

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF
SENIOR PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS'
UNDERSTANDINGS OF AN ENGLISH
ACROSS THE CURRICULUM APPROACH
TO LANGUAGE TEACHING IN NAMIBIA

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A phenomenological study of teachers' perceptions of EAC

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ABSTRACT

This is a phenomenological study designed to investigate English teachers' understandings of the concept of English Across the Curriculum (EAC), and the extent to which such understandings inform their pedagogic practices at the Senior Primary phase, in a Namibian context. The study was located within the qualitative, interpretive paradigm, using a multi-method approach of semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and documentary evidence as research instruments. The participants were three English second-language teachers at a primary school in a suburban area. Findings from the study revealed that there were several understandings of EAC, and though there might have been an underlying understanding of the concept, classroom practices were incongruent with what EAC requires. It was also found that there are documents based on social constructivist and Genre Theory in the National Professional Standards for teachers, but teachers were not familiar with the content of these documents and they were not used by teachers as guiding documents on how they need to implement EAC. It is recommended that English teachers receive continuous professional development courses on language development theories and EAC, as well as specific training to implement EAC so that "every teacher can be a language teacher".

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AIDS- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

CPD- Continuous Professional Development

EAC- English Across the Curriculum

ELLs- English Language Learners

GT- Genre Theory

LoLT- Language of Learning and Teaching

MKO- More Knowledgeable Other

NIED- Namibian Institute for Educational Development

NQA- Namibia Qualifications Authority

UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

ZPD- Zone of Proximal Development

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CHAPTER 1

THE PHENOMENON UNDER STUDY

1.1 Background of the study

This is a phenomenological study designed to investigate English teachers' understandings of the concept of English Across the Curriculum (EAC), and the extent to which such understandings inform their pedagogic practices within the Namibian context. This chapter provides the background to the study, spells out the aims of the study, and lays out how the study is organized.

In Namibia, English is the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) from the transitional Grade 4, right through to tertiary level. According to the National Broad Curriculum, the official policy for teaching, learning and assessment in Namibia (2010, p. 20), English is also a compulsory subject that determines promotion of learners from grade to grade and from phase to phase. After Namibia's independence, the government introduced the *Education For All* (2003) policy by, for example, merging all the former apartheid education departments into one Ministry of Education. With that came a lot of changes in not only curricula, teaching methods, assessment and evaluation practices, teaching media, and instructional materials, but also new teaching approaches and research-driven pedagogy. Educational reform was guided by a policy document named *Toward Education For All: a reform to move away from an elitist positivistic system to a learner-centred education aimed at "harnessing curiosity and excitement, and promote democracy and responsibility in life-long learning"* (Education for All, 2003).

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A national testing of Namibian teachers' English proficiency in 2011 led to findings that the majority of Namibia's teachers across all phases of schooling was not proficient in the medium of instruction, which is seen to compound learners' poor performance. According to Simasiku, Kasanda and Smit (cited in Nyoqvist, 2016), "learners can only progress successfully if their language proficiency in their language of instruction is sufficiently developed to be able to communicate academically". This has led to the conclusion that teachers need to upgrade their knowledge of English, the medium through which they teach.

There was also a call for the implementation of strategies to maximize learners' proficiency. Robertson (2015,) lists three such strategies: frequent opportunities to practise, use of familiar literary materials to teach language, and "English across the curriculum", with a call "that every teacher should be an English teacher". Even though "every teacher should be an English teacher" is included in the Broad Curriculum for Basic Education, it was used at every turn with varying degrees of acceptance. There seem to be as many definitions and interpretations of the phrase as there are teachers. According to The National Professional Standards for Teachers in Namibia (NQA, 2006):

English across the curriculum refers to the practice through which the study and use of English takes place throughout the curriculum. Its purpose is to prepare students for the cross-cultural and multilingual demands and opportunities of a global society. (p. 40)

Research conducted in Namibia tends mostly to focus on learners' performance and on teaching methodologies of specific skills, such as reading (Hilundwa, 2012; Smit, 2012), teaching in multilingual classes (Nehemia, 2013), code switching (Liswani, 2011), and not so much on pedagogical choices and practices of teachers and the language teaching approaches they use. There are a few exceptions, however. Amukushu-Niipare (2009), for example, investigated the implementation of a thematic approach in Namibian Lower Primary schools, but no similar study on record was done in Upper Primary and Secondary Phase. According to Amukushu-

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Niipare, a thematic approach lends itself to application of a constructivist theory of learning, since it provides an environment where knowledge is socially constructed.

Constructivists reject the view that understanding simply resides in books, that it is waiting to be found and absorbed by learners. Rather, constructivism argues that understanding is *constructed* by those involved in the learning process (Amukushu-Niipare, 2009, p. 14). The thematic approach is relevant because teachers are expected to use cross-curricular issues or themes as a basis for contextualized English lessons (NQA, p. 39). In the syllabuses for Grades 4-12, there are six themes provided that are cross-curricular and thematic to contextualise learning and foster essential personal and social values and skills.

English Across the Curriculum (EAC) is listed in the Broad Curriculum as one of the didactic approaches to promote learner-centred education (p. 35). However, the Broad Curriculum does not offer a succinct definition of EAC and its didactic principles. The assumption seems to be that all teachers have the skills of developing learners' core skills of communication and ensuring that linguistic and literacy issues are addressed, such as subject-related or content-related terminology. Furthermore, the Broad Curriculum outlines the role of language and English instruction and how the language policy is realized in the curriculum. Language and communication are regarded as a prerequisite for a knowledge-based society, where learners should have a high level of communicative, discourse and social competence.

The intentions of the Namibian Broad Curriculum are noble in that they aspire to equal opportunities and inclusion in functional literacy activities. Being literate can enable people to live productive lives, but most often, according to Bearne (1999, p. 201) principles such as EAC are not translated into practice and they stay at the level of resounding rhetoric instead of having

the desired effect of bringing about change. Bearne asserts that, "teachers themselves can only get to grips with the important matters of equity if they have the chance to translate admirable ideas into what goes on daily in their own classroom communities" (Bearne 1999, p. 202). Similarly, Popkewitz (cited in Kristensen, 1999), argues that, to reform and change, we must question underlying assumptions about society, culture, economics and politics. Failure to do so, Popkewitz argues, will result only in window-dressing:

...at worst rhetoric and rituals around reform, without questioning our underlying assumptions, serve to perpetuate our general myths of schooling as the major institution by which to improve society and the illusion we hold about reform as a way of progressing. (p. 24)

It is by understanding what teachers' understandings about the approach that they use, or are supposed to use, that we can understand their pedagogical discourse and classroom practices surrounding EAC. It is in this context that I undertook a phenomenological investigation into teachers' understandings of EAC, their beliefs about teaching, and how their classroom practices are influenced by their understandings of EAC.

1.2 Aims of the study

The primary purpose of the study was to shed light on how teachers view language learning and teaching, in particular the phenomenon of EAC. It could inform curriculum developers and reformers and Continuous Professional Development activities. It could identify certain gaps in Namibia's policies with regard to current research on language learning and teaching. This study is not so much about identifying gaps or flaws in Namibia's approach to language teaching, but it could dispel assumptions that curriculum developers and teachers might make about EAC. Other beneficiaries of this study are, for example, teacher educators involved in pre-service teacher training at tertiary institutions, teachers who are currently teaching, and

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education officers at the National Institute for Educational Development who are responsible for successful implementation of government policies. The study also adds to the body of research about language in Namibia.

To achieve its aims, the study had the following research questions:

1. What are teachers' understandings of the concept of EAC?
2. How do such understandings impact on the design of their English lessons?
3. In what ways do these understandings shape classroom pedagogic practices?

1.3 Organization of the study

This dissertation comprises six chapters. Following the Introduction, Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature that led to the introduction of EAC, and research that motivates and generates the research questions addressed in this study. It reviews how EAC is viewed in other parts of the world and identifies gaps which this study investigated. Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical framework and Chapter 4 presents the methodology, the research design and methods adopted in the study. Chapter 5 presents key findings of the research. It also provides an analysis of the data derived from the different research instruments. In Chapter 5, a detailed interpretation of the findings is given with reference to the research questions asked in Chapter 1 and in relation to previous research findings. Chapter 6 discusses and summarizes the research findings and offers recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature associated with the main areas of interest in this study. This study focused on pedagogical choices and practices of teachers with regard to English Across the Curriculum (EAC). The chapter will firstly investigate the circumstances that led to the introduction of English as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in Namibia, and summarize studies within and about Namibia that have shown the downside of this decision. This section provides reference to EAC studies conducted elsewhere.

2.1 English as Language of Teaching and Learning (LoLT) in Namibia

Independence of Namibia heralded significant changes on the political and social scene. In education, one change was the abolition of Bantu Education and the racial education system and the forming of a unified education system. Another important transition was adoption of English as both the official language and medium of instruction from Upper Primary phase through to tertiary and post-graduate level. English was seen as a unifying language, and as such, deemed fit to be the language of government, trade, official business, education and wider communication. The implementation of English as a medium of instruction came at a time of great curriculum change from a traditionalist, teacher-centred pedagogy, to a more interventionist and progressivist, learner-centred approach, considered to equip learners to become knowledgeable and productive citizens able to use the language to communicate effectively. The learner-centred approach was seen as bringing about equity, as spelled out in *Toward Education for All* (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993). Since English became the LoLT in Namibia, there have been didactical, pedagogical and methodological changes. In line with the trend in second-language pedagogy, *The Language Policy for Schools: 1992-1996 and Beyond* was introduced (Namibia. Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture. (2002).

One of the shortcomings recognized in the discussion document of this policy is that *The New Language Planning Newsletter* (1993) claims that Namibia does not have a language policy, while politicians had an agenda to promote English because it does not have perceived ethnically divisive effects. This is because it is still difficult to implement language policy in rural areas because not everyone is familiar with it or they manipulate it to fit their needs (*The Language Policy for Schools in Namibia*, p. 2). The reason for the implementation of the language policy in Namibia was to overcome the colonial apartheid education system that segregated learners according to ethnic lines and produced cheap labourers to drive the apartheid white economy. Subsequently, a lack of English proficiency influenced employment and participation on political and economic levels. Although only a few people were proficient in English, the urge for English came from inside the country, as well as from Namibians who were in exile. Thus the values were more instrumental than they were intrinsic. The chosen language of instruction plays a crucial role in the ability of education to succeed in fulfilling its objectives and helping students to achieve their human rights.

However, introduction of English as a medium of instruction was not without challenges, as several scholars have established (Wolfaardt, 2005; Mgqwashu, 2006). The Ministry of Education's yearly examination reports on the performance of Grades 10 and 12 learners, as well as the 2005-10 Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) reports (Robertson, 2015), have reinforced findings on challenges that accompanied the introduction of English. Persistent poor performance of learners in national examinations, especially in English, was linked to, among other things, teachers' poor English proficiency, lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials, and incomprehensible learning content.

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Lately, scholars such as Frydman (2011), Chavez (2016), UNICEF (2016), and others have criticized Namibia's monolingual policy and have called for multilingualism to be introduced. Many scholars such as Haarlech-Jones (1998), Brock-Utne (2001), Mgwashu (2006), Otaala (2001) and others have questioned the use or selection of English as LoLT in Namibia. Despite all these studies, English is still the LoLT and low performance, especially in English, persists. According to *The Language Policy for Schools in Namibia* (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture 2003):

Any teaching approach, including the learner-centred approach to teaching advocated by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, cannot be easily realized if teachers and learners lack the necessary language skills and proficiency. (p. 2)

Swarts (2008) also states that the Namibian language policy has unifying effects, but it has a number of contradictions and embedded inequalities, it has conflict between intention and practice, and is flexible to the point of manipulation because of existing loopholes. Her solution is that language planning should be consultative, inclusive and reflective of national goals.

The issues of intention and practice, and flexibility to the point of manipulation because of existing loopholes, are driving forces in this study. It is thus of importance to investigate how much knowledge of the teaching approaches, in particular EAC, teachers have. Such knowledge could inform how teachers apply the concept of EAC and in turn bring about comprehension of their pedagogical discourse and practices.

2.2 A brief survey of understandings of English Across the Curriculum (EAC)

Educational reform occurs all over the world, from time to time. Robertson (2015) refers to Britain where the Bullock report argued that English teaching should not only take place in the English lesson, but in other subjects too and teachers need to consciously teach language in content subjects. Robertson questions whether all teachers accept these language-teaching responsibilities. My observations are that the notion that every teacher is an English teacher has been met with mixed emotions, from indifference, to mixed emotions, to outrage. Teachers argue that they teach History or Business Management or Science, and are not language teachers.

In America, EAC is known as the sheltered model, which puts emphasis on teaching simplified vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure in teaching English through content areas, according to Echeverria and Graves (1990, cited in Carrasquillo, Kucer & Abrahams, 2004). What is noteworthy is that, in both America and Britain, there are clear definitions of different English classifications and policy guidelines, as well as education acts that define EAC, such as the American *No Child Left Behind* Act (United States Congress 2001), to provide appropriate instructional programmes for English language learners to attain high levels of content subject knowledge. In Canada, similar programmes are called “language immersion models”, where learners’ second language is the medium of classroom instruction. This is done to foster bilingualism and develop learners’ language proficiency or communicative competence.

The South African Department of Basic Education (DBE, 2013) has developed two manuals for teaching EAC, as well as pamphlets. They have trained subject advisors and provincial subject coordinators on how to implement the EAC strategy and to monitor the implementation

of the strategy. The documents further outline the roles of schools, learners, content subject teachers and English teachers.

The lack of such initiatives in Namibia could be the cause of a lack of clear intentions or expectations for EAC. The closest that could be regarded as a policy on EAC is a report on a workshop held in Ongwediva, at the former college of education, entitled *Content and Integrated Learning in Namibia Using Language to Learn and Learning to Use Language* (CLIL)(2002). This was as a result of a joint effort by the University of Jyväskylä, the Namibian National Teachers' Union (NANTU), and the Finnish Association of English Teachers. The focus of a series of workshops that culminated in the publishing of this report was on identifying teaching and learning problems specific to the use of English as the LoLT, with specific attention on "language sensitive methodologies" in respect of enhancing teaching and learning through English. They found low levels of English exposure linked to low proficiency of teachers. The result of the project was to give a scope and clear direction in how to implement CLIL in Namibia. Yet, 14 years down the line, the recommendations of this project have not yet been translated into tangible policies and guidelines. Lumbu (2013) observes that recommendations from studies such as that of Malaba, Wolffaardt, Shimhopileni, Munganda and Compion (2007) on the role of English were not systematically followed up and implemented, which has affected proficiency of English teachers.

However, the whole EAC project might have fallen short in some regard. Firstly, it fails to look at the different contexts in which EAC was implemented. It was started in developed countries with a totally different country profile in terms of available resources, language environment, educational goals, as well as teacher and learner profiles. In developed countries, English teachers are likely to be mother-tongue speakers, in a highly monolingual society, who teach

minority learners who are practically immersed in the target language in their society. This is in sharp contrast to a learner in Namibia who is most probably in a multi-lingual community, being taught through a second or foreign language, by a teacher who might not be proficient in the language and who lacks pedagogical and subject knowledge. This problem could be intensified by large classes as well as a lack of learning and teaching materials.

My contention is, how teachers view English and rate their own proficiency could have an influence on how, in turn, they interpret policy guidelines and how they teach. The explicit guidelines and implementation strategies that are missing could leave teachers to their own interpretations and devices. Another observation is that, in the Namibian language syllabus, the cross-curricular issues are given as the themes for teaching EAC. The British define cross-curricular issues as elements or processes that contribute to the personal development and social awareness of young people – their knowledge, emotions and attitudes – and how learners can be proactive participants in the learning process (Radnor, 1994). Radnor further lists cross-curricular skills that learners need, such as communication, numeracy, study skills, problem-solving skills, personal and social skills and information technology skills.

In the Namibian English syllabuses, these cross-curricular issues are HIV and AIDS, Environmental Education, Population Education, Information Technology, Human Rights and Democracy (all Upper Primary and Secondary English syllabuses, 2010). It appears as if the terms “English across the curriculum” and “cross-curricular issues” are used interchangeably, although they are actually mutually exclusive. If the aim is to teach contextualized language, perhaps a clearer definition and distinction of both terms is needed. Discrepancies in using EAC could create unequal opportunities for learners, as those learners whose teachers may not be using these concepts correctly could lag behind in vocabulary, syntax, and creativity. In other

words, lack in required discourse, communicative and social competence. The lack of such clear initiatives for EAC in Namibia, as in Britain, could be the source of a lack of clear intentions or expectations for EAC. Clearing this up could provide teachers with better focus in teaching English in content subjects and developing the desired skills.

The use of English or language across the curriculum has not been without other problems. Carasquillo et al. (2004) pointed out that there could be a lack of cooperation among teachers, where there is no interdisciplinary partnership. Teachers could lack skills to make instructional content more accessible to learners. Carasquillo et al. thus offer a collaborative solution where English language teachers, because of their linguistic expertise, have a role to offer valuable insights into how best to select and structure learning activities to meet instructional goals, while content-area partners can offer informed perspectives on the knowledge and skills most valued in their own disciplines, for example, in Mathematics or Social Sciences.

Another challenge is the perception, or objection, that language/English learning and content subject learning do not go together: Mathematics for the Mathematics class, English for the English class. However, subjects cannot really be separated into clear-cut groups and there is a need to develop mind-sets that contribute to interdisciplinary efforts. Wingate (2012), Donohue and Erling (2012), and Arnó-Macià and Manco-Barés (2015), have confirmed the relevance of this interdisciplinary collaboration and they set out the role English teachers can play in teaching EAC. Although their findings are in a tertiary setting in the context of English for specific purposes, or English for academic purposes, they can be applicable to primary school and secondary school settings.

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Barron (2002) pointed out that there are differences in didactical approaches or teaching strategies among teachers of different disciplines; “people in different disciplines sometimes have distinct ways of doing things including diverse ways of teaching, thinking about teaching and talking about teaching, they have set minds about how it should be done”, and this could hinder interdisciplinary collaboration. Barron also states that the administration and coordination of English across the curriculum needs an interdisciplinary effort, or it might not succeed. Since there does not seem to be a clear policy on EAC in Namibia, it will be worth investigating how the approach is managed and monitored and how research in the field influences practice, if at all.

This chapter traced the introduction of English as a medium of instruction by looking at the reasons why it was introduced, and briefly touched on the language policy for education in Namibia and its implication for teaching English. Also pointed out were problems associated with EAC which sets the pace for the next chapter on the theoretical framework of the study.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents the theoretical framework for the study. The theoretical framework will also be used to analyse the data. This will be the social constructivism theories of social learning theory, “more knowledgeable other” (MKO), and Genre Theory (GT), which include scaffolding, guiding and modelling by teachers in teaching. Lastly, this section provides emphasis on the need for this study and concludes with ways in which this study addresses gaps identified in this chapter.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

Theoretically, English or language across the curriculum emerges out of Social Constructivism (Carrasquillo, 2004). It came about when a need was identified to teach language for social interaction. It is for this reason that this study draws from a social constructivist theory, Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory, to generate, analyse and evaluate data in this study. Primarily premised on the development of cognition, Vygotsky's (1978) theory takes a social constructionist approach and stresses the pivotal role of social relations in the process of learning. He believed strongly in the centrality of community in the “meaning-making” process, and that culture is a prime determinant of individual learning. According to him, social activities are the basis for complex cognitive processes.

While theorists like Piaget (1969) believed that learners actively construct knowledge through experiences, Vygotsky (1978) held the view that it is, in fact, adults and the wider society that create those experiences that facilitate learning. He argued that abstract knowledge is constrained or guided, or even structured, by the social environment in which learning takes place and is, in his words, “semiotically mediated”. In effect, this implies the indispensability

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of the “more knowledgeable other” (MKO; Vygotsky, 1978). EAC is supposed to raise learners' understanding of language and subject knowledge. Teachers are the MKOs who assist learners in scaffolding information in the social environment of the classroom. As such, the roles they play in implementing EAC, and how they come across in their classroom practices, are worth investigating.

An important element of Vygotsky's (1978) theory is that which may be attributable to teachers: the design of differentiated tasks that are aimed at maximizing each learner's development potential. The emphasis here is on differentiated instruction and learning, not along the lines of either the “traditional” or “progressive” pedagogies, but in line with what has been referred to in academic circles as the “scaffolding” approach (Bruner, 1986, p. 74). Its purpose is always to guide and support learning to bolster the development capacity of a learner (which should not be confused with individualized learning that is promoted by the progressivist schools of thought). This, along with the reality that social interaction, even among learners themselves, plays a key role in cognitive growth, remains unquestioned. Feez (cited in Johns, 2002) points out that:

Vygotsky's work suggests that pedagogies that are only concerned with existing independent functioning will not give the learner the chance to progress. By contrast, pedagogies that support learners as they move to their potential level of performance make genuine learning and progress possible. (p. 56)

Thus, Vygotsky's (1978) argument is that social interaction is fundamental in cognitive development of a child, and with his idea of the development of cognition as dependent on the “Zone of Proximal Development” (ZPD; Vygotsky, 1978, p. 1981). The two concepts, MKO and ZPD, are central to Vygotsky's work. His research on ZPD is the epicentre of his theoretical contribution to pedagogic discourse.

Vygotsky defines the ZPD as a “space” in which learner and teacher meet each other halfway. The learner brings to the “zone” what he or she is able to do independently, what he or she has learned, and the teacher brings support, so that what the learner is able to do in the ZPD is supplemented and supported by the teacher. The role of the teacher is neither that of an authoritarian figure – what Cope and Kalantzis (1993) calls “well-meaning bystanders” – nor that of a docile observer, but rather that of a catalyst that increases the speed and depth of the learner’s cognitive development, utilizing “scaffolding” as a means to support the learner as he or she grows in confidence (Vygotsky, 1978; Rose, cited in Francis & Wedekind, 2005).

This describes a process in which the skills of a learner start off as elementary. As the learner interfaces with the teacher, his or her skills become more advanced. This guided learning is a fundamental part of the social justice project. Vygotsky states that cognitive development results from social and interpersonal activity, becoming the foundation for intrapersonal functioning. In general, ZPD suggests that learning is optimized in situations where tasks are more difficult than individuals may be able to handle alone, but also not so difficult that they cannot be resolved with some support or guidance. Such guidance in our context is crucial, especially since the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in Namibia is spoken by learners as an additional language.

Evidence of such guidance in the Namibian syllabi and policy documents is provided by, for example, Amukushu-Niipare (2009). The Junior Primary English syllabus is based on a thematic approach to language teaching. According to Amukushu-Niipare, a thematic approach lends itself to application of a constructivist theory of learning since it provides an environment where knowledge is socially constructed. Amukushu-Niipare states that a thematic approach is beneficial to learners and teachers; teachers can be more ingenious, creative and will be able to

adapt the syllabus to learners' needs (2009, p. 17), though she does not really provide examples of practical implementation hereof. Theme teaching maximises a teacher's use of varied available resources that are concrete and familiar to learners.

Many scholars cited in Amukushu-Niipare emphasize the benefits of EAC, such as cooperative learning among learners, and greater interdisciplinary subject knowledge transfer. Constructivists reject the view that understanding simply resides in books; that it is waiting to be found and absorbed by learners. Rather, constructivism argues that understanding is *constructed* by those involved in the learning process (Amukushu-Niipare, 2009, p. 14). The thematic approach is seen as relevant because teachers are expected to use cross-curricular issues or themes as the basis of their contextualized English lessons (NQA, p. 39). Amukushu-Niipare (2009, p. 17) summarizes the benefits of the thematic approach as:

- **Makes explicit connections between content areas** for children; topic explored from multiple disciplines.
- **Supports process learning** (Genre Theory, scaffolding).
- **Themes provide an overview** of the entire curriculum and helps with decision making.
- **Leads to skills integration** and a more natural way of learning content, instead of compartmentalization; integrating subject matter extends natural learning.
- **Leads to more meaningful learning**; knowledge combined with literacy.

Amukushu-Niipare (2009, p. 65) also points out challenges associated with thematic teaching:

- **Lack of time:** To prepare, explore themes, plan materials, explore resources, discuss students' learning styles and needs.

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- **Teacher capacity:** Cooperation among teachers, exploration of the logic behind integration.
- **Scheduling:** Integrated teaching might need different scheduling of the timetable; larger blocks of time are needed on some topics.

Amukushu-Niipare's findings seemed to have been used as the basis of writing syllabi and other materials for the teaching of English in Lower Primary. In the syllabuses for Grades 4-12, there are six themes provided that are cross-curricular and thematic to contextualise learning and foster essential personal and social values and skills. The syllabi offer sample activities that teachers can give to learners. This could perhaps be seen as scaffolding activities, however, the role of the teacher as the MKO here is not clear. Vygotsky's MKO model defines the teacher as someone who models and scaffolds the desired behaviour for learners. In this case, the desired behaviour is using language, not only for communication, but also as a tool to gain other knowledge.

Jacobs (2006) states that curriculum guidelines are often well-intended fictional accounts and are not reflective of what actually happens in class. She asserts that academic literacy is a problem in schools, and it is critical to revisit the role of the teacher and the way teachers communicate with each other about learners. Her contention is that there is a need for fundamental revision of current practices that inhibit effectiveness of teachers and produce some of the factors leading to academic illiteracy. These need to be replaced with more effective approaches and strategies; she has suggested seven such cross-curricular strategies with origins in Genre Theory. These cross-curricular strategies address root problems that directly affect student performance and they have potential for assisting learners if teachers employ them. Jacob's work is grounded in a comprehensive theory of learning and her strategies address root

problems and systemic practices that directly affect students' performance. Jacobs (2006) claims that:

Each teacher at any grade level in any subject area is a language teacher. This means all teachers must be skilled in helping students listen, speak, read, write in the subjects they teach. Skilled language learners are adept at making meaning, and the complex act of constructing meaning from texts involves intellectual processes that can be taught, learned and improved upon over time. (p.39)

Currently there seem to be vast inconsistencies in language standards and approaches among teachers, which could have led to the vast inconsistencies in student performance. According to the Ministry of Education (2006), EAC in Namibia was introduced after the World Bank gave a damning report about the use of English as medium of instruction and a lack of language skills, labelling it a critical issue. EAC was introduced to address this specific root problem that affects student performance and it advocated that all teachers must be drawn into a cross-curriculum approach to language. Teachers are expected to create an environment which supports learning/acquisition of the target language (spoken, access to books, and a reading culture). In recognizing this crisis, the ministry reiterates findings of other scholars such as Fillion (1979) and Jacobs (2006) on the importance of language capacity, Gebhard and Harman (2011) on genre-based pedagogy and academic literacy, who claim that, "language must be accepted as our point of access to students' thinking", and Mgqwashu (2006) on epistemological access. All these scholars recommend intense and formal instruction based on Genre Theory (GT). In addition to merely recommending GT, scholars have also pointed out or levelled criticisms against GT, or how it is interpreted in some instances.

Gebhard and Harman (2011) describe genre-based pedagogy as a way of supporting academic literacy. In vouching for GT, they discussed three pertinent issues that emerged from how GT was implemented. They looked at the impact of federal reforms, such as the American *No Child*

Left Behind (NCLB) reform on 12 literacy practices in K-12 schools which, in our case, could be compared to the language policy reform and implementation of EAC, and they concluded that:

- Federal reforms such as NCLB are linked to institutional practices that create the social construction of illiteracy by often providing less challenging and lower quality instruction from less qualified teachers. These reforms are for low-income students, students of colour and English Language Learners (ELLs).
- Institutional practices of low-quality instruction make it professionally and legally risky for teachers to implement what they know about teaching in an effective and culturally responsible way, for example, an HOD not wanting teachers to use learners' prior knowledge, but rather to stick to a Scheme Of Work (Gutiérrez, Asato, Santos & Gotanda, 2002, cited in Gebhard & Harman 2011).
- Poor language-learning environments only expose learners to contrived, inauthentic reading materials and little exposure in composing extended text beyond word and sentence level.

In other words, EAC could be a platform where, instead of constructing literacy, illiteracy is created because language use is inferior. Forums such as EAC are political moves where instruction is of low quality and learning is contrived. Gebhard and Harman (2011) thus propose to use GT to support ELLs so that they are able to use academic discourse in school, home and other social settings, which was the original aim of EAC. They provide an outline of some core epistemological and methodological assumptions informing different perspectives of genre and genre-based pedagogy and how these concepts and methods have relevance in supporting academic literacy development in K-12 contexts.

3.2 Genre Theory (GT)

Here I turn to the Genre Theory (GT) from which EAC stems. As alluded to earlier, GT, as described in Gebhard (2011), is about a paradigm shift in epistemological concepts (regarding the relationship between text and context) and the pedagogy on how to apprentice (scaffolding, MKO), to disciplinary ways in which language is used in different/multimodal representations, such as graphs, bars, illustrations, etc., in formal and informal settings. Thus teachers must know language use in context to show learners how to use that language. GT is also a rejection of purely behavioural and psycholinguistic conceptions of language learning and teaching, but this is exactly where our teachers are stuck. It can be concluded that there is a discrepancy between language-teaching theory and the actualization of the materials to be used to teach language (the syllabus).

GTs and genre-based pedagogy are based on socio-cultural conceptions of language and learning; they are broadly based on theories by Bakhtin, Halliday and Vygotsky as cited in Gebhard (2011). Branches of GTs and genre-based pedagogy are usually English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), New Rhetoric Studies/New Literacy Studies (NRS/NLS). NLS focuses more on literacy practices of K-12 learners in school, while NRS focuses more on analysing lexico-grammatical forms and rhetorical patterns of discourse. The ESP agenda is concerned with helping non-native and native speakers to develop their academic communicative competence and to develop profession/subject-specific communicative competence.

Fillion (1979) calls the proposition “every teacher a teacher of English” lip service that does not amount to much. Fillion’s comment came from studies he conducted in which he found that what the Bullock Report intended to happen, was not happening. According to him, the Bullock

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Report set out to meet concern about the quality of English teaching. The teacher is supposed to recognize and reinforce the central role of language in the learning process. Each school was supposed to come up with a language policy for the school, but this was not so easy because teachers did not always know exactly what was expected of them. This is no different from the current situation in Namibia. It would be interesting to find out what are these inferred language policies in schools.

The theoretical basis for language across the curriculum came from the Bullock Report (1975) that works on the tenets that:

1. Language is more than surface structure.
2. The entire school as an environment influences students' language development.
3. Language plays a vital role in virtually all learning.

Fillion (1979) points out that, based on the assumptions above, a language across the curriculum must be concerned with deeper structures and functions of language, such as teachers' notions and awareness of language, and helping students learn to use language (and these make up the phenomenon which is language or EAC). I wanted to investigate how teachers understand these. Language across the curriculum goes much deeper than a superficial notion of elimination of errors in spelling, punctuation, sentence structure and usage conventions, thus it is more than just teaching grammar, vocabulary and so forth. Fillion also notes that implementation of language-across-the-curriculum policy could be problematic because content-subject teachers might not have the time; they do not see it as their job to correct students' sentence structures, and they might just view language as something that is to be corrected and improved.

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Fillion's study (1979) was done at secondary school and he says secondary schools might have implicit language policies in place that ultimately undermine the intentions of the suggested Bullock language policy. In other words, some schools have unspoken policies about language that restrict students' language usage and instead see the teacher as a font of knowledge from whom learners must learn. Research into classroom language indicate that learners are supposed to keep their solicitations to the minimum. Such classroom practices deny one of the most important findings of the Bullock Report, that language has a heuristic function in the class, in other words, language that is used for. Fillion identifies a flaw in the initial reason for language across the curriculum as being a focus on improving students' language skills, rather than a concern about language and learning.

In a context similar to the Namibian context, Mgqwashu (2006) raised the issue of a heuristic function of language and epistemological access of formerly disadvantaged students at tertiary institutions in South Africa, and asserts that a language policy that limits learners' language usage impedes both language development and learning for a large number of students. Mgqwashu emphasizes the issue of epistemological access in that he asserts that English studies or English pedagogy should be about more than just equipping students with technical knowledge of subject fields. English teaching should be more than just "expressive competence and narrowly defined language skills" (pg. 18). He argues that:

In combining language teaching with discursive, social and cultural critique, the field of English might take itself beyond mere service provision to other knowledge areas, such as to enable graduates to utilize language for purposes ranging from writing business letters and reports to solving problems and generating ideas. (p.18)

Mgqwashu (2006) states that there is a need for language teaching at universities to rethink the position of language teaching, and ways in which language teaching and learning can be

informed by broader aims of university education in general. Universities should train students to think critically and use language (written and spoken) to convey thoughts and ideas that are accessible to others. Mgqwashu also proposes a pedagogic practice for teaching English that integrates grammatical rules teaching with academic writing and criticism. If these two are separated, students' development in literate English will be compromised. What Mgqwashu recommends for universities here is relevant to this study because it is the universities that train teachers, whose understanding of language learning and teaching has to be enlightened if they are to teach language and language usage effectively, as Genre Theory recommends.

3.3 Filling the gap in research

In Namibia, research about language in education can be regarded as being in its infancy. The quality of English taught has been under the spotlight, with many researchers pointing out how unqualified teachers are to teach English, and how little English they know themselves, as seen in Namibian Teachers' English Proficiency Tests (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture 2011), as well as the perceived problematic language policy for schools. Some studies also focus on learners' poor performance in different skills, especially in national exit examinations or at regional forums, such as SAQMEC. Learners' performance must be looked at in the context in which language is expected to be taught. A lack of research on EAC makes it difficult for educators to make informed decisions about using EAC effectively in improving learners' performance. Most research articles are descriptive of teachers' practices and views, but this study goes beyond this to investigate why teachers do what they do in their language classes. Perhaps this is built on a presumption that teachers know about language usage for learning.

There is little documented evidence that teachers know about EAC. Similarly, there are few or no studies that examine policies that govern teaching of English and my study intends to fill

this gap. Teachers are supposed to teach EAC and I am interested in finding out, what does this actually mean for them? How does that compare to the original, intended aim of EAC? The Bullock Report wants students to be able to use elaborate language for their own purposes, and to be motivated to extend the complexity of their language. This entails using language in a contextual manner and employing different teaching methods and strategies. What is important here is that intention and use are essential elements in the development of language. It would be interesting to see how teachers do this. Research on classroom practices tend to focus on learners, but I wanted to investigate whether EAC was an adequate substitute for the teacher as the MKO in the English classroom, or the other way round.

There is a lack of research on the application and effectiveness of EAC in the language classroom in Namibia. A study done by Burns (1992) found that teacher beliefs have an influence on instructional practice and Breen (1991, cited in Burns, 1992) studied factors that they termed “the hidden pedagogy” in the classroom, meaning the beliefs, attitudes, expectations and decisions which underpin observable behaviour. From other studies cited in Burns, it can be concluded that, although teachers see themselves as practitioners only and not theorists, what they decide about classroom materials, language-teaching methods and resources, inevitably rests on implicit theories about the nature of language and learning. I would like to find out what these theories are or, as Fillion (1979) termed them, these implicit language theories that teachers who use EAC, have. Thus my research is needed because there has been no evaluation of how teachers perceive the phenomenon of EAC and how it affects their classroom practices. Other researchers of language, such as Mgqwashu (2007) and Thompson (2008) and Eddles-Hirsch (2015), have also used Genre Theory and phenomenology as theoretical frameworks and using this framework could unearth the practitioners' practices in this study and underlying theories that determine their practices.

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This chapter expounded on the theoretical framework for the study, the implementation of English across the curriculum in different parts of the world was traced, and criticisms against this approach were discussed. Finally, the chapter looked at how this study intends to fill a niche in research concerning EAC. The next chapter will describe the research process of this study.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Having reviewed the literature that informs this study, this chapter shifts the focal point towards the methodology for this research project. This research is a qualitative study in design that employs the interpretive paradigm to study the phenomenon of English Across the Curriculum (EAC), as conceptualized by Senior Primary English teachers. This chapter further discusses the research tools and data collection, and how the data were analysed. In addition, ethical issues concerning the research process are clarified. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of preceding sections.

4.1 Orientation and design

This is a phenomenological qualitative study designed to understand practitioners' understandings of their world, their interpretations of it, and the meanings they attach to their experiences. According to Merriam (2001, in Maree, 2012), phenomenological studies are "interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds and what meaning they attribute to their experiences". Thomson (2008) states that phenomenological research falls under the interpretive paradigm. It investigates the participant's lived experience and tries to, "penetrate the bubble wrap of self-conscious self-reporting of personal experiences, in order to see beyond that which participants selectively articulate, to what they also inadvertently tell us", and tries to explore the essence of the "subjective experience" (Thomson, 2008, p. 141).

However, Thomson (2008) points out that claiming phenomenology as a philosophy and as a research methodology (Paley, 2005; Dealy, 2004) could be problematic in two ways. The researcher can be subjective and have certain assumptions about the phenomenon under study

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and their own lived experiences could interfere with the data collected, thus researchers can never really be neutral, so they need to bracket their beliefs about the phenomenon. The second potential problem is the linguistic definition of the phenomenon being studied. Giorgi (2008, as cited in Maree, 2012) asserts that a discipline-specific slant is used toward the phenomena under investigation which, in this case, is EAC.

Admittedly my subjectivity, as someone who has applied EAC and who has certain notions about it, cannot be ruled out or overlooked. Being conscious of this subjectivity and my assumptions about the phenomenon, I made a concerted effort to maintain objectivity through bracketing. Given the research questions in this study, phenomenology as a research design was used to allow the study to generate data with potential to offer practitioners' understanding of the concepts related to EAC, how such understandings inform lesson design and classroom pedagogic practices. This was from the participants' perspectives and their social realities.

According to Giorgi (1994 cited in Thomson, 2008) the phenomenological paradigm consists of three methods or steps. These are description, reduction and the search for essences or, "free imaginative variation or meanings or essential structures" (148). My three research questions were aligned to these three steps. Giorgi draws a parallel of these three steps to the scientific methods in the natural methods, which in a way attempts to make this study objective. Likewise, the research instruments were drawn up along the lines of six research activities or characters identified by Van Manen (1997, in Thomson, 2008, p. 157). Unlike Thomson who explored students, I explored the experiences and perceptions of EAC in Senior Primary school teachers.

4.2 Research site and participants

To select study participants, purposive sampling was used. For Christiansen (2014), purposive sampling means that the researcher makes specific choices and targets a specific group that does not represent the wider population, but simply represents itself. This is the most appropriate sampling because the sample was a primary school which represents a wider variety of former disadvantaged learners in the townships. The study participants were English teachers in Senior Primary phase in a state school of the Khomas educational region.

Initially, I was to interview five teachers, but two withdrew in the week of the interviews. The final participants were three teachers, one who was trained before independence (1990), one trained after the teacher training reform in 1992/93, and the third teacher was a recent graduate from the newly introduced Upper Primary degree qualification in Namibia (2014). All of them were female and were willing to participate in the study. The school was relatively unknown or foreign to me since I had not done school visits there, thus I had no prior impression of the school.

4.3 Data generation instruments

To enrich the data and triangulate, a multi-method design was adopted and justified. Three qualitative data-collection instruments were used, namely interviews, classroom observation and documentary analysis. These are described as well as the procedures followed in collecting and analysing the data.

4.3.1 Documentary evidence

Documentary evidence in the form of policy documents, such as the National Standards and Performance Indicators for Schools in Namibia (2006), English Second Language Subject

Policy, Grades 5-12 (2009), English Second Language Teacher's Guide (2009) syllabuses, teachers' schemes of work and learners' written work, were used. These instruments enabled the study to generate data in relation to the research question, "What are the teachers' understandings of the concept EAC?" According to Maree (2014, p. 92), documentary evidence is effective in the research process because, "they are economical, enable the investigators to study past events and issues retrospectively".

4.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

Another research instrument was the semi-structured interview. On interview questions, Christiansen and Bertram (2014) point out that the interview is used extensively in interpretivist research:

Interview is a structured and focused conversation where the researcher has in mind particular information that he or she wants from the respondent, and has designed particular questions to be answered. (p. 80)

The questions asked were related to the participants' knowledge and information, values and preferences, as well as attitudes and beliefs. These interviews generated data in relation to research questions one and three: How do such understandings impact on the design of English lessons? There were interviews with three English teachers. Semi-structured interviews were used as they allowed the researcher to ask probing and clarifying questions and to understand the participants' understandings of phenomena (Bertram et al., 2014). The thrust of the interview was to explore the social constructivist concepts that an English teacher who teaches EAC should display.

I first drew up a bank of questions which I piloted with fourth-year education students at a local university, since they had spent almost a whole trimester at school during their school-based

studies and were expected to teach at that time. The piloting helped to identify which questions yielded unrelated data and should thus be avoided during the actual interviews. I used open-ended questions throughout each interview which allowed for the possibility of asking more probing questions to get more information from respondents. The interviews lasted for about thirty to forty minutes. Thomson (2008p. 160-161) also cautions that in a phenomenological study, the researcher should be comfortable with silences that might occur during the interview and not be tempted to fill in gaps by prompting the respondents to speak. The data were transcribed, a disadvantage being that there was a lot of data to process.

4.3.3 Classroom observations

Finally, semi-structured classroom observations were done to generate data in relation to research question three: In what ways do these understandings shape classroom pedagogic practices? The observations were semi-structured because I did not have a checklist to get through, but rather a free description of what was observed. Through classroom observation, as Maree (2012) or Bertram et al. (2014, p. 84) argued, first-hand data about a wide range of phenomena is obtained on site and on classroom practices and the classroom context. As Henning (2004) emphasizes, data collected through observation are fashioned with certain assumptions that comes from the researcher's philosophical and experiential base about language. This was semi-structured, non-participant observation. Classroom observation might influence the classroom practices of teachers, but it could enable the observer to pick up things that teachers are not aware of. The observations were done to pick up issues related to the teacher as the "more knowledgeable other" (MKO), and Genre Theory strategies, such as scaffolding. The observations were also done for purposes of triangulation.

4.4 Data analysis

Based on the nature of the research questions, this study used phenomenology and Genre Theory as a theoretical framework and data analytical tool, through the drawing up of nodes. The data were summarized and thick descriptions were provided to increase the trustworthiness of the interpretations. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) describe “thick descriptions” as the depth or thickness of a description that a researcher needs to report and this is done to provide enough detail so that findings can be seen as transferable to other contexts. The approach to analysis of qualitative data was deductive because, to understand the phenomenon of EAC as teachers perceive it, I could not come with pre-set knowledge, but had to work from specific observations to broader generalizations and theories.

According to Thomson (2008), phenomenology (Heideggerian) attempts to show the *dasein* experience. The attitude of studying the world theoretically or scientifically comes from the *dasein's* (person's) experience of the world. Phenomenology is interested in the analytical and descriptive experience of phenomena by individuals in their everyday world. “Phenomenologists, therefore, are more concerned with first hand descriptions of a phenomenon than they are in resolving why participants experience life the way they do” (2008, p 106). Phenomenologists perceive that human experience of the everyday world is a valid way to interpret the world. The phenomenon being studied is not measured or defined through the lens of its accepted reality; rather an understanding is sought of *how participants make sense of their everyday world*. Similarly, Thomson (2008) states that:

The goal in phenomenological interviews is to capture the experience of the phenomenon through that which is spontaneously and unwittingly given, rather than through a thoughtful, intellectualized response. (p. 175)

Christensen, Johnstone and Turner (2010 cited in Eddles-Hirsch, 2015) assert that phenomenology differs from other modes of qualitative inquiry in that it attempts to understand

the essence of a phenomenon from the perspective of participants who have experienced it. Thus, the focus in this type of research is not on the participants themselves or the world they inhabit, but rather on the *meaning or essence* of the interrelationship between the two (Merriam, 2007). Phenomenological research tries to uncover the essence of the phenomenon that is studied. It has specific techniques, like bracketing and imaginative variation. Thus, in order to define theory, we must look at the practice.

On the other hand, an inductive approach towards some sets of data from classroom observations was used to detect patterns and regularities in the data that spoke to Genre Theory. Vygotsky's MKO and Genre Theory were the two concepts used to draw up research tools, such as the document-analysis profile, interview questions and classroom observation tools. This elucidated whether teacher's understandings on the role of EAC incorporate these two fundamental concepts. Themes were extracted by using nodes drawn up according to which data were analysed.

4.5 Ethical considerations

Research involving human subjects has ethical issues related to collection of data, writing and referencing different sources of data (Furseth & Everett, 2013, who cite Hart, 2008). Research ethics relate to norms for behaviour during the research process and the responsibility of the researcher for consequences of the research. Thus, informed consent was sought from relevant authorities and individual participants. Voluntary participation, confidentiality, right of privacy, anonymity and protection from harm and trust were explained. Participants were also informed that interviews would be recorded and notes would be taken during classroom observations. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time, should they wish to.

Pseudonyms were used and each tool had an introductory text that explained the purpose of the research.

I obtained an Ethical Clearance form from Rhodes University. A letter requesting permission to conduct research in a state school was written and permission was granted from the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture. I further consulted the principal and the head of the language department on site to seek permission to interview teachers and do classroom observations.

4.6 Validity and reliability

According to Bertram and Christiansen, (2014, p. 188) there is a need for some kind of quality check on qualitative research; in this context, the trustworthiness, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the research findings. In this study, credibility was achieved by using a recorder to transcribe the collected data. The use of three instruments also ensured triangulation validity, and the use of semi-structured interviews gave participants a chance to check that they understood the questions correctly as they had a chance to ask for clarification. The researcher will provide thick descriptions and provide enough evidence to substantiate interpretations and corroborate this with literature reviewed.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the research design and described the research procedure used. A qualitative approach was used in an attempt to answer the research questions that seek to investigate teachers' understandings of EAC. The research instruments used were described and justified and ethical issues were presented. Data validity and reliability were achieved through adoption of a triangulated approach. Finally, ethical considerations in the research process are

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included in this chapter. Chapter 5 presents key findings in the research. It also provides an analysis and discussion of the data from the different research instruments.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Data and analysis of relevant research data gathered during document analysis, semi-structured interviews and classroom observation are presented in this chapter. The research questions posed in Chapter 1 are reiterated and addressed. The data presented are from the document analysis, followed by data from semi-structured interviews and classroom observations.

According to Giorgi (1994), cited in Thomson, (2008) the phenomenological paradigm consists of three methods or steps. These are description, reduction, and the search for essences or free imaginative variation or meanings or essential structures. The data will be presented in that way.

5.1 Document analysis

One of the objectives of the interviews was to find out what are teachers' understandings of the concept of English Across the Curriculum (EAC). I did a document analysis first to find out what policy documents said about the phenomenon. The documents I looked at were primarily the National Curriculum for Basic Education in Namibia (NIED, 2010), the Namibian Professional Standards for Teachers (Ministry of Education, 2006), the English Second Language Subject Policy, Grades 5-7 (NIED, 2009), and the Upper Primary English Second Language Syllabus, Grades 5-7 (NIED, 2009). The documents were analysed to:

- Define EAC.
- Understand reasons for the introduction of EAC.
- Understand theoretical positions that underpin EAC design or pedagogy in Namibia and expose classroom pedagogic practices that are expected during delivery of English lessons.

- Analyse how these documents speak to each other and are interpreted in actual classroom settings by teachers.

5.1.1 The Curriculum for Basic Education

The *National Curriculum for Basic Education* document (NIED, 2010) asserts the important role of English as both the official language and the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT), but the document does not define EAC or state reasons why teachers should teach EAC. It points out teachers' responsibility in developing core communication skills, oral and aural skills, and perceptual reading and written skills in different genres. Teachers must also teach subject-specific jargon and technical terms for specific contexts.

5.1.2 The Namibian Professional Standards for Teachers

The *Namibian Professional Standards for Teachers* (Ministry of Education, 2006) is a national statement intended to enhance preparation and ongoing support of teachers. It is a set of standards that specifies the subject expertise and professional practice competencies that teachers should possess to plan and manage learning, teaching and assessment activities in their classes. The document defines a standard as a document that describes, "a coherent and meaningful outcome (milestone/endpoint) of learning or training that 'we' want formally recognized, which is broken down into smaller more manageable outcomes" (NQA, 2009, p. 9).

The standards came about after much consultation and are part of an enhancement of the quality of education in Namibia. They are meant to be used in addition to curriculum documents and guidelines and they describe teachers' capabilities. On EAC, the standards categorize EAC

under Teacher Competency 9: "Apply strategies to promote English competence across the curriculum" (p. 39). The standards state that:

English across the curriculum refers to the practice through which the study and use of English takes place throughout the curriculum. Its purpose is to prepare students for the cross-cultural and multilingual demands and opportunities of a global society. (p. 40)

Some of the goals are defined as integration of language into all disciplines and the use of language skills in the access and pursuit of knowledge, and creating a climate immersed in, and supportive of, the target language. This differs greatly for the intended use/meaning of EAC, in that it is more about multilingual communication, yet Namibia has a predominantly monolingual education system. Moreover, English is a minority language in Namibia and learners are not usually immersed in an English community, but rather in a multilingual society which uses English as the LoLT.

Even though the study of language is supposed to take place across the curriculum, teachers have indicated that they do not plan lessons with teachers from other subjects. This was perhaps an unrealistic expectation, given that the Standards came just before education reform in Namibia.

Apart from providing performance criteria for language teachers, in the Standards there are strategies for teachers other than language teachers that range from language-centred teaching, creating a democratic, interactive classroom, to critical self-reflection for both teachers and learners, as well as the role of management and the wider community in supporting a language-rich environment. The theoretical underpinnings given here for EAC have distinct characteristics of Genre Theory, such as talking to learn, learning through various writing assignments and genres in content (subject) areas, applying study skills, critical reading,

thinking across the curriculum, and engaging in metalanguage or classroom inquiry into learning about learning. The *National Professional Standards for Teachers* wants language taught for learners to be able to communicate on a global level. Perhaps the aims here should be to teach language for epistemological access, this was, after all, why EAC was introduced.

5.1.3 English Subject Policy guide

The *English Subject Policy for Grades 5-7* (NIED, 2009) is the ministerial guideline on how English as a subject and LoLT should be taught:

The purpose of this subject policy document is to guide subject management in the school, but it simultaneously strives to leave scope for each individual teacher to take initiative, especially in presenting subject content and facilitating learning. (p. 1)

The Subject Policy states the timetabling of the subjects, provides the content of the different files an English teacher should have, and gives templates of a semester plan, scheme of work and lesson plan.

The Subject Policy also spells out responsibilities of the teacher and other line managers of the subject, one of which is pertinently to “strive towards the achievement of the objectives contained in the National Standards and Performance Indicators for Schools in Namibia” (p.7). EAC is only mentioned as a requirement or a component to be completed in the lesson plan. Unlike with the scheme of work, assessment, files content and other topics, there is nothing further on EAC in the subject policy.

5.1.4 The English Second Language Syllabus, Grades 5-7

The English syllabus is a course description or intended outcome for a subject within the curriculum. The syllabus does not mention EAC, but states that English has thematic links to

other subjects across the curriculum. Similar to the *National Curriculum for Basic Education*, the syllabus emphasizes the important role of English as official language, the LoLT, and as an important language for national unity and identity. English is a compulsory subject and teachers have to ensure that learners become proficient in it. English is regarded as a potential agent of change in bringing about personal growth, developing knowledge and fostering critical thinking abilities, among others. English is deemed to have an interdisciplinary role in enhancing learning across the curriculum and all teachers should be concerned with language, though the English teachers are expected to assist their colleagues and learners to use the language effectively.

The Upper Primary English syllabus does not mention ways that can be employed to enable learners to communicate effectively or to think critically, nor does it offer strategies and methods designed to introduce students to fundamental concepts which are core to the discourse of English teaching/learning. Namibia's language syllabus can be seen as based on Halliday's Systemic Functional Theory (1978)), with a focus on language form and function and contextualization. Nesbitt (1994) states that it has been generally agreed, within the Ministry of Basic Education in Namibia, that the approach to language teaching should be based on the Communicative Approach to language teaching, a participatory approach in the learning process, encouragement of teacher involvement in production of teaching and learning materials, and avoidance of a prescriptive syllabus (p. 4).

It can be deduced that the type of syllabus advocated here is a notional-functional syllabus. Instruction should be learner-centred with recognition given to experiential and other knowledge which learners bring to the classroom. This could be interpreted as being based on the constructivist theory where the teacher meets the learners in their zone of proximal

development (ZPD). Yet perhaps this was a premature decision, given the types of teachers and learners Namibia had just after independence. For once, the teachers might not have been trained in reflexive pedagogy and might still have been in the apartheid's philosophy of prescriptive teacher-centred teaching. A gradual and systematic introduction of reflexive pedagogy while phasing out the old system could have been better.

In line with the constructivist view, the Namibian syllabus/curriculum expects teaching and learning to encourage active learner participation through explaining, demonstrating and posing questions, checking for understanding and helping provide for active practice and problem solving, and according to the upper Primary Phase syllabus, to develop proficiency in the medium of instruction. (English Second Language syllabus, 2007 p.2). This is in line with Genre Theory, however, the Upper Primary English syllabus does not mention ways to enable learners to communicate effectively or to think critically, nor does it offer strategies and methods designed to introduce students to fundamental concepts which are core to the discourse of English teaching/learning.

Applied linguists and educational researchers see Genre Theory as a way of addressing low performance in schools at a macro level. For instance, Gebhard and Harman (2011) assert that Genre Theory is about a paradigm shift, moving from teachers who just want to improve performance in low-achieving schools, to teachers who can teach how to:

...critically unpack how academic language works in the genres they routinely ask their students to read and write in school, expand the range of linguistic choices available to students in communicating for particular purposes and audiences, and support ELLS in using academic language for social, academic and political work that matters to them (p. 47)

This requires robust conceptions of learning and cooperation at micro, meso and macro level. In contrast, at macro level in our education system, *The National Professional Standards for Teachers* in Namibia (2006) states that the reason for implementing EAC, is to improve marks and to enable learners to communicate effectively (p. 39). At meso level, the type of language syllabus in Namibia seems to be based on Krashen's (1982 psycho-linguistic oriented theories.

Krashen states that explicit attention to language and knowledge about language is detrimental to the natural order in which language learning occurs and this conception of language learning has been institutionalized. Krashen's theories call for learner-centred education where the teacher is on the periphery, so to say, yet the call for every teacher to be a language teacher is based on a more genre-based approach that calls for explicit teaching. Even the preferred language teaching methodologies are eclectic in nature, with concepts such as positive marking highly encouraged. This could perhaps be the reason why even teacher-training course outlines and the subject policy do not deal explicitly with EAC, while at micro level teachers are expected to teach using EAC. In other words, teachers are called upon to teach not only the form, but also the function of the language, and the vocabulary of the different subjects in the curriculum.

South Africa wants effective language development to facilitate the learning of content subjects. They have designed pamphlets that provide strategies for teaching EAC based on Genre Theory. In Namibia, there is a view that language is at the centre of any educational enterprise, and that if language acts as a barrier to successful learning, strategies should be identified, tested and implemented to overcome any deficiencies. In one informal discussion with an education officer, it came to light that there is no pamphlet or working document on EAC. The issue of EAC cannot be divorced from the debate about the suitability of mono-lingualism/bi-

lingualism/LoLT in Namibia, as these issues are intricately linked, but that debate is beyond the scope of this research. It is nevertheless worth mentioning because it links to the desired outcomes of education, and one thus needs correct strategies to teach English as a means of communication and for epistemological purposes. I will give recommendations to this effect in the next chapter.

The conclusion on the document analysis that can be drawn here is that the policy documents do not pronounce themselves clearly and consistently on EAC. This would have an impact on how teachers understand and interpret EAC and its intended outcomes.

5.2 The interviews

Semi-structured interviews were held with the teachers on site. The main aim of the interviews was to record the teachers' lived experience of EAC. The questions probed the teachers' understandings of EAC and how these were aligned or not aligned to the concept of EAC. Another aim was to find out how these understandings impacted on their practice in class. The interviews and classroom observations were held on site over a period of one week. All three teachers interviewed were teachers of English as a second language at Upper Primary phase, teaching from Grades 4-7. Genre Theory was used as the analytical tool, thus nodes or themes were extracted from the data collected. Thompson (2007) used nodes of experience and perceptions and these perceptions constituted the phenomenon under study, that is, they brought to life the phenomenon of EAC. One of my phenomenology nodes for analysing data was how teachers approached EAC or English instruction.

5.2.1 Nodes

The data were analysed through nodes by examining teacher and classroom variables through interviews and classroom observations, as well as triangulation through document analysis. The first node was the biographical data, or identity of the participants (Table 1).

Table 1: Participants in the study.

Teachers	Gender	Grades taught	Qualification	Teaching experience
Kavii	female	Five	BETD	16 years
Joyce	female	Four, Five	BETD	32 years
Natango	female	Six	B.Ed. Honours	4 years

The second node was the synthesis of experience. These nodes of experience are relevant only to the individual experiencing them and these nodes are there to make the participants' voices or opinions heard. Each interview was treated as unique, despite there being certain broad similarities in terms of probes and directions of talk. The descriptors of these nodes were the words that the participants used themselves when describing particular phenomena. This was because their choice of words was seen as the meaning they attributed to a particular concept or experience. I briefly summarize the content of each teacher's interview which represents their experience and conducting of lessons, but the actual transcripts of the interviews are in the Appendix.

5.2.2 Teacher Kavii

Teacher Kavii is a young, vibrant teacher who showed much enthusiasm and eagerness to participate in the interview. She volunteered to be interviewed first and took me to her class.

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The description of the class will be presented under classroom observation. On the question on what is EAC, Ms Kavii said she did not know, although she had heard of the term and the phrase, "Every teacher is a language teacher". She equated EAC to skills integration and thematic teaching or integration, perhaps because she had prior knowledge of thematic teaching in the lower primary grades. Ms Kavii stated that she integrated subjects such as Natural Science and Mathematics in her classes, and she used learner-centred styles and methods, such as group work and establishing prior knowledge. However, Ms Kavii did not elaborate on how this prior knowledge was incorporated. It was thus not clear whether she did scaffolding or not. It emerged that the integration was incidental rather than deliberately planned:

The integration of, of other subjects, it's something which comes....(pauses) not something that I've prepared for, like today, we're going to integrate Natural Science or what, it comes, just, just a glimpse of it, because usually I want to do what I, I want to achieve my objectives... (From interview with Ms Kavii.)

A significant finding here is an admission from Ms Kavii that she struggled with the subject content of other subjects, such as Natural Science, as she feels she is not competent in Natural Sciences: "Some of those science terms, I am unable to explain it more to the learners."

The school had schemes of work that were drawn up by the school cluster and teachers were expected to adhere to these and not divert to come up with their own themes, a situation Ms Kavii did not seem pleased about. Another problem was the large classes or what she calls "overcrowdedness", thus she was not able to cater to learners' differing learning styles. In addition, there was little cooperation among the teachers in assisting each other with planning lessons or sharing materials. Management did not assist teachers with skills integration.

Ms Kavii saw herself as a dispenser of knowledge, teaching about nouns and verbs, and not really as a facilitator. It was important for her to meet her objectives and basic competencies. An interesting aspect that emerged was how Ms Kavii perceived herself and her skills as perhaps more modern as compared to “older” teachers: “I have seen with the old, those who’ve been in the streams for quite a long time, they don’t consider integration.” According to Ms Kavii, teachers do not know about EAC, they only know about subject integration, though other teachers (e.g. Mathematics teacher) do not integrate English into their subject. She was not familiar with the *National Professional Standards* for teachers or the subject policy. Ms Kavii however regarded subject integration as a good thing because she felt that learners pick up general knowledge as they acquire knowledge of language rules.

5.2.3 Teacher Joyce

Teacher Joyce is an experienced teacher in her early fifties. She was quite interactive and was confident in participating in the interview. She emphasized the point that she was studying further and wanted to learn more about Learning Support in Reading and Writing. Even though she felt that every teacher ought to be able to teach English, she could not define EAC and circumvented the direct question about it. She linked subjects, such as Mathematics and Social Studies, but she could not provide a clear definition of a topic or how these subjects are linked: “...or a topic, out of the Social Studies book, and then you, and then you.... (pauses) how could I say? You take that topic and then you integrate it into your English topics.”

Ms Joyce mentioned subject integration, but could not provide succinct definitions or procedures for such integration. What she seemed to be more familiar with was skills integration: “Okay, in class what I might do is, remember we have how many skills? We have

the listening skills, the reading skills, speaking skills and the writing skills, and all, spelling and so on.”

Furthermore, Ms Joyce stated that there was no collaboration among teachers in planning integrated lessons – each teacher plans his or her own. She found integration to be beneficial to the learners, but she did not like that they have to use the same scheme of work. She regarded students' prior knowledge as important in the teaching of integrated skills.

5.2.4 Teacher Natango

Teacher Natango happened to be a former student at our campus. At first she was apprehensive and I think she was not at ease talking to me as her former lecturer, thus there were some power-relation issues and I had to assure her that the interview had nothing to do with her as a (former) student, but I was merely interested in her perceptions of EAC. Her responses were rather curt at first. I had to be content with long stretches of silence on her part. Ms Natango had been teaching for only two years and she did not yet have a permanent job; she was a temporary teacher. She stated that she knew what EAC is, and she defined it as, “When you teach English using themes that touch on other subjects taught in school”. She listed themes, different materials and integration of skills many times. This can be inferred to mean that she regarded them as central to her definition of EAC. She reflected that her teacher training did not cover much on EAC: “Jaaa, not really. We did not really go in-depth.” Ms Natango claimed that she used a variety of classroom activities, such as role play, reading comprehension and discussion.

As with her other two colleagues, Ms Natango was unclear about how EAC is planned or managed at the school; she just used the scheme of work provided by the school and she was

not actively involved in drawing it up: "I just got a scheme of work and my HOD said I must just use that scheme of work because it's the one the cluster is using."

5.3 Discussion and analysis of interviews

The major finding in the interviews is that the participants could not define EAC, which could mean they do not know what it is. This sharply contrasted with their general feeling that EAC is a positive step that could help learners to learn better. There seemed to be an interchangeable or synonymous use of the terms EAC, theme integration, subject integration and skills integration.

The teachers did not possess discourse competence about EAC so that, even if they could not define the phenomenon, their choice of words could reflect what they meant. Similarly, the teachers did not seem to identify with or own the content or scheme of work from which they taught since they did not plan it, it was just handed to them to teach. Drake (1998, cited in Amukushu-Niipare, (2009) comments that "teachers need time not only to plan but also to make sense of new ways to deliver the curriculum". In addition, one teacher indicated that she was not comfortable with natural science content, while she was supposed to integrate those science "terms". Overall, there appeared to be a lack of understanding of what EAC entails and it was equated with skills integration. The teachers indicated a lack of guidance in EAC, or even skills integration. Since they were expected to stick to the scheme of work, they might have found it limiting of their spontaneity, which might have influenced their role as MKOs in their classes.

According to Genre Theory, teachers should display modelling, guiding and scaffolding of learners to assist them. However, it did not seem as if the teachers intentionally used these three notions to assist learners. Their primary understanding of and discourse about EAC are not

aligned to the theory of EAC or Genre Theory. This is evident because they hardly used terminology relevant to EAC as found in the guiding policy documents, such as the *National Standards for Teachers*, the *English Subject Policy* and the subject syllabus.

5.4 Classroom observations

Classroom observations were done to see how teachers' understandings of EAC impact on the design of their English lessons and their classroom practice, to answer the question, "In what ways do these understandings of EAC shape classroom pedagogic practices?"

The classroom observations were also to observe how the following Bullock Report (1975) tenets, that form the theoretical basis for language across the curriculum, are manifested in the classroom: whether language is looked at as more than surface structure, and how the entire school as an environment influences learners' language development. This was done to determine whether some of the following aspects were considered, such as, whether classes are creative, language centred, or language is reviewed critically. Do assignments promote an increase in the range and extent of learner language? Are classes democratic, talk-intensive, and is there active participation of the learners? Is there a variety of projects? Are teachers supported from school management for continuous professional development opportunities, as well as practical issues of timetabling and staff scheduling (overcrowded classes). These aspects are important since they are characteristic of a class in which EAC is practiced.

Henning (2004) states that data collected through observations reflect a discursive perspective on language by the researcher or discourse analysis which is part of the social constructivist epistemology. As indicated earlier, bracketing took place where I tried to remain objective and put my own experiences and interpretations of EAC aside.

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The observations were done on site over two weeks. I sat in on at least three lessons for each teacher. The observations were recorded manually on paper in note form. I also studied lesson plans, preparation files and looked through learners' exercise books. There were a few pre-set criteria that were looked at. A brief summary of the overall key observations in each classroom is presented (see Table 2 below).

Included is also a detailed unstructured observation summary of a lesson from each teacher that is followed by an analysis and discussion of each lesson.

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Table 2: Description of criteria for each participant.

Criteria	Ms Kavii	Ms Joyce	Ms Natango
Class layout/spatial organization	45 desks, in groups, crowded, most posters removed.	42 desks, more spacious (library) no posters on wall.	37 desks, neat rows, many new posters on vocabulary/themes.
Aural/oral skills	More teacher talk, discussion with learners.	Teacher talked most, lecture on nouns.	Rather rowdy, too much teacher exposition, learners discussed with no guidance.
Reading/writing	Reading lesson, answering questions.	Grammar lesson (nouns), previous knowledge.	Writing a letter, poster with format. Most learners cannot read.
Subject integration	None	None	None
Skills integration	Reading, discussion.	Listening.	Very little, most focus on specific learning content from syllabus.
Thematic integration	Environment.	HIV/AIDS theme used in introduction grammar in isolation.	Cultural rights and responsibilities.
Projects	Very little, mostly grammar worksheets	None. Worksheets, class activities.	Drama: cultural responsibilities.

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Scaffolding	Help with pronunciation, spelling.	Little explaining.	No guidance on how to discuss.
Guiding	Read aloud, correction, no explicit rules presented.	Learners did individual work.	Teacher walked around class to monitor group work, but offered no help.
Modelling	Reading aloud.	Applying grammar rule (abbreviations).	None. Learners organized themselves.
Subject management	Neat files with required documents.	File was missing, some lesson plans presented.	File with daily lesson plans, worksheets.
Materials used	Textbook, posters.	Textbook, worksheets.	Poster on letter format.

5.4.1 Teacher Kavii, Grade 4

The class had many posters on language rules (tenses, verbs, antonyms) and other documents, such as circulars and timetables. There were 35 learners, seated in single neat rows of six or seven per row. This was a special set up for examinations and tests as they were writing tests that week; usually they sat in groups of six. The lesson was 35 minutes long.

The teacher started the lesson off with prompting questions about application forms, explaining why and how different forms are filled in, for example application forms, and competition forms. She engaged learners by asking them to come and write on the board, and by asking several learners to explain terms on a form, for example nationality, occupation, home language, residential address and so forth. She put up a poster displaying a completed application form

and read a text from which the learners had to extract information to complete a form. A text was handed out and learners read the text in chorus while the teacher listened. (The text was about a boy who has to apply for a plane ticket to go to Italy for a holiday).

Then more prompting questions were asked: "Have you ever boarded a plane?", "Who has seen an aeroplane?" The learners were absorbed in the lesson and they seemed eager to participate. As the teacher read the form, she explained the meaning of the words. Learners were then left to complete the form. Some learners were code switching, using English while one child explained to another in the vernacular. Upon inquiry after class, the teacher said that she found it interesting that they did that because the learners are supposed to use English and she did not encourage it, but now she saw the need of codeswitching and using the vernacular.

As the learners completed the form, the teacher walked around assisting learners with the work and provided tips on how learners could find the answers and how to punctuate correctly, for example, to look for where the email is written email and copy that correctly. The activities were sporadic and not timed – learners were not given time on task. Teacher Kavii then went through the forms for the benefit of the "slow learners" by completing the form, question by question. She walked around the class and paused at individual learners and pointed out spelling mistakes, letter formation, punctuation of titles, and ensured that learners wrote down the correct answers. Ms Kavii pointed out that forms filled in must always be neat; untidy forms would not even be read, but be thrown away.

It seemed that what was important was for the learners to get the correct answer written down. The teacher constantly praised learners – "good, very good", and so on – and she discouraged those who laughed at others. She used a handout with a fill-in form and a poster on an

application form as teaching aids. The class ended and the teacher marked some forms. The others were put away. In the next lesson, the learners read aloud throughout the whole lesson, with the teacher listening.

Lesson 3 by Ms Kavii was to an English Grade 5 class. The theme, as provided in the text book, was *Dealing With AIDS* and the topic for the day was Health Rules. (Other themes from the book are cattle culture, sea treasures, things change.) The learning objective for the day was speaking. The learning competencies were: learners should be able to speak with clarity and fluency to be understood by teachers and peers, for example, when explaining or describing simple, familiar topics, etc. (*English Second Language Syllabus*, Ministry of Basic Education and Culture 2015).

The teacher started the lesson off by asking about health rules that the learners knew, such as, one must exercise, eat healthy food, (she asked learners for examples), then they described pictures from the text book, *Let's Do English, Grade 5*, (pp. 87-88). The teacher then read the factual text and the learners listened and followed, reading silently. Afterwards the learners read the text aloud.

After the choral reading, the teacher went back to the text and learners had to say something about the different headings. She asked questions such as, "What is meant by, 'Do not overeat?'" and the class went on to discuss how much each person should eat. Learners claimed the teacher did not eat enough; another comment was that she eat less because she did not want to get fat, and the teacher explained that her slender body was because of her genetics. She went on to explain about anorexia and obesity. It was quite an interesting lesson!

In this lesson, the teacher seemed to concentrate on fluency activities only and not accuracy activities, as the learners talked freely and the teacher overlooked pronunciation and syntactical mistakes. It was an open-discussion lesson. The text had some words in bold and their explanations were provided in the text, but vocabulary was not looked at explicitly. The chalkboard was not used; only the headings were written on it.

The topic used for the lesson was explicit and there was scaffolding happening, for example, when the teacher allowed code-switching and catered to slower learners. However, no pre-prepared vocabulary was provided by, for example, giving flashcards of words to be taught explicitly, or grammar rules integrated. The teacher read "date of departure" then asked, "When are they leaving?", so there seemed to be an assumption that learners understand the rephrasing of the word departure.

The teacher did not identify the learners' ZPD or exploit it or use it to their benefit, as she provided immediate answers and the work provided was not challenging. The learners' ZPD could have been extended by adding specific speaking skills that they needed to meet the basic competencies. Teacher Kavii valued the cultural aspect of scaffolding and recognized learners' prior knowledge by asking learners to share their lived experiences in class. There were no differentiated tasks for learners with different abilities, and even if the teacher could be seen as the MKO, her activities did not appear to be premeditated and deliberately worked out to scaffold learners. It can thus be concluded that the teacher was not aware of her role as language teacher. The focus on language correctness can be a sign of traditionalist, teacher-centred pedagogy as opposed to an interventionist and progressivist, learner-centred approach that is propounded by the EAC approach.

One of the overall emergent findings was how teachers maintained a balance between a cross-curricular theme and the language-learning content. This is also my main observation/finding in this research. It seems as if the teachers could not really strike a balance between integrating a theme and simultaneously teaching subject-specific learning content – they either treated the lesson as a purely language lesson, or a purely interactive, conversational lesson, with no deliberate language focus. The language focus could be based on the basic competencies for the lesson, where the teacher could model how to speak with clarity and fluency.

5.4.2 Teacher Joyce, Grade 6

Teacher Joyce taught Grade 6 English. The class had 26 learners and they sat in pairs. The lesson started off with the reading of the topic for the day and a picture description from the text book, and the teacher asked several prompting questions. Ms Joyce read the text to the learners while they followed in their books. It was a factual text about a solar eclipse (Ms Joyce did not point this out, though it was stated in her competencies). She explained the meaning of words as she read along. After reading the text, the teacher asked the learners what they have learned from the text by asking questions such as, “What is a solar eclipse?”, “How will you explain to your small sister who is not going at school what is a solar eclipse?”, “What else did you learn from the text?” (A learner responded, “I learnt how to protect my eyes from a solar eclipse.”) There was no specific learning content presented on the basic competency for the lesson, which was, read to rearrange sentences into meaningful paragraphs.

The learners were then given an activity in the text book, *Let's Do English, Grade 6* (pp. 48-49), where they had to arrange sentences from the passage in the correct order. The textbook is thematic and the theme/topics for the day was “looking to the skies” while the topic was solar eclipse. Other themes/topics are: friends across the world, houses and homes, weird and

wonderful weather, show time, market time, water – not a drop to waste!, the internet, and health issues.

A noteworthy observation was that the textbook had a page on how to use the book which, among other things, looks at previous knowledge, explains activities that help learners interact with the content and knowledge, icons that suggest whether it is individual, pair or group work, listening text that appears upside down, vocabulary, self-assessment tools and activities. The teacher, however, hardly used the suggestions made in the book. The chalkboard was indicated as one of the teaching aids in the lesson plan, but it was not used. Only the date and title was written on the board and nothing else.

5.4.3 Teacher Natango, Grade 7

Ms Natango taught Grade 7. There were 33 learners in class. There were many commercial posters on the wall, quite colourful and attractive, on parts of speech, punctuation, rhyming words, plurals, months, baby animals, opposites, body parts, opposites, adverbs, degrees of comparison, etc. The text books were kept locked up in class.

The lesson was a revision of elements of literary texts. Ms Natango started off by asking the learners to list different elements of literary texts, such as poems and stories. Learners listed alliteration, similes, metaphors, assonance, stanzas, verses, poet, author, setting, and so forth. She asked the learners what the difference between similes and metaphors was and asked them to consult their notes in their note books. A learner read the definition of a simile from her note book. Another student read the definition of a metaphor. Text books were handed out and the learners read a story in unison. (They read well in sync, even though it was choral reading!) The text book used was *Let's Do English, Grade 7* (pp. 106-107).

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After the reading, vocabulary work was done. The teacher wrote three words on the board and asked the learners what the words meant: viz. sneered, breakneck, hurtling. They gave the answers based on how they understood the words and provided examples. Ms Natango went on to ask comprehension questions about the story. It was a short story with a simple linear plot in which similes were deliberately contrived. She asked the learners to write six similes from the story in their exercise books. As the learners wrote, the teacher went around looking in their books and asked the learners guiding questions for self-correction. Learners came to her with questions and she explained to individuals.

Afterwards, the learners exchanged exercise books, the teacher provided the correct answers and the learners marked each other's work. The whole class then discussed the lesson and the moral of the story, with the teacher asking learners to justify/defend their answers. The teacher explained the difference between the theme and the topic, that the theme is what the story is about and is not the title.

I saw a learner's Directed Writing exercise book in which there were listening comprehension texts, reading comprehensions, spelling tests, vocabulary exercises, dictations, grammar exercises on conjunctions, tenses, active and passive voice. There were also notes on synonyms, reported speech, diminutives and so forth. The exercise books were marked regularly and the learner's averaged eight marked exercises per month. There were different genres: poems, short stories, factual texts were used (e.g. a carrot muffins recipe, a form to be filled in). The lesson ended with the teacher giving learners tips on how to answer examination questions on literature.

Ms Natango seemed to have systematic learning content planned for the class. There were a variety of activities, such as speaking, reading and writing, and a lot of collaborative learning

in the class, such as choral reading and peer grading. The learners were active participants and she was the MKO by prompting learners to engage their previous knowledge while scaffolding them by asking questions and setting activities, such as identifying different literary elements in the short story. Learners were provided with notes they could consult. These activities were in line with Genre Theory and EAC, yet it was Ms Natango who said in the interviews that she did not know what EAC is.

5.5 The findings of the study

This chapter presented data from documents, interviews or the individual nodes of experience, and data collected from classroom observations. The data is summarized and presented through thick descriptions. Based on the nature of the research questions, this study used phenomenology and Genre Theory as a theoretical framework and data analytical tool through the drawing up of nodes. By analysing the data collected, the following findings and interpretations could be collated. The findings are presented under the themes of the research questions that are the gist of this study.

5.5.1 Teachers' understandings of the EAC concept

The teachers in the study could not define EAC and equated it to skills or thematic and subject integration, for example, "When you teach English using themes that touch on other subjects taught in school". One teacher stated outright that she did not know what EAC was and I found that the question was circumvented. This made it difficult to ask more questions on this. The teachers were aware that they were supposed to use other subjects' content in English class. There was a sense of uncertainty or lack of words to define the concept of EAC or subject integration: "...or a topic, out of the Social Studies book, and then you, and then you.... (pauses) how could I say? You take that topic and then you integrate it into your English topics".

The limited understanding of the concept could be due to the whole subject management and setup of the school. Teachers do not know about the documents they need, they do not have the theoretical background of teaching methodologies they are supposed to use and perhaps their training does not sufficiently prepare them for what and how they are supposed to teach. The teachers' responses and behaviour revealed something about how they view teaching English and the role of language in learning and teaching. Teachers recognized the important role of English as a LoLT, but they did not seem to be aware of the implications for them as language teachers in ensuring that the type of English they teach indeed enables learners to use English as a medium of instruction. Consequently, this had an impact on their interpretation of the syllabus, and their role as language teachers and the MKOs in their classes.

5.5.2 How such understandings impact on the design of their English lessons

Because the teachers did not have a clear understanding of EAC, their interpretation and use of the syllabus and their English lesson plans were affected; they did not reflect characteristics of EAC. According to the subject policy, teachers should write out all the lesson plans for lessons to be presented. The subject policy has samples of lesson plans that has a section for theme and topic and an EAC section under which teachers should indicate reading activities and writing activities. The schools are allowed to draw up their own lesson plan and this school's lesson plan form does not include EAC. Thus, from the onset, there were no deliberate planned activities for EAC.

When it comes to lesson planning, the findings are that social constructivism principles of social learning are planned into the lesson plans to varying degrees. For example, some lesson plans indicate collaborative learning activities such as group work, others do not. There were few instances of modelling and scaffolding by the teachers, or if there were, these were more

coincidental than intentional. Vygotsky's theory of learning and teaching assumes that both learning and teaching are highly interactive activities where social construction of knowledge occurs, but in some of the classes observed, there was little interaction among learners and between teacher and learners. Thus the teachers' understanding of EAC has a negative impact on their lesson planning and execution that is not in line with the principles on which the syllabus is built.

5.5.3 Classroom pedagogic practices

The English classes under study were found to be relatively traditionalist and not social-learning environments. This was reflected in the classroom physical environments, teaching and learning activities, classroom interaction and choice of learning and teaching materials. Clement and Vanderberghe (2000) discussed what they termed progressivist professionalism characterized by the use of skills based on theoretical knowledge and there are two streams of teachers' beliefs. There is the direct-transmission belief about teaching that is relatively teacher-centred, and there are constructivists beliefs about teaching. They cover two aspects of teacher beliefs: those that have to do with general and pedagogical knowledge, and those that are concerned with teachers' teaching practices and cooperation with colleagues.

Given the origin and nature of EAC, one would expect teachers to display or practice constructivist beliefs in their teaching. Data revealed that teachers rather still have direct-transmission beliefs in that they give activities such as grammar exercises that are not contextualized, they do not choose other subjects' learning content to use in their classes, or integrate themes and other language skills, although these might be indicated in lesson plans. The teachers did not display an awareness of deeper structures and functions of language that are reflected in their teaching. This can be equated to what Fillion (2013) termed as their implicit

theories of what teaching English should entail. Teachers have the rhetoric of thematic teaching and so forth, but they do not practise it.

My conclusion is that, even though teachers say they are doing EAC or theme and skills integration to help learners in other subjects, these teachers did not have practical, subject-content knowledge to present. The teachers do not offer English learning content based on lesson objectives or basic competencies indicated in lesson plans. On subject integration, learning content of subjects such as Mathematics or Science is unfamiliar to teachers who may wish to integrate such content effectively into English lessons. There is little cooperation and interdisciplinary partnership among English and content-subject teachers. The teaching materials chosen are textbooks and worksheets that do not reflect subject integration.

The findings corroborate what Carasquillo et al. (2004) say about lack of cooperation and interdisciplinary partnerships. Teachers lack skills to make instructional content more accessible to learners. The findings also support the proposition that “every teacher is a teacher of English” is lip service that does not amount to much. However, teachers can only offer valuable insights once they themselves are the MKOs. They can become MKOs through rigorous training and conscious or overt training in theory about language acquisition, language learning and teaching.

5.6 Conclusion

Chapter 5 presented the data collected in the study, analysed it and interpreted it. It also provided a summary of the main finding that answer the research questions posed in Chapter 1. Reference has been made to literature reviewed in the study. The next and final chapter will make give a summary of the research and offer recommendations based on the presented findings.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings of the research and the implications these have on teaching English across the curriculum (EAC). It also outlines and assesses the limitations of the study and makes recommendations for further research in the field. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of the preceding sections.

The main objective of the research was to establish how Upper Primary teachers view language learning and teaching, in particular the phenomenon of an EAC approach to language teaching. The primary objective was to investigate how their perceptions of EAC impacts their classroom practices. The study was carried out at a primary school in the suburban location of Katutura in Windhoek where English is taught as a second language. The study was situated in the interpretive research design and grounded in social constructivist theory. A triangulated approach was adopted to collect data using purposive sampling. Three instruments, namely document analysis, semi-structured interviews and classroom observation were used. The data were analysed qualitatively using Genre Theory and Vygotsky's theories concerning the "more knowledgeable other" (MKO).

Findings show that teachers do not seem to have a clear understanding of language teaching in general and of EAC in particular. While teachers displayed some of the principles of EAC, such as integration of content subject matter and language skills in English lessons, this did not necessarily correspond with their pedagogical choices and practice in the classroom.

The study also revealed that there is no clear implicit or explicit or interactive pedagogy in application of EAC in Namibia. This could be because there is a lack of materials on EAC

specifically aimed for teachers to guide them in using EAC, although it is implied in the National Standards for teachers. However, contrary to my initial assumptions, there are documents on EAC in Namibia, such as the comprehensive document by Marsh, Ontero and Shikongo (2001). There are similarities between the Namibian documents on EAC (Marsh et al., 2001) and South Africa in defining EAC and its role in education, but while South Africa has developed a policy on EAC and made pamphlets to inform teachers, Namibian documents have probably been archived as they are not readily available. Lumbu (2013) raised concern about Namibian research recommendations that seem to be shelved instead of being turned into tangible, usable documents that are readily available with teachers being trained in their use. According to Thompson (2008) the disjunction between policy and practice has been well documented in South African research (Jansen, 1999; Motala and Pampalis, 2001; Mda, 2004; Harley & Wedekind, 2004).

With reference to the historical context of implementation of an EAC approach, the issue of disjuncture in intention and practice in language teaching, and the flexibility of the language policy to the point of manipulation because of existing loopholes, were driving forces in this study. EAC was implemented to help equip students to better study in English, however, the study revealed that teachers are not clear on what their role as language teachers is and they still use traditionalist approaches to language teaching instead of the expected progressivist approached advocated by social constructivism, Genre Theory and EAC. This, in essence, could mean that language is not necessarily being taught to equip learners with epistemological access, but as a set of grammar rules.

Chanvez (2016), in his critique of Namibian language policy, states that the chosen language of instruction plays a crucial role in the ability of education to succeed in fulfilling its objectives

and helping students to achieve their human rights. Chavez states that the right to education is enshrined in the constitution and UNESCO, but description of what education should be like is usually vague in practice. For instance, article 13 states that, "measures should be taken to ensure that education is culturally appropriate for minorities and indigenous peoples, and of good quality to all" (UNESCO, 1990 para. 50).

From the onset of EAC, the programme was meant for multilingual learners in schools, to effectively prepare students for success in academic subjects. To do this, teachers need a focused approach to teaching language in every classroom, in every subject area, every day. But our syllabus says that English is to be taught for effective communication. This can be regarded as a discrepancy in intention since multilingualism in America might not necessarily be the same as in Namibia. As an example, Namibian learners mostly hear English at school, whereas American immigrants are immersed in an English environment while being taught mostly by English mother-tongue speakers who are specifically trained for second-language teaching, and there seems to be a clear distinction between a first and a second language. However, Dutro and Moran (2002) indicate a need for teachers specifically trained for second language, and I believe this also applies in the Namibian context. They also implore that academic language learning as a lifetime endeavour needs to be taught daily, and this goes beyond teaching grammar and vocabulary to include linguistic structures, such as those used to summarize, analyse, evaluate, combine sentences, and so forth.

In implementing English as a medium of instruction, what was perhaps overlooked is the finding that, in transmitting a language, one also transmits a culture, so it is not clear which culture is intended to be transmitted: that of the English/British or that of Namibian teachers teaching the English language. In Canada or England, for example, the culture that is

transmitted is the lived culture in which the language originates. Perhaps one failure (if one can call it that) of EAC is caused by teachers feeling alienated from the culture and themes they are supposed to use to teach English.

The National Professional Standards for teachers wants language taught to learners to be able to communicate on a global level. On the contrary, the objective for the introduction of EAC was to teach language for epistemological access. For a government to provide an education of good quality that is culturally appropriate for the students of its nation, that government must first understand precisely what those terms entail, and then know what steps need to be taken to implement a system that satisfies these demands. Document analysis did not reveal systems put in place to make language teaching of good quality available and be culturally appropriate. It could be argued that the cross-curricular themes in the syllabus address the need for appropriateness, but it is still not clear how quality is ensured.

In Ontario, language across the curriculum requires that schools have a language policy, but this is not the case in Namibia. There is a need for national deliberations and debate on the role of language in learning, the LoLT. The expectation is that, once teachers know what language in education is about, they be able to teach EAC. In light of this, it is recommended that there be alignment between the national curriculum objectives for studying English, the school syllabi, the training of teachers, and continuous professional development activities that must be informed by theory on language across the curriculum.

Dutro and Moran (2002) have an architectural view of EAC, which wants learners to achieve the highest level of literacy through rigorous, high-quality, second-language teaching. They

recommend that all teachers have linguistic knowledge and knowledge of how to design a comprehensive approach to English language development. Dutro and Moran (2002) say:

If teachers are to design effective English Language Development instruction in their classroom, they need to analyse the academic language in terms of the functions, forms and fluency features and address these in the planning process. (p.7)

Unsworth (2001) asserts that EAC should rather be seen as literacy across the curriculum. This is not concerned with only the language or words of a subject, but also the *genres* of a subject; definitions are used more in Biology, reports in History, tables in Maths, and so forth.

I am of the conviction that teachers required to teach EAC might not necessarily have the linguistic knowledge or even be aware of language development. This is because language development content is mentioned overtly only in such course outlines. It is thus recommended that to achieve success in teaching English as L2, there is a need to infuse policies and classroom practices with more theoretical approaches or bases for teachers to understand the point of teaching English.

This study could not trace any studies done on EAC in Namibia, although quite a number have looked at performance of learners and teachers in English. Such learners' performances must be looked at in the context in which language is expected to be taught. This lack of research on EAC makes it difficult for educators to make informed decisions about using EAC effectively in improving learners' performance. Most research articles are descriptive of teachers' practices and do not go beyond this to investigate why teachers do what they do in their language classes. Perhaps this is built on an assumption that teachers know about language usage for learning. However, there is little documented evidence that teachers know about EAC. It is thus recommended that further research could look at how content-subject teachers perceive EAC.

6.1 Limitations of the study

This study was a qualitative study and the findings may not be generalizable to other settings because of the small size of the sample. The issue of bracketing and subjectivity could have been a limitation as I might not have picked up all valuable information. The findings, however, could inform teachers' practice of teaching English, as well as policy makers and teacher trainers.

The whole project was a humbling experience. The use of phenomenology as a research design was a great challenge. Lack of experience in research could also have compromised my engagement with the research. However, the project enlightened and broadened my knowledge on the subject matter and led to a lot of reflection on my own perceptions and practices of EAC. Bracketing was thus a particular challenge.

6.2 Conclusion

As a trainer of English teachers, the findings of the study are a perturbing, albeit not completely unexpected, revelation. It confirms my opening comment that there seem to be as many definitions of EAC as there are teachers. This calls for going back to the drawing board of the different curricula, for example, the school language curriculum and the teacher training curricula, a clearer definition of the role of language in education, as well as deliberate, comprehensive and explicit strategies in the teaching of English if we are to ensure that language is to be used as a tool to gain knowledge and for epistemological access. Namibia will have to move away from teaching superficial, technical skills of just grammar and sentence construction, to an approach that will enable teachers to teach learners to use language to make meaning and create new knowledge. EAC as a pedagogical approach needs to be defined in an

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unambiguous and concise manner, and there must be, as in South Africa, Germany, Toronto and America, booklets and pamphlets that explain the phenomenon for teachers.

In conclusion, this study can be seen as a valuable contribution to research on English language teaching research in Namibia and other parts of the world that might have similar situations. It has established some teachers' perceptions of EAC and how their perceptions impact their classroom practices. It has also identified gaps in the policy documents that govern the teaching of English in Namibia, and it has provided recommendations on how different stakeholders in teaching language, namely the ministry, teacher training institutions, and teachers themselves, could improve their practice so that, indeed, every teacher can be an English teacher.

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APPENDICES

Transcription of interviews with teachers about English Across the Curriculum (EAC)

This is a verbatim transcription of interviews with three teachers on the subject of English Across the Curriculum (EAC). The interviews were done individually in the teachers' classrooms and recorded with an audio recorder and a cellular phone. With the first teacher, I encountered a problem with the recording device and I had to use my cellular phone to record the interview.

INTERVIEW 1: TEACHER KAVII

Emily (E): Sorry Kavii, let us just resume again. We were talking about how you do the subject integration, and I asked you about how comfortable you are in integrating the subjects and you said that, in some subjects, such as Natural Science, you are not so familiar with those science terms and you are unable to explain those terms to the learners. My next question was, which texts books and teaching materials are you using to teach English across the curriculum or integration and you were telling me that you use printed posters, and you have a television that you use to watch, okay? Which are some of the topics that you've maybe watched with the learners?

Kavii (K): We watched about HIV and AIDS and about the environment.

E: Okay.

K: Mh...

E: I also wanted to know, the textbooks that you are using...

K: We are currently using, there's a new one that's let's do for Namibia and Platinum.

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E: Mhmh. How do you think do these text books integrate the subjects or how do they do subject integration as you were talking about?

K: Jaa, most of these sub, jaa, texts books are covering all their topics, especially topics in, like the environment one in Natural Science, there is also how to take care of the environment and Social Studies also is also integrated there about our heroes' history and those stuffs.

E: Okay. Now, how do you plan, or how do you prepare for your lessons when you are doing subject integration? For example, which teaching styles and methods do you use when you are doing this skills integration?

K: We usually try to do this learner-centred...

E: Mhmh...

K: ...where we ask them questions of things they know, prior knowledge, before we come in with new things.

E: Okay...

K: Mh, maybe where we test if they know about these topics, their prior knowledge and stuff.

E: Okay, so which activities do you use for your integration classes?

K: We usually have group discussions, group work, or even individual work also like worksheets where they can do on their own.

E: Now, how do you make them engage; you said you give them group work?

K: Ja.

E: Uuhm, when you're doing the group work, do you specifically look at skills, I mean, sorry, not skills, do you specifically look at the integration now, of the other subjects, how do you deal with them?

K: Not necessarily, the integration of, of other subjects, it's something which comes.....(pauses) not something that I've prepared for, like today, we're going to integrate

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Natural Science or what, it comes, just, just a glimpse of it, because usually I want to do what I, I want to achieve my objectives...

E: Mh, those are now your objectives from which syllabus?

K: From, from the national syllabus...

E: The English syllabus?

K: Yes, from the English syllabus, So maybe for instance if I, I have to teach about verbs or nouns, if I want to integrate I only look maybe for a text about HIV and AIDS, is it, is there learning Natural Science, just they read the text and find, about HIV and AIDS, and then they look for verbs. Usually my objective is to achieved my basic competencies.

E: Basic competencies...

K: In English.

E: Okay, uhm, let's talk a little bit about, or tell me a little bit about your planning for integration. Uhm, who does the planning for your integration?

K: For my lessons?

E: Ja.

K: I do the planning.

E: Okay, do you do it in isolation or do you do it with your colleagues at school?

K: Usually, we only follow the, the what? The year plans, the scheme of work. But with my planning, what I'm going to do in my classroom, I say that this week we are doing verbs and what, I do it on my own.

E: Okay so you don't have, you and your colleagues at school, for example, all the Grade four teachers, you don't come together to plan what you're doing?

K: No, no. though we do the same topic, the planning you do it individually.

E: On your own? Okay, and how about at cluster level, do you perhaps have the same year plans?

K: Ja, we got, we're having the same year plans and schemes of work.

E: Uhm, who draws these year plans and schemes of work up?

K: It was maybe drawn up before I started working? Because we're just following it.

E: So it has been there for a while?

K: Ja, it has been there for quite a while now.

E: Uhm, how would you say, do you receive support, whether it's now from your HOD, or principal or people in the cluster, when it comes to the integration of the skills?

K: Mhh, we don't actually get any assistance, maybe if you encounter problems you ask your colleagues or We don't get any assistance.

E: What could be an example of the problems you can encounter in this?

K: Mhh, it might be that, to find a text which suits a certain topic, like about the Environment, sometimes you might not find the, an appropriate text, then you have to go and ask from your colleagues or do research on the internet and those things. Usually it's on your own.

E: Ja, but you research on the internet on your own?

K: Yes.

E: Okay, you've mentioned here that you have a diploma in teaching, in languages, and you are enrolled for your Honours Degree in Education. If you consider your previous teacher training and your current studies, is the topic of integration or subject integration or English across the curriculum touched anywhere in your training?

K: In my current one or previous one?

E: Both.

K: Ja, in my, I did BETD with, it have a lot of, it was more practical.

E: Uhm...

K: Unlike the current one, it's more theoretical, but we did a lot about integration.

E: Okay, could you give me examples of what exactly you did in your BETD?

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K: Integration of subjects?

E: Uhm...

K: Especially it was like, you got a topic, in a, a topic like, let me see, (hesitates) HIV/AIDS, and the same topic you have to use it teaching English.

E: How?

K: Like, you got a text, you read it, Maybe if you have to take out nouns, you make sure that the learners get nouns out of that text, identify nouns or, those are parts of speech nè?

E: Mhh...

K: From the text, or with the same topic, you have to use it also for creative writing, maybe they write a letter of a, to make their friends aware about HIV and Aids or design a poster to make the nation aware of the danger of HIV and AIDS, stuff like that.

E: Okay.

K: And if resources are available it's very, integration is very interesting.

E: Really?

K: Yes, it's true.

E: What do you mean?

K: Kids are more broadened up, because sometimes, they're we used to teach, in my year of schooling, teachers used to teach things in isolation. If it is verbs, they will take any sentences about verbs and then you do it. But now with, while you're teaching verbs, you're also teaching HIV/AIDS, which is very good.

E: So you think that learners are benefiting....?

K: Are benefiting lot, and they are exposed to two different things at the same time. (which are those two different things?)

E: Okay.

K: Mhh...

E: Do you think that this has an influence on their performance?

K: It's got a great influence on their performance. Especially if you teach kids about HIV/AIDS in English, once they go for Natural Science, they heard, they read the story about HIV/AIDS, it's something they know and they are familiar with it, I think it's for the benefit of the learners.

E: Okay, uhm, how do you align, because you said that the kids find it very interesting, do you cater for learners' individual learners' learning styles with this skills integration?

K: Ja, we do (what do you do to cater?), but with the over-crowdedness of the classes...

E: Umh...

K: Sometimes it's difficult to cater for all the learners in the class, sometimes we only cater for those bright ones, you give them more activity, and you assist the slowest ones but sometimes with the middle one you just let them do their own thing...

E: You just leave them to their own devices? But have you tried it the other way round where you maybe just look at the middle ones?

K: No, I did not try that, especially I only concentrate on the ones, who, the slow ones, and sometimes these bright ones are distractive if they finish work so you give them work just to keep them busy.

E: Okay, you said that the classes are overcrowded, what for you is overcrowded or which number for you is overcrowded?

K: For me to help, er, 47 learners in Grade Four, they are really a lot, a lot.

E: A lot?

K: Mhh...

E: How would you say, overall, how would you say is this skills integration implemented and managed at your school?

K: Really, you know those.... I have seen with the old, those who've been in the streams for quite a long time, they don't consider...

E: How do you define a long time? Just to quantify...

K: Those who've been teaching for more than twenty years, for them, those new systems, if they have to teach verbs, they take any sentences and write with verbs there without integrating it or concentrating on what the theme or the topic is for that week. But usually I don't think, uh, managed, how it's managed and controlled, everyone do your own work in the class as long as you submit your preparation file.

E: Okay.

K: 'Cause I've never seen a day where my HOD says, "No, what you wrote here is so you were supposed to do it like this.

E: Okay, good, uhm, I think I've covered unless you have other views to share, on skills integration?

K: It's actually skills integration not English?

E: No the topic is actually English across the curriculum, but I asked you earlier and you said you don't know about English the curriculum.

K: Can you please explain it what it is?

E: Okay, English across the curriculum is. One can say it's a theoretical approach that people have that has been implemented, it was started in England where people said that they, it was meant specifically for those learners whose mother tongue is not English, like in Britain who went there they were struggling now with the school work, and they came up with integrating this English across the curriculum, meaning that there is, just as you explained English is not just taught in the English class, but every teacher is supposed to be an English teacher, in the sense that the Mathematics teacher is teaching mathematical concepts, but at the same time they are also teaching the learners that this is a verb or this is

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a noun and this is how we form the plural of the word, like index, indices, so they are teaching Mathematics, but they are also alerting the learners to the English, ja.

K: Okay, I got it now.

E: You got it now?

K: Ja.

E: But if you look in the Broad Curriculum for Basic Education in Namibia, English across the curriculum is mentioned, if you look in your subject policy, it's also mentioned.

K: Okay!

E: so I just want to find out, how do teachers understand that concept, and how does that concept influence what they do in their classes.

K: I'm not actually aware of, teachers if they are aware of it, they know of subject integration nè.

E: Mhhh...

K: But those Mathematics teachers even when, call, say something about English to them, is to them, with other subjects yes, but an Mathematic teacher, you say you have to integrate English in your subject, to them it's like mhhh-mhh (shaking head).

E: They don't do that?

K: Mhh-mhh...

E: That's one thing I wanted to ask you- how is your cooperation with your colleagues, other subjects' colleagues, do you ever maybe, sit together to plan, what you're doing, in your English classes?

K: No, we don't sit together, and we have these things of Learning Support at school, they were expecting us, only English teachers should do learning support.

E: What is your view of that, what is your opinion of that?

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K: To me, every teacher is capable of teaching learners how to read. You can take your Natural Science or your Mathematics, they got mos (sic) words, these learners are reading and teach those learners how to read, Ah, but even me myself I struggle with those Maths things, so I ask my Maths colleague.

E: Okay, I would like to see your planning, your year plan or your preparation file, just for me again to substantiate the things that you were saying here, and to see if the integration comes out in your planning. If you have them here...

K: Can you have them on Monday when you come?

E: Yes, I can also have them on Monday, and maybe also just go to your class and look around.

K: No we removed all those things. *(It was close to the end of teaching/semester, posters were removed to prepare classes for the examinations)*

E: It's okay, the class observation will do. Thank you very much for your time, I appreciate it quite a lot and if there is something that I may be missed, when I come back on Monday, I will ask, because I think I've asked classroom management, planning and administration, we've talked about that, learners' performance your teaching style we've talked about, your pre and in-service training so I think we've covered most areas that I wanted us to look at.

K: Okay, thank you very much.

E: Thank you very much Ms Kavii.

INTERVIEW 2: TEACHER JOYCE

E: I would like you to choose a name for you, which name would you like me to use, a pseudonym?

Joyce (J): Joyce.

E: Joyce? Okay Joyce, can you please tell me a little bit about yourself, about your qualifications that you have?

J: Actually, I am a teacher by profession, I am having a diploma, I also have been studying for that English Language Education you know, while I was doing my diploma, soo... even me, I want to study next year.

E: Mh...

J: Learning support, due uh, due to the fact that there are a lot of barriers in the reading and writing of learners. I want to find out, how should one go about when you are helping out those learners.

E: Okay, which grade, which subjects do you teach and which grades do you teach?

J: Actually, I taught from Grade 4 up to Grade seven, for the past twenty-nine years...

E: Wow!

J: So, but currently, I am teaching Grade Four and Grade Five.

E: Teaching English?

J: English only, English and Information Communication (Basic Information and Communication Skills)

E: Okay, it's very interesting, they go hand in hand.

J: Yeah.

E: Okay, now, my study, wants to find out teachers' perceptions of English across the curriculum. A few years back there was a phrase that says, "Every teacher is an English teacher".

J: Mhmh...

E: What is your take or your opinion on that?

J: Ja, actually, every teacher, not only the language teacher, all of us that are English teachers, due to the fact that they are the medium of instruction which we are using, it is, it is English, so, I think that, If we have that English across the curriculum, then, it will make most of the learners to be able to read and to write, because in Mathematics, you read and then you write, Science, the same, Geography or Social Studies, the same. So I think it is, it goes hand in hand.

E: Okay, in that case, how would you define, what is English across the Curriculum for you?

J: Actually, say for instance, according to the English syllabus, we have certain topics, themes whereby you got, you, you get a theme about Population. So now if you take this theme Population, *(Teacher is not able to give a definition of EAC – tries to explain how it works.)* then automatically, it will include Social Studies, it will include Mathematics. Now if you take that topic, you must go across and take out a topic, out of the Mathematics book

E: Mmh mmh...

J: or a topic, out of the Social Studies book, and then you, and then you... (pauses) how could I say? You take that topic and then you integrate it into your English topics.

E: Okay, could you perhaps give me a practical example, how you would do it in class?

J: Okay, in class what I might do is, remember we have how many skills? We have the listening skills, the reading skills, speaking skills and the writing skills, and all, spelling and so on. So before I start with my topic, I go to the Mathematic division, I pick out a topic...

E: Sorry, this Mathematics division is now where?

J: I take a book concerning Mathematics...

E: Okay.

J: And say now for example, there is now a bar graph, about HIV and AIDS, then from that topic, there will be always like, something about, like a reading passage. Then we read that reading passage, out of that, we, there will be always a paragraph whereby you ask, "how many people died on this date? How many more people could have been saved if they did what? How do you think about HIV and AIDS? And so forth. And then, I take out certain vocabularies, difficult words, and make flash cards, we do those vocabularies together, we spell it, we read it, at least for five days, and then on the fifth day, we write a spelling test. In the meantime, from that same topic, we also make a listening comprehension.

E: Mhmmhh...

J: But when I am marking, I said listening comprehension, I don't necessarily be strict on the writing of the learners, say for instance, the child writes men, like, man, then I just give them a mark because I can guess what they want to say.

E: So how would you then say, have you taught the language across the curriculum?

J: Yes.

E: You said that you use topics from Social Studies or Mathematics in your English class.

What determines your choice of the topics?

J: No, we are given the scheme of work from the cluster, and we are just supposed to use that scheme of work.

E: What do you think of that?

J: I do not think it's fair for our learners, because we must use topics that our learners know. Sometimes our learners come from *kambashus* (corrugated iron houses) where they do not have electricity so they might not know, or I mean, they have no prior knowledge about the topics.

E: Why do you think is prior knowledge important for the learners? Can the teacher not teach these learners those topics?

J: Yes, the teacher can, but if they know something about it, like fires that burn down the kambashu then they can relate to what they learn in class.

E: Do you and your colleagues from Mathematics and Social Studies work together to come up with. J: No, no, we don't work together at all. The HOD just says, stick to the scheme of work! So you cannot bring in new things.

E: How about the other English teachers? Do you come together to plan your themes or integration?

J: No, we each plan on our own. We are two teachers who teach Grade 4, but we just work on our own. Yes, we teach the same things, but just not the same time or in the same week, you see?

INTERVIEW 3: TEACHER NATANGO

E: So Ms Natango, that's your pseudonym you have chosen, right?

Natango (N): Yes.

E: Ms Natango, can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

N: Well, my name is Ms Natango (laughs) and I am an English teacher. I have obtained my Honours Degree in Upper Primary Education from UNAM.

E: How long have you taught English?

N: Not very long. Last year I was just helping out at one school in Wanaheda, even this year I am just helping out, I am not a permanent teacher yet.

E: Have you ever heard of English across the curriculum?

N: Yes.

E: How do you define English across the curriculum?

N: When you teach English using themes that touch on other subjects taught in school.

E: What does the syllabus you use say about English across the curriculum?

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N: The syllabus has provided themes that the teacher can use such as the Environment.

E: How comfortable or confident in teaching across the curriculum?

N: I feel confident as it does not really require one to go into depth of the other subject.

E: what do you mean? I mean, why do you feel this way?

N: Mhhh... It simply requires you understanding plus you can research if you have difficulties understanding a certain theme.

E: When you say you can do research, what is it that you are researching?

N: Maybe the theme. One can also use the textbook for the subject the English theme coincides with, the English book is also helpful.

E: So you use textbooks to teach these themes?

N: Yes, Materials can be in forms of pictures, regalia and or video or audio.

E: Well, do you use those in your classes?

N: Sometimes.

E: Would you say that the textbooks you are using and other materials are aligned to teaching English across the curriculum?

N: Yes. Textbooks have different themes that are used to teach English.

E: How do you plan and prepare your lessons for teaching English across the curriculum?

N: I would for example choose a theme that will run for a whole week and each day of the week will feature a different activity based on the skill I'm teaching that day.

E: Mmmhhh?

N: Like, prepare a text. Mostly in reading comprehension that learners answer. In my introduction I touch on the issue discussed in the text to see how learners are aware of the issue at hand.

E: Is that skill the same as the theme you mentioned earlier that you said you research?

N: Yes, No! I don't know now..... (hesitates) It's almost the same, but they differ also.

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E: How?

N: In my understanding of English across the curriculum has to do with teaching learners skills in English, covering different English topics at the same time teaching learners on different life issues around them. Bringing English to them in the context which is around them.

E: You said you just graduated recently. When you think back to your training, were you ever trained in English across the curriculum?

N: Jaaa... not really... We did not really go in-depth. It's just that on SBS English across the curriculum was also on the evaluation form and you lost marks if you did not do it.

E: Please explain, if you did not do what?

N: If you did not use a theme or integrate different skills in your lesson.

E: Which activities do you use for your English across the curriculum classes?

N: As I said before, reading comprehension activities mostly and also listening comprehensions as they are more easy to engage. Sometimes I use dramas and role plays, they are also good with curriculum issues.

E: What do you mean by that?

N: I mean English across the curriculum issues.

E: Do the learners participate in these activities? I mean how do you engage them or make the participate in your classes?

N: I bring up class discussions and even ask them what they know about certain issues then I build on that.

E: At school level, how are the activities for English across the curriculum coordinated?

N: I don't really know. I just got a scheme of work and my HOD said I must just use that scheme of work because it's the one the cluster is using.

E: Is there anything else you would like to share about English across the curriculum?

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N: Yeah... I think it's great teaching English across the curriculum because learners can tap into their prior knowledge if they already learned the same or a similar theme in a different subject.

LETTER TO THE MINISTRY

PO Box 70140

Khomasdal

Windhoek

October 2016

The Director of Education

Khomas Regional Office

P/Bag 13236

Windhoek

Re: Permission to conduct a study at a state school: Bet-el Primary School

Dear Sir/Madam

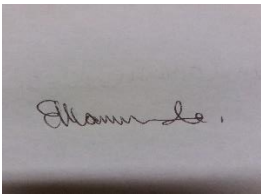
I am a second year Master's student (Student number 15K5222) at the Rhodes University currently doing a Masters in English Language Education. I hereby seek permission to collect data at the Bet-el Primary School in Katutura. The data is to be collected for a dissertation, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the above mentioned degree. The study is an investigation into senior primary teachers' perceptions of "English across the Curriculum" phenomena and how this impacts their pedagogic practices. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Professor Emmanuel Mgqwashu (Rhodes University).

The study is significant in the sense that the findings could be helpful to English teachers, advisors and teacher trainers to develop their knowledge and skills in applying language teaching methods. All data collected from the teachers will be treated as confidential and the outcome of the study will be made available to the public.

A phenomenological study of teachers' perceptions of EAC

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0812029796 or ekekambonde@unam.na. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A rectangular image showing a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Emily Kambonde'.

Emily Kapena Kambonde