as limiting learners' opportunity to engage in developing their writing skills in the classroom and in the presence of the teacher. In that routine teachers could be afforded with the time to scaffold the learners in their writing and also have a deeper understanding of what learners encounter when writing. After each lesson in the allocated time, teachers require to assign some time from the allocated one for writing exercises every day.

3) Learners should be given more writing opportunities in class with the aim of alleviating anxiety that seem to have a potential of reducing their prospects of becoming competent writers. When learners constantly engage in writing activities that could also increase their confidence and eliminate the hesitation on what they are supposed to write about, competency in writing could be achieved.

6.3.4 EFAL Policy Makers

The DBE policy makers on EFAL should not use a blanket approach when formulating policies on how and what should be taught in schools. They need to take into cognizance the demographic profiles of the various sections of South Africa. The sociocultural backgrounds of the learners, whose schools are still disadvantaged by not having the libraries and situated in deep rural areas where parents are not conversant in English, necessitate thoughtful attention.

6.3.5 Code switching

EFAL in most rural schools is taught by bilingual teachers whose HL is not English hence resorting to their HL when explaining some difficult or uncertain parts during their EFAL lessons. Since code switching is associated with bilingualism and its practice in teaching appears inevitable, the researcher recommends that it should be formalized in the schools where the LoLT is English and a limited language to learners. Teachers should acknowledge what learners do when they don't understand a certain word in English and write it in brackets, should mark them and write the correct word as feedback.

6.3.6 Text message language

This is an informal language learners engage in due to their unending use of smartphones. This type of writing is not acceptable in a classroom situation where learners are taught formal writing skills. It is on that perspective that the researcher recommends condemnation of the use of the text or informal language when writing formal school tasks. Teachers need to understand that teaching formal or proper writing to learners helps develop their language and so the they could be able to write in all spheres of life, at school and at work place and for a variety of purposes.

6.4   CONTRIBUTION TO NEW KNOWLEDGE

1. The study established that there is no clear link between learners' HL development and their competency in writing in EFAL. This in the study was verified by the essays and free writing activities learners wrote and were read and analyzed by the researcher and also their responses on the Focus Group Discussions. What the LiEP encourages is what is called additive bilingualism in which the learners' HL continues to be developed while the second language (English in this instance) will be added. The study establishes that there are no similarities in the languages concerning competency in writing and that learners' confessed that even their HL which is isiXhosa has difficult words which they could not spell correctly.

2. Anxiety is another aspect that the researcher established as one of the hindrances towards competent writing to EFAL learners. Learners become anxious when they know they have to engage in writing because they know it is through writing that they are assessed and progress to the following grades. So what's new?

3. In rural public schools where learners' HL is not the school LoLT, two Englishes are taught; EFAL as a second language and the English that is used in content subjects which is not as simplified as EFAL. The textbooks which EFAL learners use in content subjects are the same as the ones used by English HL learners. That could be one of the reasons why learners cannot fully comprehend instructions and resort to writing informally.

4. Social networks that the teenagers spend most of their time in, are negatively contributing to their writing competency. Because of them, when writing, learners end up using informal text language and acronyms which are not accepted in the EFAL classroom. Learners need to be taught the importance of differentiating between the formal writing that is needed for their learning and the text language which is informal and not assisting in their language development.

6.5 ISSUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Research should shed more light on the following:

1) Effects of anxiety towards writing in EFAL; perceive anxiety not as a unitary issue but something caused by multiplicity of components.
2) The impact of using smartphones or social media towards competent writing in rural public schools where writing is still a matter of pen and paper.
3) HL and EFAL are viewed as two separate domains, how HL which is internalized and embedded with learners' sociocultural features could assist in transferring knowledge gained to benefit writing in English First Additional Language.
4) Teachers' feedback messages and how learners should respond to the feedback given by their teachers after marking their essays in an attempt to improve their writing.
5) Inclusion of certain aspects of the process writing approach to the content subjects' curriculum to enable teachers to teach writing as they are required to assess in essays and summary writing.

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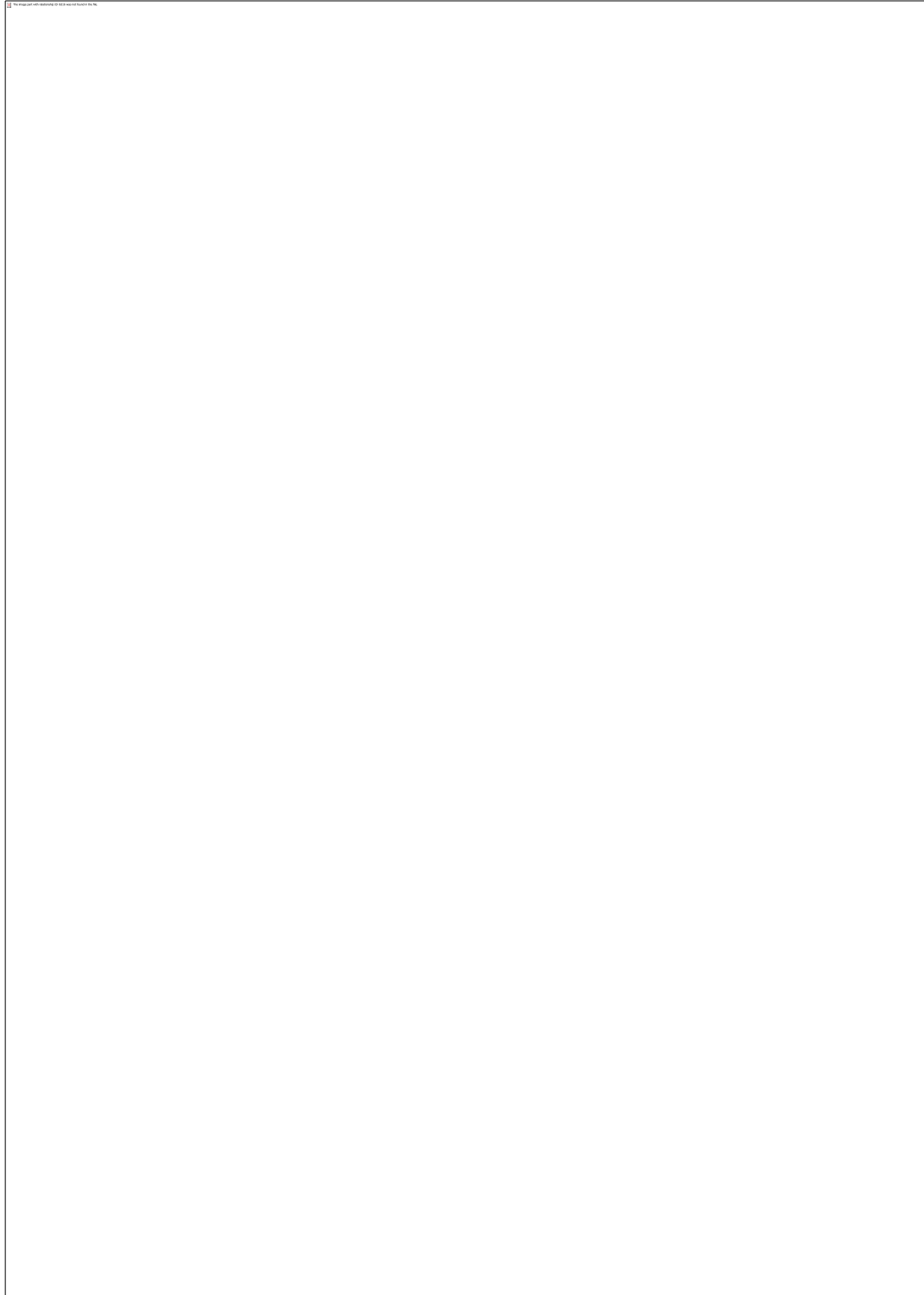
APPENDICES

Appendix A: A request Letter for permission to conduct research
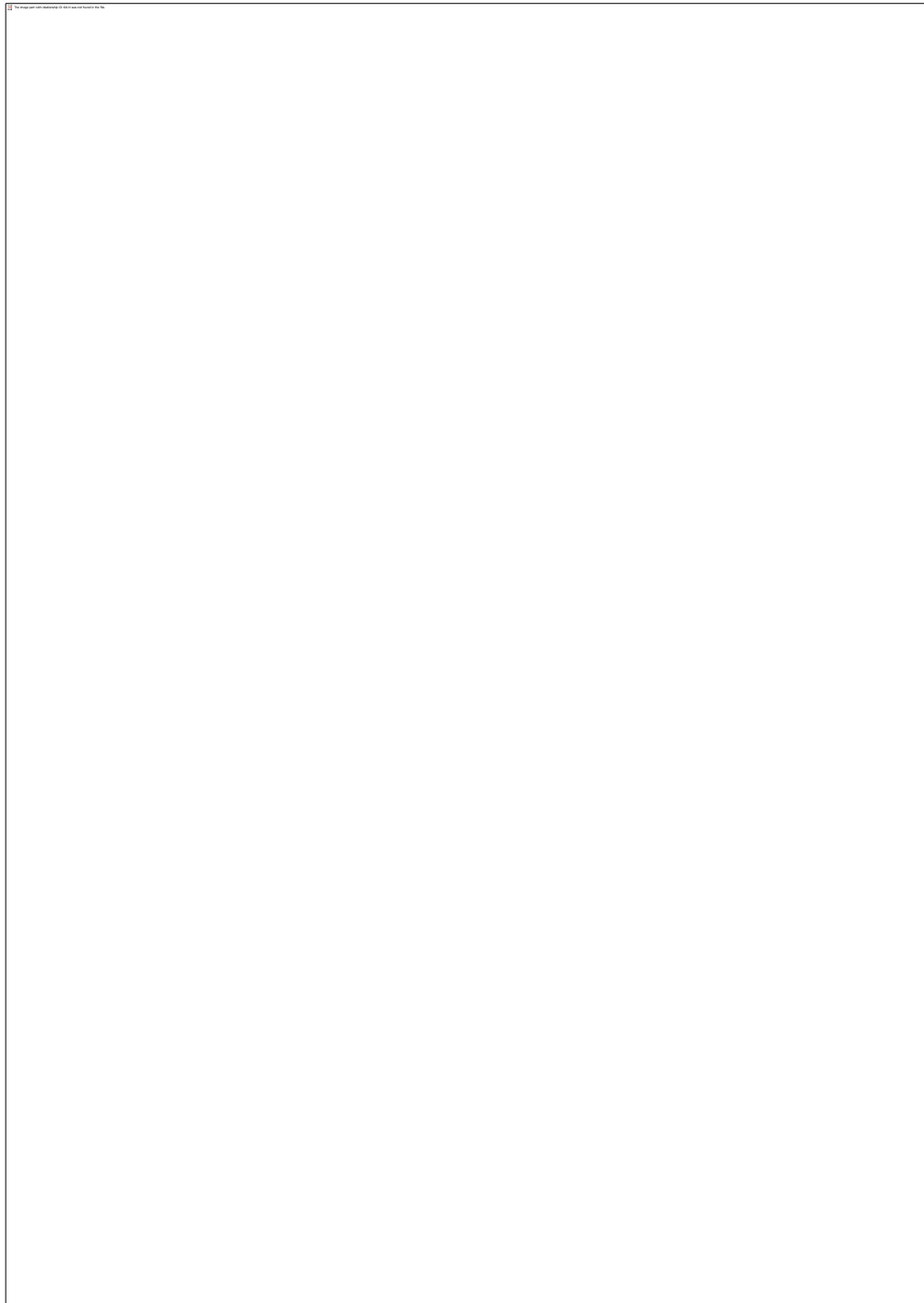
Appendix B: permission letter from King Williams Town District
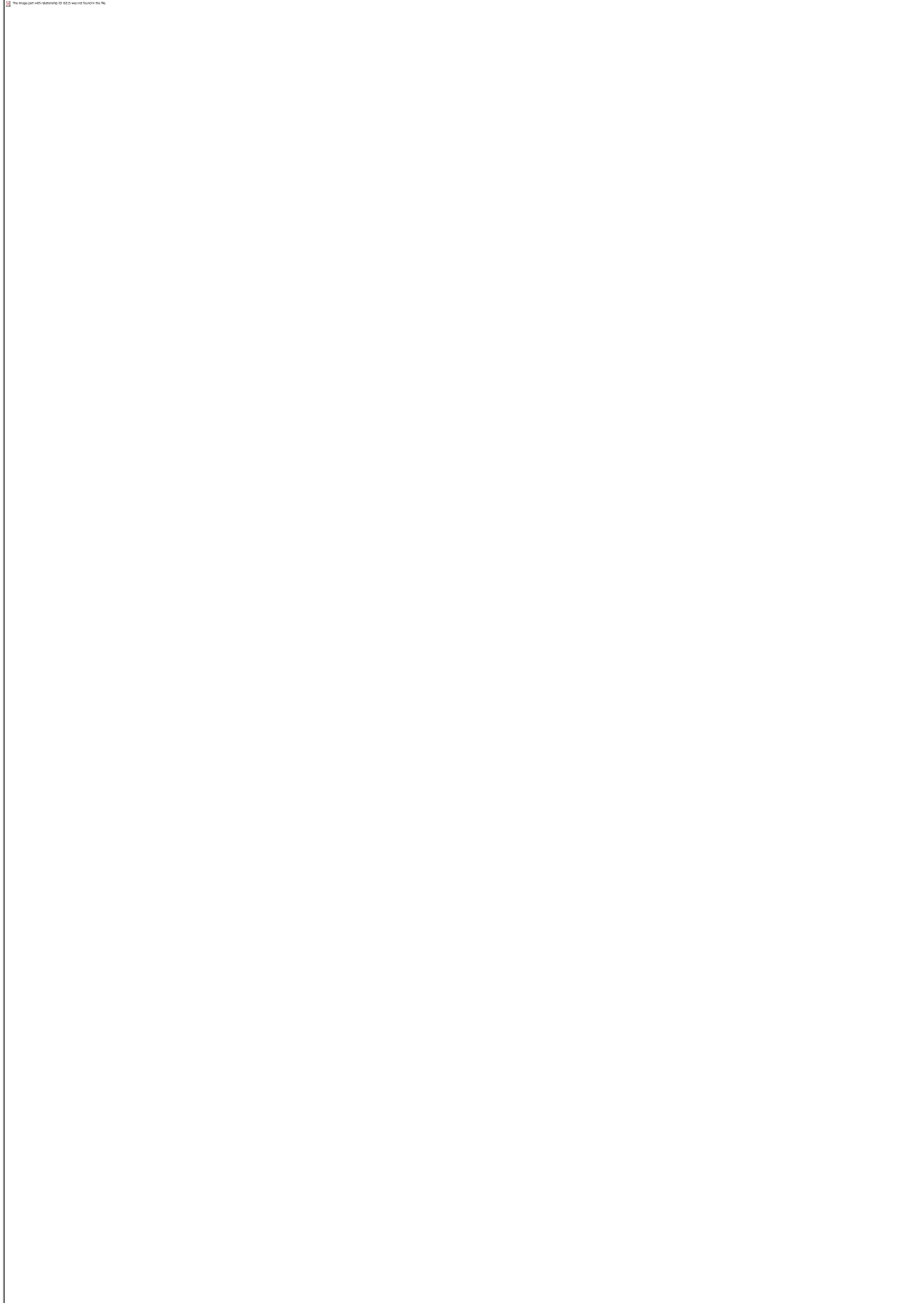
Appendix C: Request Letter for carry our research at Fort Beaufort District

Appendix D: Permission Letter from Fort Beaufort District

Appendix E: Interview questions for EFAL teachers

1 Can you please share with me how much do you know about EFAL, meaning your training and qualifications?

2. How long have you been teaching EFAL? Please share all that you would like to.

4. What language do you use for social interaction with the learners?

5. Can you please share with me what role do you think the learners' Home Language (HL) play in learners' learning of EFAL? Please explain.

6. Can you think of any specific example where you found yourself in the EFAL lesson using learners' HL? Was it beneficial, if Yes, how? Please explain.

7. In teaching writing in English, what strategies or approaches have you found to be beneficiary to the learners?

8. How do you perceive writing as a skill that needs to be taught in CAPS Grade 12?

9. Generally, what could you say is your opinion on Grade 12 learners' writing competency?

11. What specific challenges do learners experience when writing, for an example, an essay?

12. Also, what strengths could you say your learners display in writing in their FAL?

13. How does the Department assist in the challenges encountered by the learners in writing? Does the Department conduct workshops in the pursuit to assist you to deal with writing challenges?

14. Given the content of the workshops on writing in EFAL, what did you find most beneficial for your learners?

15. Do you in your EFAL writing lessons integrate the learners' sociocultural experiences? If yes, please explain the benefits of that integration. If no, what dangers do you envisage in the integration? Please explain.

16. Since English is the school's LoLT, how do you think other subjects benefit from EFAL? Please explain.

17. What role do you think competent writing in EFAL play in the learners' study?

APPENDIX F: Interview questions for content subject teachers

1 How long have you trained as a teacher and can you also be kind and share with me your qualifications?

2. Can you please share with me when have you started teaching the subject?

4. What language do you use for the interaction with your learners? Please explain.

5. What are your views on the use of the learners' HL in your subject? Please explain.

6. Do you think using English as a LoLT ideal for the learners in your school. Please explain.

7. Since English is the LoLT at your school, how do you think it is beneficiary to your subject teaching? What can you say is a role for EFAL teaching in your school?

8. Would you encourage code switching when teaching your subject, why? Please explain.

9. If you could encourage code switching when teaching, would you do the same when learners have to write? Please explain.

10. In your subject, do learners have to write essays? If yes, how do you teach essay writing for your subject? Please explain.

11. What specific challenges do learners experience when answering in writing in their FAL? Please explain.

12. In an endeavor to improve their writing, what strategies do you employ and what results do they produce. Please explain.

APPENDIX G: Interview questions for the learners (FGD)

1 What is your Home Language?

2. Why do you think that language is important?

3. Which language do you use to study at school?

4. Are you studying any other language besides the one you have mentioned? If yes, name it/them.

5. Is that language your HL or FAL?

6. What do you think is a difference between HL and FAL?

7. When did you start doing EFAL?

8. Do you think it is important for you to learn your subjects in English. Please explain.

9. Which language/ do your educators use to communicate with you? Please explain.

10. Which language do you prefer to use when you are writing anything, from school work, personal things/ letters or smses?

11. How well can you write in English?

12. Do you mix the language when writing to your friends, or smses?

13. If you could be asked to write a speech for presentation in class, which language can you prefer? Please explain.

14. Does your school assist you with language support programmes to help improve your writing? Please explain.

15. Do you think you need language support programmes that could help you improve your writing?

16. If you had a chance, would you learn your subjects in your HL? Please explain.

APPENDIX H: Observation sheet

An investigation into Learners' First Additional Language writing competency among Grade 12 learners: The case of two Eastern Cape's rural public schools.

The researcher will observe the following:

- ➢ The school environment.
- ➢ The availability of infrastructure such as library.
- ➢ How do learners manage or group themselves before the interviews?
- ➢ How the learners interact with each other during discussions?
- ➢ Do the learners respect each other's point of view during discussions?
- ➢ How much do learners use their Home Language when discussing?
- ➢ How do learners agree to an answer that will be owned by the entire group?

APPENDIX I: Ethical clearance from the university

APPENDIX J: Parents' consent form sample

NAME OF APPLICANT   Ethics Human 2011

<<Approved   >>   OFFICE USE ONLY

Ref:	Date:

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM FOR USE BY
PARENTS/LEGAL GUARDIANS**

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

REFERENCE NUMBER:

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

ADDRESS:

CONTACT NUMBER:

Your child *(or ward, if applicable)* is being invited to take part in a research project. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the study staff or doctor any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research entails and how your child could

be involved. Also, your child's participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you or your child negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw him/her from the study at any point, even if you do initially agree to let him/her take part.

This study has been approved by the **University Research Ethics Committee at the Universityof Fort Hare** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki, South African Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice and the Medical Research Council (MRC) Ethical Guidelines for Research.

What is this research study all about?

Explain in participant friendly language what your project aims to do and why you are doing it?

Explain all procedures.

Explain any randomization process that may occur.

Explain the use of any medication, if applicable.

Why has your child been invited to participate?

Answer this question clearly.

What will your responsibilities be?

Answer this question clearly.

Will your child benefit from taking part in this research?

Explain all benefits objectively. If there are no personal benefits then indicate who is likely to benefit from this research, e.g. future patients

Are there any risks involved in your child taking part in this research?

Identify any risks objectively.

If you do not agree to allow your child to take part, what alternatives does your child have?

Clearly indicate in broad terms what alternative treatment is available and where it can be accessed, if applicable.

Who will have access to your child's medical records?

Explain that the information collected will be treated as confidential and protected. If it is used in a publication or thesis, the identity of the participant will remain anonymous. Clearly indicate who will have access to the information.

What will happen in the unlikely event of your child getting injured in any way, as a direct result of taking part in this research study?

Clarify issues related to insurance cover if applicable. If any pharmaceutical agents are involved will compensation be according to ABPI guidelines (Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry compensation guidelines for research related injury which are regarded as the international gold standard)?   If yes, please include the details here. If no, then explain what compensation will be available and under what conditions.

Will you or your child be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

You or your child will not be paid to take part in the study, but out-of-pocket expenses will be covered for each study visit. There will be no costs involved for you if your child does take part. (Edit as applicable)

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

You should inform your family practitioner or usual doctor that your child is taking part in a research study. (Include if applicable)

You should also inform your medical insurance company that your child is participating in a research study (Include if applicable)

You can contact Dr……………... at tel…………… if you have any further queries or encounter any problems.

You can contact the Chairperson of the University Research Ethics Committee if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by your child's study doctor.

You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.

Assent: Children with an age of 7 and above must give assent to participate in research

Declaration by parent/legal guardian

By signing below, I *(name of parent/legal guardian)* …………………………………..……… agree to allow my child (name of child) ……………………………….… who is ………. years old, to take part in a research study entitled *(insert title of study)*

I declare that:

I have read or had read to me this information and consent form and that it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.

If my child is older then 7 years, he/she must agree to take part in the study and his/her ASSENT must be recorded on this form.

I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been adequately answered.

I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to let my child take part.

I may choose to withdraw my child from the study at any time and my child will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.

My child may be asked to leave the study before it has finished if the study doctor or researcher feels it is in my child's best interests, or if my child do not follow the study plan as agreed to.

Signed at (*place*) ....…......……………. on (*date*) …………...………………

Signature of parent/legal guardian   Signature of witness

Declaration by investigator

I *(name)* ……………………………………….……… declare that:

I explained the information in this document to …………………………………..

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I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.

I am satisfied that he/she adequately understand all aspects of the research, as discussed above

I did/did not use a interpreter (i*f a interpreter is used, then the interpreter must sign the declaration below).*

Signed at (*place*) ....….......…………….. on (*date*) …………...………..

Signature of investigator

Declaration by interpreter (Only complete if applicable)

I *(name)* …………………………………………..……… declare that:

I assisted the investigator (*name*) ………….……………………………. to explain the information in this document to (*name of parent/legal guardian*) ……...………………………... using the language medium of Afrikaans/Xhosa.

We encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.

I conveyed a factually correct version of what was related to me.

I am satisfied that the parent/legal guardian fully understands the content of this informed consent document and has had all his/her questions satisfactorily answered.

Signed at (*place*) ....….......…………….. on (*date*) …………...………………

Signature of interpreter   Signature of witness

APPENDIX K: Editor's declaration

I, BELLITA BANDA-CHITSAMATNGA (LANGUAGE AND WRITING CONSULTANT) confirm that I edited SHIRLEY BESMAN PhD Thesis Titled:

An investigation into learner's English First Additional language writing competency among Grade 12 learners: The case of two Eastern Cape rural public schools

During the process of the editing, the following changes were recommended: punctuation, grammatical and sentence construction. In addition consistency in use of abbreviation, referencing style and capitalization were also recommended.

31 May 2016

Editor's signature   Date