An investigation into the causes of disparities in literacy readiness of learners: perceptions of pre-primary teachers.

by

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CONTENTS

DECLARATION

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I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge, original. This thesis has not been previously submitted, either in part or in its entirety, for the award of any other degree at any other university.

Signature: 

Date: 01.12.2016

DEDICATIONS

I first and foremost dedicate this to my sincere and forgiving God for another chance He bequeathed me in life and education.

To my husband Gideon, who did not tire listening to narratives about my confusion and frustration, but joined in my vow to come to the end of this journey.

To my beloved children, may this be your inspiration as you embark upon your educational journey which does not regard social and economic background.

May this be a symbol of pride to my dear father, mother, brother, sisters, friends and all those who supported me in any way.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ECD: Early Childhood Development

EFA: Education For All

ibid.: *ibidem*, meaning a citation the same as the previous citation

JSAIS: Junior South African Individual Scale

MoI: medium of instruction

PIRLS: Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

LIST OF TABLES

ABSTRACT

This study investigated pre-primary teachers' perceptions of the causes of disparities in the literacy readiness of pre-primary learners. The aim was to understand the reasons that teachers ascribe to differences in literacy readiness; ways in which teachers' understanding of the causes may relate to their practices and to learners' literacy readiness levels. The study drew from Bernstein's pedagogic discourse as the theoretical framing and analytical tool for engaging with the data. The participants in the study were three pre-primary teachers practising in a variety of schooling contexts. In a quest for a deeper understanding of the causes, data for the study was generated using multiple sources. Structured interviews were employed to get the teachers perceptions, while classroom observations were aimed at discovering ways in which the teachers' points of view related to their practices in the actual classroom. An analysis of documentary evidence was carried out to understand ways in which teachers' practices adhered to the curriculum intentions, as well as ways in which their plans and curriculum documents supported the development of the emerging literacy skills of the learners. Findings of this study indicated that teachers attributed disparities in the literacy readiness of learners to factors external to the classroom and it was found that their pedagogic practices, as a result of these perceptions, were not supportive to the development of literacy skills that are pivotal for transitioning to Grade 1. The study has implications for curriculum reform, sensitization of stakeholders and teacher training in order to ensure a solid and promising academic foundation, and consequently, a successful academic future for all pre-primary learners.

CHAPTER 1: CONTEXTUALISATION, PROBLEM DEFINITION AND PLANNING

1.1 Introduction

Education in the early years of life has long term impact on a child's cognitive as well as overall adjustment that determines readiness to cope with the demands of schooling. In the words of Vogler, Crivello and Woodhead (2008, p. 1):

> "… this phase of life is generally acknowledged as a period of accelerated and intense change, usually involving multiple developmental, social, and (for increasing numbers of children), institutional transitions, each of which has implications for current well-being and long-term outcomes."

Early childhood education plays an important role in combating social exclusion by according all children a fair chance at realising their potential regardless of their varying social backgrounds. As much as children naturally have an increased capacity for learning during this period of their lives, the type of education they are exposed to may either expedite or constrain meaningful learning and development, with long term consequences for their academic future.

Access to early childhood education does not, in practice, guarantee a good academic foundation for all children due to various pedagogic orientations found in classrooms that may have implications for student learning. To avoid disparities at this level of education, educators have a major role to play in ensuring that all children are provided with stimulating and rich learning experiences, especially in the area of language and literacy, to enable them all to read for learning in the future (Sibanda, 2014).

With educators being the focal persons in ensuring literacy readiness of Pre-primary learners, this study is set to investigate the teacher's perceptions of the causes of disparities in pre-primary learners' readiness in literacy. The focus of the study is on teachers' understanding and explanations that they ascribe to these disparities and how this affects their pedagogical choices during literacy instruction. Finding the teachers' perceptions is fundamental, because as Kuzborka (2011) puts it, teachers' beliefs influence their goals, material, procedures, classroom interaction patterns, their roles, their students and schools they work in. In this study, investigating the teachers understanding, beliefs and explanations that they ascribe to the disparities in student learning brought to the fore ways in which they contribute to the problem

as a result of their beliefs. Understanding this can then make it easy for corrective measures to be taken on policies and pedagogic content knowledge of the teachers in efforts to improve literacy readiness of pre-primary learners.

This introductory chapter provides the background of the study by outlining the pre-primary programme background in the context of Namibia and the rationale for the study through which the importance of readiness in the area of literacy is discussed. The chapter moreover describes the statement of the problem, as well as questions that guided the investigation. The chapter concludes with an overview of the structure of the thesis.

1.2 Background of the study

The pre-primary programme is a relatively new innovation of the Namibian education system's efforts to improve outcomes. It is a single year school-readiness programme under formal education in Namibia which was designed to lay a foundation for lifelong learning by acquiring basic literacy, numeracy and life skills prior to Grade 1 (National Curriculum for Basic Education, 2009).

After independence, the Ministry of Education in Namibia had, as part of the Education For All (EFA) initiative, decided to place Early Childhood Development (ECD) under the auspices of communities with the assistance of the then Ministry of Local Government and Housing. This decision was based on the understanding that ECD should be a part of community development (Toward Education For All, 1993). There was an ECD policy, but there was no curriculum in place for education at this level. It was then realised that the ECD initiative was not sufficient in paving a way toward EFA's goals of "Access, Quality, Equity and Democracy" (MoE, 1993, p. 32). During the review process of the education system, a lack of equitable access to quality ECD and pre-primary education was identified as one of the factors underlying poor quality and inefficiency in education. A lack of access to quality ECD was found to be contributing to low literacy levels and it was decided that the problem be addressed by improving learning readiness at primary school entry level (ETSIP, 2006). A curriculum for the programme was developed by the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED), starting in 2007, and is progressively being rolled out in schools to date. With School readiness being the rationale of the programme, a standardised test was developed and administered yearly in all implementing schools. The test is used as a tool to identify areas where intervention

is required early in the year, and then again at the end of the year to assess pre-primary learners' readiness for progression to Grade 1.

The outcomes of this test indicated that the majority of learners scored very low, particularly in the language domain. This discrepancy in readiness levels of learners in literacy, after the intervention of this programme, is in itself a call for attention, because it points to the fact that some learners are not benefitting from the programme, particularly in the area of literacy. This study, therefore, sought to understand the reasons that teachers of the programme attach to the disparities and discover ways in which their perceptions may have an impact the literacy readiness of learners after a year of the program.

Early literacy in the context of this study does not only refer to basic skills of reading and writing, but includes communication strategies (Klibthong, 2012) and this, according to Heydon (2013, p. 482), is the "centrepiece of schooling". Although it is common knowledge that literacy development, instruction and failure are multi-dimensional constructs, Justice, Kaderavek, Sofka and Hunt (2009, p. 68) assert that "a preventative orientation offers a significant promise for reducing the number of children who fail to achieve skilled, fluent reading and writing in the elementary grades". This orientation minimises failure because, according to Torgesen (as quoted by Justice et al. 2009, p. 66),

> "advocates for broad implementation of systematic and explicit early literacy instruction delivered within early childhood programmes, so as to prevent early delays in literacy development from progressing into serious reading and writing disabilities that require intensive and expensive remediation".

This study therefore investigated the causes of the disparities from the teachers' point of view to find ways in which these disparities can be minimised to ensure equitable access to the quality education that this programme is meant to support.

1.3 Statement of the problem

A lack of equitable access to quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) and pre-primary education was identified as one of the factors underlying poor quality and inefficiency in the education system in Namibia (ETSIP, 2006). This was found to be contributing to low literacy levels among learners, and a decision was taken that the problem should be addressed by improving learning readiness at primary school entry level (ibid.), hence the reinstatement of pre-primary education to the Ministry of Education. This was more to provide children,

especially those from disadvantaged communities, access to ECD services which were previously only accessible to a privileged few. With access having been granted, the outcomes still indicate that not all children going through this programme attain readiness at the end of the readiness year, particularly in the domain of literacy. The question then remained, what are the causes of these disparities? Why is the programme still unable to level the starting ground for all the children?

With the teacher being at the helm of the programme's implementation, the study sought to understand, firstly, the causes of disparities from the teachers' point of view and, secondly, ways in which the teachers' understanding and pedagogic practices may be supportive or constraining to the literacy readiness of learners. This manifested in the extent of classroom interaction, materials used, questioning strategies employed, as well as the provision of support for learning observed in the participating classes.

1.4 Rationale for the study

Pre-primary education in Namibia is a new innovation intended to improve education quality and consequently enhance epistemological access for all learners. Understanding the causes of the disparities in the literacy readiness of learners from the teachers' point of view helped to crystallize areas in the implementation of the programme that may require improvement. Sourcing teachers' perceptions was vital, because it gave an indication of the position in which they put themselves; their understanding of the curriculum; and similarly illuminated ways in which their knowledge and pedagogical practices supported or impaired the development of learners' literacy skills. This research correspondingly gave an indication of the professional development that teachers might need in order to improve their instructional practices.

This study was fit for the above purpose, because it was conducted in schools across a variety of socio-economic contexts (urban, semi-rural and rural) of Namibia. This was done to understand ways in which the programme may contribute to or constrain the development of literacy skills of learners in different contexts including the highly targeted rural.

It was similarly necessary, because the study evidenced ways in which the curriculum may not cater for the needs of the preschool learners in various contexts, and equally the expectations of educators who are responsible for implementing the programme. This was, because

insufficiency of the curriculum might put the learners at risk of not starting on a strong foundation for their future learning.

Research of this nature was necessary in the context of Namibia, because it was the first of its kind since the conception of the pre-primary education initiative. Carrying out this study had implications for curriculum, policy developers, as well as implementation agents, because it provided them with required information, and opportunity to make a positive impact on the program while it is still new.

1.5 Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- What are the causes of disparities in the literacy readiness of learners at the level of pre-primary?
- To what do teachers attribute the disparities in literacy readiness of pre-primary learners?
- How do teachers' perceptions relate to the disparities in the literacy readiness of learners?
- In what ways do their pedagogic practices support or constrain the development of pre-primary learners' literacy skills?

1.6 Conclusion and thesis overview

The chapter introduced the study by outlining an overview of the background, rationale, problem statement and questions that guided the course of inquiry. It then sets the stage for Chapter 2 which presents views and findings of other studies which were conducted around literacy readiness in different contexts. The design of the study thereafter is presented in Chapter 3, in which there is an explanation of the paradigm in which the study is located, and a methodology section that outlines the research approach, style, data generation process and the instruments. As part of chapter 3, an overview of the process of analysis is presented, followed by the ethical considerations that were made, and then the assurance of the trustworthiness of the study. Chapter 4 follows with an account of the theoretical and conceptual perspectives in which the findings of the study were framed and analysed. Chapter 5 presents data collected during the investigation and it is followed by a discussion and analysis of the data in Chapter 6. Conclusions of the study and proposed recommendations based on the findings, are proffered in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Children do not only fail to develop early literacy skills because their home background has not laid a good foundation for their learning, but also because they are not provided with opportunities to develop the required skills during pre-primary education (Wesley & Buysse, 2003). It is from this position that different perspectives of scholars presented in this chapter were explored. The focus of the review of existing literature was on the findings of other empirical studies on how school readiness in the area of literacy is conceptualised. This chapter is prefaced by a definition of the concepts of literacy and readiness and how these concepts are defined in relation to learners' academic success. The main section of the chapter thereafter presents and discusses findings of various studies that were conducted around various dimensions of early literacy teaching and school readiness in different contexts and how they relate to this study.

2.2 Conceptualisation of literacy and readiness

Although the concept of literacy is constructed differently in various contexts, it is commonly established that early literacy does not only refer to the ability to read and write, but includes other communication strategies such as talking, viewing, as well as music and dance (Klibthong, 2012). Literacy is understood to include "communicating thoughts and ideas in effective ways which enable individuals to think critically, to solve problems, to develop knowledge, and essentially to be able to participate fully in society" (Tams, 2009, p. 122).

The concept of readiness is understood to be two-fold. On the one hand, it refers to school readiness which includes cognitive and language skills children need to perform as school students, and on the other, it refers to the child's ability to cope with the demands of schooling (Murray & Harrison, 2011). Literacy readiness, therefore, can be defined as the child's ability to cope with the demands of literacy skills acquisition by way of having developed necessary precursors of literacy. These, according to Whitehurst and Lonigan (1998) includes emergent literacy skills such as attitudes, language and conceptual knowledge, as well as phonological awareness and letter knowledge necessary for conventional forms of reading and writing. This is important, if a child is to succeed in developing central skills of reading and writing for their social and academic future.

It is also a cornerstone for learning and development in all aspects of children's intellectual, emotional, social and creative life (Hamre & Pinta; Howes, et al., as quoted by Klibthong, 2012). It is therefore imperative that all children are presented with a fair chance to develop this important skill. For this to be realised, preschools have a major role to play, because the knowledge that children bring with them from pre-schools, and the dispositions that they show towards learning, are important predictors of their subsequent achievement in literacy in elementary grades (Murray & Harrison, 2011).

Early literacy development is established as a precursor for improving children's skills in other learning areas (Janks, 2014; Lonigan, 2008), because all learning depends on a child's language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. These language skills, therefore, have to be adequately developed to enable a child to utilise them in the acquisition of knowledge and other skills. Dickson and Tabors; Kulvichit, Valdez-Mechana and Whitehurst (as quoted in Klibthong, 2012) echo this by taking a position that a child's standard of literacy is among the most critical elements of success in school and life.

It is the purpose of education to yield academic success for all learners, but it is also a known fact that learning readiness is not an event, but a developmental process that starts from conception (Snow, as quoted by Prior, et al., 2011) and therefore prone to developmental variations. In this process, variations that exist are derived from exposure to different external factors that either support or constrain the growth and development of linguistic dispositions of various learners. This includes poor language development during preschool education.

2.3 The impact of poor language development on literacy readiness

Readiness to learn, which is the child's ability to cope with the demands of schooling (Harrison & Murray, 2011), is highly dependent on the linguistic dispositions of learners. Learners who do not have sufficient language capital to communicate and participate fully in learning activities during elementary education, experience delays in development of literacy skills. In the context of this study, most of the learners within the vicinity of the research areas were not native speakers of the indigenous languages used as a languages of teaching and learning in the schools. As a result, they did not come to school with sufficient language capital in the languages that schools offer. The situation then may affect learning readiness at the end of the pre-primary programme, if classrooms do not mediate the development of language skills that the learners require during the preparatory years. In support for this position, Nel, Krog,

Mohangi, Muller and Stephens (2016 p. 103) argue that "a prerequisite for young children is to understand the language of teaching for the lessons to have meaning and for them to participate in the lessons."

Along these lines, Naude, Pretorius and Viljoen (2003) conducted a study in a South African disadvantaged Griqua community to establish the impact of poor language development on pre-schoolers' readiness to learn in the foundation phase. A sample of 30 pre-schoolers between the age of five and seven years, together with their parents, were systemically chosen as participants from the year's cohort. For the purpose of data collection, parents completed questionnaires and were interviewed to get their perspectives on the mediated language experience with their pre-schoolers. Data from the learners were collected by administering the verbal scale of the Junior South African Individual Scale (JSAIS) to determine their attained measure of language development (Naude, et al., 2003). The study found that learners' language competence was inadequate and they were not taught high-order thinking skills via early mediated language experiences. In addition to that, pre-schoolers were unable to re-define and transform relatively complex ideas that comply with new learning demands. It was similarly argued that because vertical and horizontal elaboration of language did not occur, the pre-schoolers lacked verbal fluency, associative reasoning and relational thinking (ibid.). The restricted vocabulary was found to have affected their verbal retention. It was concluded, based on these irregularities that the pre-schoolers' knowledge acquisition processes were impaired and thus they were not ready to cope with learning demands.

The impact of impoverished language development, as outlined in the findings of this study, is major and may require intensive and expensive remediation efforts to equip learners with the needed language skills that will support their knowledge acquisition in subsequent grades (Justice, et al., 2009). To eliminate this, early intervention mechanisms are required, hence the need for this study that interrogated teachers' practices during the preparatory stage. This needed to be done to illuminate ways in which teachers' pedagogical choices may be constraining language development of learners and to inform ways in which this might be remedied.

2.4 The link between literacy at home and school

It is a fact that language development is a process that starts from conception and keeps developing during the child's early years of life prior to preschool education (Dennis, et al., 2012; Cullingford, 2013).

Although findings of most studies report that family context is a major predictor of children's school readiness in literacy at the end of preschool years (Okado, 2014; Prior, et al., 2011; Klibthong, 2012), education institution has a major role to play, and to an extent, makes up for the gap that there may be due to family orientation and other contextual influences (Wesley & Buysse, 2003). As regards the foundation for language acquisition being family context, one would still wonder as to what the difference might be between activities done by parents with children at home and learning activities employed by teachers in the classroom as regards language and literacy development.

In the context of Namibia, a study in this dimension was carried out by Henok (2014) in the Khomas Education Region. The aim of the study was to discover whether children came to preschools already exposed to writing and reading skills or whether there was a gap between home and preschool literacy events and practices. Six teachers were selected from three preschools as participants in the study. The schools were selected based on their location and only schools from middle and high economic class settings were selected. A total of 40 parents and their children were selected by the class teachers in all three preschools. Qualitative as well as quantitative data were collected through teacher interviews, lesson observations and questionnaires which were sent to parents.

The findings of the study indicated that literacy events and practices that took place at homes of the participants were similar to those that teachers did at school and that the children came to school having acquired some knowledge of print already. They were able to identify some words, write their names, had knowledge of print and some sounds. It was also found that reading stories to children was the most important variable linking children's home literacy practices to preschool literacy. The study concluded that knowledge about literacy differs from child to child, but all children, including those that come from low economic class settings, have had some exposure to print in their homes and communities, but those who are read to at home excel more than those who do not (Henok, 2014; Cullingford, 2013).

Although it holds true that every child has some exposure to literacy, there are still disparities between home literacy activities in different contexts, because some parents are more knowledgeable and make deliberate effort to expose their children to literacy at home while it is only incidental for children in poorer contexts.

An examination of what is happening in the classroom, together with use of the Namibian guiding curriculum documents, is what this study utilized in order to establish from teachers about both how disparities in school readiness occur after a year of the programme and discover ways how the disparities can potentially be obviated.

2.5 The role of pre-schools in literacy development

A preschool classroom has an independent role to play in striving for literacy readiness of learners because it is filled with rich possibilities for language development that builds a foundation for continued literacy development (Cunningham, Zibulsky & Callahan, 2009). It's role is not solely to complement the level of linguistic skills that the child has attained from home, but also that of closing the achievement gap that might be in the child's linguistic growth and attainment. As Cunningham, et al. (2009, p. 487) put it:

> "Whether children come from impoverished or enriched language environment, their preschool teachers are in a unique position to provide opportunities to build the fundamental skills and knowledge they need to transition into the first years of formal schooling".

Readiness is the responsibility of the preschool, but this depends on how teachers make adjustments to their teaching to respond to children's diverse needs at preschool level. The preschool period is highly significant in the acquisition of social and pre-literacy skills, as well as in overall social adjustment (Prior, et al., 2014, p. 4). Children's readiness, therefore, will always depend on the demands that kindergarten places on the child and the level of support that it provides during the process of learning (Ackerman & Barnett, as cited in Murray & Harrison, 2011).

There is concern for the literacy situation in South Africa, which was near the bottom of international systemic measures of performance in literacy. For example, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS, 2006 and 2011, Nel, et al. 2016) conducted a study to explore Grade R teachers' attitudes towards reading literacy in primary schools and

the literacy practices employed by teachers. For the study, 26 Grade R teachers and six Heads of Department (HODs) were selected from 10 primary schools in Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces, as a sample. An exploratory mixed-method design was employed, of which quantitative data was reported in the study. This was the second of a series of studies conducted on literacy in Grade R. Data for the study were collected through the use of questionnaires and classroom observations. Findings of the study indicated that, although 76 (47%) of the teachers perceived themselves as literate and claimed to have a positive attitude towards reading, this trait was not evident in their classrooms as there were no storybooks and not much storybook reading took place.

The teachers perceived their children's reading readiness as average and reading culture as good, but this was found to be a misperception of the state of reading in their classrooms. The teachers' teaching of reading practices were questionable as developmental levels were not considered and only whole-class reading was commonly used as a reading strategy.

It was found that activities to establish laterality were not commonly used and only fine motor activities, such as tracing and drawing, were done, thereby neglecting other perceptual skills which are equally important. Teaching methods such as chorusing, repetition and completing worksheets were dominant in the classrooms and the teachers mostly used traditional reading resources, while the use of children's periodicals and technological resources were limited. This indicates that there was a mismatch between the teachers' perception and the actual situation posing a danger of limitation in the effort of these teachers.

Masola (2012) from a different point of view analysed pacing and sequencing of reading instruction in three Grade 1 classrooms that used isiXhosa as a language of teaching and learning. Similar to this current study, Masola (2012) drew on Bernstein's notion of framing as a theoretical basis for the study. The aim of the study was to discover ways in which teaching of reading is paced and sequenced to maximize learning in Grade 1 classrooms. The study involved three Grade 1 teachers in two primary schools located in the working class economic set-up of Grahamstown in South Africa. Data for the study was collected using interviews, observation and documentary evidence to discover ways in which teachers' practices and curriculum provided for the pacing and sequencing of reading.

The study found that teachers had limited understanding of the importance of reading and classroom reading was not related to reading practices beyond the classroom. The external pacing of reading was found to be weak, because it was not dependent on policy guidelines, but on internal factors of the classroom. Due to weak internal pacing, the usage of time was also a constraining factor, as much time was spent on disengaged instruction and external distractions.

On the teaching of reading, it was found that teachers concentrated on the drilling of phonics and language structure through choral repetition and there was little exposure to texts, answering questions or joint interaction with texts. Just like pacing, sequencing of learning of reading was controlled by internal factors, which meant that teachers decided what and how to teach reading. Instead of skills being introduced hierarchically, some followed a circular interconnected process balanced by phonics instruction (Masola, 2012).

Findings of the study indicated that the socio-economic status of the learners influenced teachers' teaching practices due to low expectations teachers had of the learners. A limitation in resource provision was equally found to be a constraining factor in the teaching of reading, more so because teachers lacked creativity to improvise on what was available.

As in the Masola (2012) study, which found that the degree of pacing and sequencing had an impact on the teaching of reading in the foundation phase, the current study focused on ways in which control over different dimensions of framing, such as content selection, pacing, sequencing, and evaluation, can contribute to discrepancies in readiness of learners in literacy during pedagogic interactions in the context of Namibia.

2.6 The centrality of interpersonal interaction in literacy development

The importance of interpersonal interactions between teachers and learners cannot be over-emphasized. Research has established that interpersonal interactions are fundamental for children's learning and development (Colwell & Lindsey 2003; Kulvichit 2003; Pianta & Stuhlman 2004, as cited in Klibthong, 2012). Whatever social status may be, quality interactions, especially in preschools, are required to provide opportunities for children to build a positive teacher-learner relationship on which oral language flourishes. This relationship serves as a basis for developing important skills, especially those of language and literacy (Klibthong, 2012).

To establish the link between interaction and learning, Lisanza (2014) conducted an ethnographic study in a Kenyan Grade 1 classroom to examine the interactions that took place during lessons, and ways in which teachers created opportunities for learners' active participation in meaning-making during literacy lessons. Although the study was only conducted in a single classroom, it was chosen for analysis due to contextual circumstances that were peculiar and resembled learning set-ups that are generally perceived as 'ineffective' and constraining of interaction in the Namibian context.

The study was a single case study of a Grade 1 classroom with 89 learners. There were two teachers allocated to the class who taught the class in rotation. The classroom, according to Lisanza, had a "paucity of learning materials" (2014, p. 121) and the school was generally under-resourced. As regards language, the class was taught in Kiswahili as Kikamba, the mother tongue of the children, was not allowed in the school as per the school's own language policy at the time of the study. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with teachers, as well as analysis of documentary evidence.

In the study, Lisanza (2014) discovered ways in which the teacher created opportunities for classroom interaction during literacy activities such as reading and writing. She found that, during reading, the teacher made an effort to move from choral reading to dialogic reading. This was done by asking learners to take turns to read in small groups and as individuals and also in a gender-specific manner. The teacher ensured that the learners understood what they were reading by asking them questions to identify different words, phonemes and syllables in words, and used the chalkboard to illustrate these. Repetition was limited to instances where pronunciation had to be practised. Reading became dialogic, because the text was used "as a mediating tool that evoked talk between the teacher and the students" (Lisanza, 2014, p. 128). This was done by asking learners questions that related to the text and their own experiences, thereby making connections between sight, sounds and experience (Cullingford, 2013). By so doing, learners were enabled to bring words from the text to life by using them as their own. This went beyond the text and involved a meaning-making process through interaction with the text and the teacher. As Gambrell & Mazzoni (1999) put it, the approach enables students to develop meanings as a result of co-constructed understandings within socio-cultural contexts.

To encourage social interaction, student collaboration and independent reading, learners were grouped in fours, under the guidance of other learners, to read papers of words and sentences (Neuman, 1999). The group leaders helped others where they could not be reached by the teacher, but the teacher went from group to group to listen to them read and asked questions, gradually relinquishing power to the learners.

For speaking, the teacher created "authentic social context" in the classroom (Mole & Whitemore, as cited in Lisanza, 2014, p. 129) where learners tried out, used and manipulated oral language as they made sense and created meaning (ibid.). This was done through the use of oral traditional games such as riddles. With this activity, the students were eager to give and solve riddles under the guidance of the teacher. This was in a form of play in which, as Vygotsky (as cited in Lisanza, 2014, p. 130) puts it, "a child always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behaviour; in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself." The use of this game gave the children a voice, agency and appreciation in the use of language and thus interaction was extended. This approach featured what Newman (1999, p. 260) termed "culturally responsive instruction" as it acknowledged and appreciated children's home cultures and built on language with which children were already familiar.

In writing, the teacher still used talk and collaboration. The teacher used collaborative writing by telling learners to work in groups on their writing tasks. By so doing, the teacher allowed talk during writing to enable the learners to continue to learn the language and concepts from each other with the teacher as support.

The form of dialogic activities elaborated in the findings of the study are appropriate for use even at the level of pre-primary education to maximise interaction, because it is found to be effective in facilitating literacy development in elementary education. Given the similarities in the contexts between Kenya and Namibia as regards difference between school and home language, as well as material provision, maximising interaction may support language development of the learners. It is therefore justified for the current study to look into ways in which interpersonal interaction, as a dimension of teacher practice, is a contributing factor to deficiencies in children's literacy readiness in the schools.

From a different contextual orientation, Klibthong (2012) echoed this with the study he carried out in which the nature and role of interpersonal interaction in early literacy development were

explored and analysed. The study was carried out in Bangkok, Thailand. The aim was to look at the nature of collaborative activities that teachers employed in teaching literacy to children in order to establish the effectiveness of these activities in facilitating interpersonal interaction and literacy development. The study included three teachers and 82 children from three classrooms of a public preschool. Teachers were interviewed and were observed during literacy lessons for five days. The focus of the interviews was on the teachers' understanding of literacy, and the observations looked for evidence of the teachers' moment-to-moment encounters with the children and also the nature of language that teachers used.

The findings of the study indicated that there was good conceptual understanding of interaction among the participants. It was also found that the nature of activities that teachers used promoted interaction between teachers and learners. The teachers used collaborative writing with the children's own pictures, whereby the children were asked to explain their pictures to the teacher so that the teacher could help them write about their pictures while they sounded out the words.

The second interactive activity used was collaborative story telling. The teachers gave learners story books to read to others and used scaffolding to support their understanding and learning of concepts. The learners in the activities spoke to the teacher about their stories.

The third activity used was collaborative dialogic inquiry. This is a notion of teacher-child communication in which children explore their social world as an act of sense-making (Lindfors 1999, as quoted by Klibthong, 2012). During this activity, the teacher asked children to collect various print materials from home to share in the classroom. With the use of the materials, the teacher invited and encouraged dialogue with the children by discussing the news and stories with the help of the pictures.

The fourth interactive activity was collaborative meaning-making, a process which serves as a key component in developing early literacy in the classroom. During this activity, the teacher and the child interacted, shared experiences through communication, and constructed reality together (Narey, as quoted by Klibthong, 2012). The teacher encouraged children to explore their understanding of the topic that matches their prior knowledge and current conceptual understanding so that they are free to contribute their experiences. The teacher then played the role of supporting individual children's responses and gave them feedback about their ideas

first, before providing them with new information (Klibthong, 2012). When this happens, children become involved in a more meaningful process with the teacher (Wells, as quoted in Klibthong, 2012).

The fifth activity which was used to promote interaction was child-to-child partnership. As observed by Lisanza (2014), this activity was found to be effective, because it encouraged learning when peers shared their perspectives and experiences. During this study, children worked together as a class, in groups or pairs, to learn letters and numbers by rote. Children rotated as class or group leaders, because some children know more than their peers. Findings indicated that it is not only teacher-child interactions, but child-child interactions that similarly enhanced early literacy development (Klibthong, 2012).

From a theoretical second-language acquisition point of view, Long (as cited in Leeman, 2003), in motivating the interaction hypothesis, argued that in addition to Vygotsky's input hypothesis, participation in interaction is required in the second-language acquisition process. On this, theorists such as Lee, Long, Picca and Swain (as quoted by Leeman 2003, p. 48) found that participation in interaction is beneficial because "it leads to negotiations of meaning, provides exposure to negative feedback, offers opportunities for modified production, and helps learners segment the linguistic input for enhanced comprehension."

In an empirical study conducted by Leeman (2003) to investigate the effects of interactional input such as recasts, negative and enhanced positive evidence on second-language development, it was found that recasts can lead to greater development by highlighting specific forms in the input. Consistent with other findings, participating in interaction was found to help learners make more efficient use of their attentional resources and thereby increased opportunity for language production. Interaction facilitates literacy development of learners, because it contributes greatly to intellectual and vocabulary growth, as well as to print knowledge (Klibthong, 2012).

Interaction, however, is not sustained in the classroom, because interactive activities are used during lessons, but it is coupled with teachers' skilled use of questioning strategies that fuel discussions in the classroom. It is this skilful use of questions that lays the foundation for learners' developed linguistic and cognitive skills.

2.7 Questioning and early literacy development in early childhood education

Educators' questions can encourage children to engage in extended conversations, facilitate learning and stimulate thinking (Davis & Torr, 2016). Although literacy experts recommend a rich diet of oral language for young learners of literacy, it remains the responsibility of teachers to offer this by creating an appropriate learning environment and conditions. Teachers can make this possible through well-planned questions as a high cognitive strategy which elicits talk-for-learning in the classroom (Vaish, 2013). The way in which teachers ask, and the type of questions asked are important, because this determines learners' level of language acquisition.

Although not all planned questions are effective in sustaining interaction, Boyd and Gald (as cited in Vaish, 2013) argue that contingent questions are effective, because they are dependent on learners' contributions and position. These types of questions probe further elaboration by learners rather than foreclosing, thereby provoking speculations and extend imagination (Harris & Williams, 2012). Open-ended questions, according to Harris and Williams (2012), hand over a certain amount of power to learners, because they are invited to influence subsequent steps of the lesson by responses provided. This relates to Bernstein's (1997) notion of framing. Bombey (as quoted by Vaish, 2013) asserts that 5-6 year old children can be involved in productive discussions, and may operate at high levels of cognitive challenge if assisted with correct use of questions.

However, not all teachers at preschool level use questions for the purpose of cognitive and linguistic development of children, and it may be that little consideration is given to the type of questions that are used by teachers to maximize student literacy development. This situation may be caused by the fact that, although there is overriding support for open-ended type of questions, the superiority of open-ended questions is contested (Edwards and Mercer; Myhill et al., as cited in Harris & Wiliams, 2012). They believe that recalling factual information through closed-ended questions is equally important in student learning, and that open ended questions are time-consuming for students to answer.

In this study, it seemed that the teachers did not appear to be aware of the different types of questions, how to use them, and how to plan for them, thus they resorted to questions that only tested for listening skills of the learners.

Vaish (2013) studied the questioning patterns of teachers in the elementary reading-support programme in Singapore. In this programme, pre-schoolers were tested for school readiness and results dictated who was to be a part of the learning-support programme in Grade 1. The learning-support programme took place for one period daily, away from their mainstream classes for reading-skills development. The learning-support classes, however, were not big, but were equivalent to a group discussion in their mainstream classes.

In this study, the discourses of five teachers in the learning-support programme were analysed while conducting whole-class discussion with 6-10 learners. The focus of the study was on questioning patterns of the teachers and learners during their discussions with children in bilingual classes of the learning-support programme. This was done to better understand how teachers' questioning patterns can support or inhibit student talk during lessons, given the centrality of oral language skills in early reading.

A sample for this study was, however, extracted from a larger study by Singapore's National Institute of Education in which 170 learning-support coordinators where involved. In all the classes, a total of 45 students were observed and videotaped, of which 10 focal students were interviewed.

In the context of Singapore, similar to the situation of some of my study participants, learners are taught in a second language, but in their case, English, with Mandarin, Malay and Tamil as their mother tongue. English is given first-language status although children do not speak English at home.

After the data for the study were collected, they were coded, first to identify statements from questions and thereafter, questions were further coded to categorize them as factual, procedural, speculative and process questions. Findings of the study indicated that 94% of the questions were asked by the teachers and only 6% were asked by the students. The study found that of the questions asked by the teachers, about 73% were factual, and procedural. Questions that elicited extended oral responses from the learners, such as process and speculative questions, made up only 27%. This trend was also noted in the children's questioning patterns as the learners mostly asked questions that were factual. This finding had implications for the young learners of language in that, they were being socialised into an environment where only factual types of questions were asked, thereby making them think that a factual question and its answer

are the preferred discourse of a classroom (Vaish, 2013). The use of factual questions is found to be restricting and does not allow students to 'talk for learning' during lessons, thereby disadvantaging their cognitive and linguistic development.

Questioning is a tool that teachers can use to relinquish control of classroom talk to the learners, while they play a prompting, guiding and facilitation role in the background. All literacy skills stem from oral language, thus questions play an indispensable role in facilitating critical thinking, writing ability, reading and listening comprehension, subject matter learning, metacognitive skills and scaffolding of the learning process (Davoudi & Sadeghi, 2015). Learners should be prompted and encouraged to speak extensively and intensively, so that those that are second-language learners can learn the language pragmatically, even more so at the level of preschool where literally all learners are still learning the language.

Borrowing from the findings of Vaish's (2013) study, the current study deems it fit to investigate the causes of discrepancies in the literacy readiness of learners by looking at the type of questions that teachers asked during literacy lessons. Doing this, gave an indication of ways in which classrooms that were meant to address social inequalities are failing to provide equitable opportunities for learners to develop language skills of all learners.

2.8 Teachers' content knowledge and literacy readiness

Teachers' pedagogic content knowledge is a necessary prerequisite for effective instruction, especially at preschool level where children are beginning their programme of structured learning. For children in preschools to have a strong foundation in literacy, teachers should have a sufficient knowledge base to be able to foster emergent literacy skills that children require at preschool level. Whether a child has come from a background and context where parents have positioned them ahead of others with language skills, the preschool teacher without sufficient knowledge will be detrimental to the child's learning.

To discover the extent to which teachers' pedagogic content knowledge is associated with literacy gains of learners, Cunningham et al., (2009) conducted a study on preschool teachers' knowledge. The study was a part of the national study conducted by the Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research Consortium which was carried out in 2008, in California. The larger study focused on assessing the efficacy of preschool language and mathematics curricula. For the study on preschool teachers' content knowledge, 20 teachers from the sample of the larger

study met on a monthly basis over the course of one year as a professional community of learners. The teachers were all older than 30 and were credentialed college graduates with teaching experience, and more than half of them had been teaching for more than four years.

These teachers met in the form of a teacher-support group to engage in discussions and skills-building exercises around the topic of phonological awareness. In addition to the discussions, the teachers were observed and given feedback on their classroom literacy practices. Mentoring was provided by literacy leaders who facilitated their discussion in the learning community.

During the course of the school year, a teacher-knowledge assessment survey was conducted to assess the teachers' actual and perceived knowledge of spoken and written language structures, as well as relevant instructional practises. The questions that were asked were derived from the teacher-knowledge assessment surveys and focused on teacher knowledge of phonology, word recognition, morphology and orthography that elementary school teachers indicated were areas requiring support. At the same time, measures were used to assess learners' emergent language and literacy skills.

The findings indicated that, out of 20 teachers who participated, more than half were able to respond correctly only to zero or one question in the survey. It was found that teachers not only lacked knowledge in beginning literacy concepts, such as basic dimensions of phonological awareness, but that their perceptions of their abilities were not well calibrated. This was evidenced by teachers in their perceptions survey in which they rated themselves higher than they actually scored in the teacher-knowledge assessment survey. According to Cunningham et al., (2004, as cited in Cunningham et al., 2009), teachers overestimate their subject matter knowledge, because they are not aware of what they know and what they do not know. It is important that teachers are well calibrated in their knowledge of content, because they can then easily identify and focus on areas where their knowledge is uncertain (ibid.). This will presumably enable teachers to be more receptive to seeking out and receiving information that they do not have. The present research project indicated a similar discrepancy between perception and application.

Although it is a fact that the causes of disparities in literacy readiness are multi-dimensional, based on the outcomes of this study, it can be argued that whether children come from literate

homes where their early literacy skills are well developed, or not, teachers can contribute to disparities in student achievement in literacy if they lacked pedagogical content knowledge.

It is possible for all learners to attain the literacy skills necessary for successful transition and academic success, but the problem is that children from vulnerable backgrounds and with inadequate preparation for school are most at risk of academic failure. It is this phenomenon that this study aimed to understand from the perspective of teachers as catalysts for change in the classroom.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter presented a discussion based on the perspectives on literacy readiness of scholars from different contexts. Findings of studies on different dimensions from which early literacy development and readiness is approached were presented. This included dimensions such as the role of the classroom, family context, as well as pedagogic strategies using interactive activities and questioning techniques. In addition, the chapter attempted to foreground ways in which the reviewed studies formed the basis and, to some extent, rationalized the need for the current study that brought to the surface ways in which classrooms can contribute to disparities in literacy readiness of children that stem from social inequalities.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS OF THE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

This section presents an account of Basil Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse and practice which was used as the theoretical framework for this study. Basil Bernstein was a great sociologist of the 20th century with concern for education, and his ideas offer a most developed grammar for understanding the shape and character of our current educational practices (Davis, 2001). This chapter defines concepts of his theory and gives an account of the need and ways in which they are used in this study as theoretical lenses and a linguistic tool for collecting, explaining and making sense of the data. The chapter commences with an overview of the theory after which a discussion on the relevance and use of the concepts in data analysis is presented, starting with classification, framing and, lastly, recognition and realisation rules.

3.2 Bernstein's pedagogic discourse and practice: an overview

Due to the complexities and multi-dimensional nature of literacy development at the foundation phase of education, Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse and practice (1990, 2000) was chosen as the theoretical framework, analytical and linguistic tool to be used in the description of the data and findings of this study. This study was aimed at understanding the causes of disparities in the literacy readiness from the teachers' perspectives, it has therefore focused on the content as well as the process of pedagogy which teachers employ in the teaching of literacy at the pre-primary level. This choice of theory was made, because to understand the causes of differential attainment, one requires an analysis of pedagogic discourse as a set of rules which regulates the transmission and acquisition of linguistic skills (Morais, 2002). This dimension makes the theory a suitable frame as it is concerned with discourses connected with education including pedagogic content and the process of transmission (Hasan, as cited in Tallapessy, 2011).

The theory was considered a suitable framing for the study because it is underpinned by the assumption that pedagogic discourse is not only about transmission of skills that we assume we are teaching, but also that of order, relations and identities (Bernstein, as quoted by Williams, 1999; Rose, 2004). Both content and the way in which it is conveyed to learners are subject to regulations. These may vary according to the context, as it is transformed through its distributive, re-contextualizing and evaluative rules that form, regulate and transform

pedagogic practice (ibid.). This transformation is thus believed to legitimize some learners and delegitimize others during the process of schooling (Bernstein, 1996). Transformation may regulate different learners taught in the same context to become successful, average and unsuccessful (Rose, 2004). It is on this basis that the theory was considered a suitable framing for the study with an intent to discover the causes of disparities in the readiness of learners in literacy at the level of pre-primary.

Bernstein with this theory argues that learners' identities are constructed in classrooms during pedagogic communication, because the carrier of pedagogic content is believed not to be neutral and that it may have some intrinsic regulatory functions (Bernstein, 1990). In his description of the theory, Bernstein argues that:

> "Pedagogic discourse is a rule which embeds two discourses; a discourse of skills of various kinds and their relation to each other, and a discourse of social order. Pedagogic discourse embeds rules which create skills of one kind or another, rules regulating their relationship to each other, and rules which create social order. We shall call the discourse which creates specialised skills and their relationship to each other *instructional discourse*, and the morals which create order, relations and identity *regulative discourse*." (Bernstein, 1996, p. 46)

Bernstein further explains that during the pedagogic process, "the instructional discourse (ID) is embedded in the regulative discourse (RD) and the regulative discourse is the dominant discourse" (ibid.), as symbolised below:

$$\frac{\text{Instructional discourse (ID)}}{\text{Regulative discourse (RD)}}$$

He asserts that the regulative discourse which embeds the instructional discourse, takes discourses from outside and brings them to the school for specialised pedagogic purposes. This embeddedness of the discourses may account for disparities, because during "the process of relocation, the instructional discourse is transformed, the manner of its introduction, pacing and sequencing, is determined by the operations of regulative discourse" (Christie, 1999, p. 159-160).

Bernstein further argues that "a pedagogic practice can be understood as a relay, a cultural relay: a uniquely human device for both the reproduction and production of culture" (2003, p. 196). A teacher leading a pedagogic process, therefore, may be in a position to draw from his/her own cultural and social background during pedagogic interactions, thereby making it easy for learners from the same background to learn and not others. This was found to be applicable to this study, because the participating classes also had learners who were from either the same or different cultural backgrounds as their teachers.

Bernstein, through the theory of pedagogic discourse and practice, further used concepts to define learning in social contexts and the interactions that occur in them (Morais, 2002). The concepts will then be used as a linguistic tool to unravel ways in which teacher practices and perspectives contribute to disparities in learners' readiness in literacy. Concepts of this theory such as classification and framing, as well as recognition and realisation rules, were selected because they were found suitable for use as conceptual frames for reading and analysing data for this study, as discussed further on.

3.3 Bernstein's construct of classification

Classification is defined as the degree of boundary maintenance between curricular categories. In the definition of classification, Bernstein explains that:

> "Classification does not refer to what is classified, but the relationship between contents. Classification refers to the nature of the differentiation between contents. Where classification is strong, contents are well insulated from each other by boundaries. Where classification is weak, there is reduced insulation between contents, for the boundaries between contents are weak and blurred." (Bernstein, 1975, p. 88-89)

The degree of boundary maintenance between curricular categories is presented in the theory to be at the two extremes, a strong classification (C++) and a weak classification (C--) (Bernstein, 1990 & 2000). According to Bernstein (2000), a strong classification refers to a curriculum that is highly differentiated into traditional subjects. This may refer to subject contents that are well differentiated from each other, as well as how teachers' and learners' pedagogic identities are demarcated. The strong classification is found to be supportive, because it reduces the power of the teacher over what s/he transmits, so that s/he may not overstep the boundary between subjects or contents (ibid.).

When there is a strong classification, the teacher's power over pedagogic knowledge is reduced. When the teacher's power is reduced, disparities in student learning are minimised, because learning content and goals are explicit.

Weak classification, on the other hand, refers to a curriculum in which boundaries between contents are fragile and the curriculum is not differentiated into traditional subjects and, in the case of this study, literacy skills (Bernstein, 1971; 2000). In this value of classification, the contents within a particular subject are not well distinguished from other subjects. Where there is weak classification there is integration, thus a weak classification may increase the power of the teacher to overstep the boundary between subjects or contents. The degree of classification may also affect the level of boundary maintenance between everyday knowledge and the taught or pedagogic knowledge (Robertson, 2008).

Classification is believed to have the conceptual potential to illuminate the nature of power involved in the structuring of pedagogic content (Hoadley, 2006). In this study, the concept of classification was needed as lens to discover the degree of boundary maintenance between the pre-primary curriculum for literacy and other learning areas (Table 1).

Table 1: Dimensions of classification

Concept	Dimension	Areas of the dimension
Classification	Relations between discourses	• Inter-discursive (strength of boundary between the subject area and other subject areas) • Intra-discursive (strength of boundary between knowledge within a particular subject area)

Table adapted from Hoadley (2006).

The concept of classification necessitated the use of document analysis as a data collection technique. Document analysis was done to find the level of integration between contents within the syllabus of literacy and the teacher's manual, and between literacy and other learning areas. The lesson plans of the teachers were similarly analysed to discover the degree of integration with other learning areas of the programme, as well as relationships between different literacy skills/activities on the lesson plans. Data collected through this documentary evidence were analysed by coding the variation in the classification values of the dimensions to discover how

this variation in the curricular structure related to the different modalities of the pedagogic practice of the teachers who participated in the study (ibid.).

The concept of classification was likewise used by Gerald (2008) as a conceptual framework for the study he carried out to evaluate and construct a theoretical account of changes in socio-political context, mode of governance, constructs and the practice of leadership of education in Britain. The concept was used together with the concept of framing in an attempt to ascertain its theoretical potential to illuminate, at a deeper level, the nature of educational changes that took place in society (ibid.). Similarly, although at classroom level, classification in this study was used to evaluate the structure of pedagogic content, out of which evidence was derived that enabled the study to construct an account of the causes of disparities in literacy readiness of pre-primary learners.

3.4 Bernstein's construct of framing

The concept of framing refers to the "degree of control that the teachers and the pupils possess over the selection, sequencing, pacing and evaluation of the knowledge transmitted or received in the pedagogic relationship" (Bernstein, 2003, p. 159). It describes the interactional aspects and control relations that are inherent in the pedagogic practices. In defining the concept of framing, Bernstein (1975, p. 89) elaborates that:

> "Framing refers to a range of options available to the teacher and the taught in the control of what is transmitted and received in the context of the pedagogical relationship. Strong framing entails reduced options; weak framing entails a range of options."

The value of framing are expressed in terms of its strength and weakness following the standard notation of F^{++} representing the strongest framing and F^{--} representing very weak framing (Hoadley, 2006). It is this variation in framing values of different areas of lessons that regulates the transmission and acquisition process.

Strong framing refers to a pedagogic relationship whereby limited options or little control is given to the children and more control given to the teacher over selection of content, sequence, pace and evaluation of pedagogy (Bernstein, 2000). Weak framing on the other hand, is where learners have more options/control over selection of content, sequencing, pacing and evaluation of pedagogic knowledge while the teacher's control is limited (ibid.).

In this study, the concept of framing was used to ascertain the degree of control that the teachers and learners had over the different dimensions of selection, sequencing, pacing and evaluation of the learning content. The above listed dimensions of the hierarchical and discursive rules were treated as separate units, as highlighted further on.

3.4.1 Framing of selection of content

Framing of the selection rules refers to the degree of control that the transmitter and the acquirer have over selection of the content of pedagogic practice (Bernstein, 2003). In this dimension of framing, the focus is on variation in control over selection of content during the lesson to see how much of the content the teacher and learners contribute to the learning situation. When the degree of framing over selection of content is strong, then the teacher has more control over selection, which might disadvantage learners who are not familiar with the context of the selected content. In the case of a very weak framing value, however, the learners have too much control over the selection of content, a situation which is believed to reduce the specialty of the pedagogic discourse (Hoadley, 2006).

Using classroom observation, the level of the teachers' and learners' involvement in the selection of content learned was discovered by looking at the source and the way in which the content, which was used to develop different literacy skills, was constructed. The level of control over selection was also evaluated by looking at the extent to which freedom of creativity, as well as social and collaborative learning, was encouraged during lessons.

3.4.3 Framing of the sequencing rules

Bernstein (1971, 2000) describes the framing of sequencing rules of pedagogic knowledge as the order in which parts of the content are transmitted and acquired. According to Bernstein (2003), every pedagogic practice must have these sequencing rules and they are expected to be explicit. For there to be progression, content or skills should be sequenced in a meaningful way from the start to the end of a lesson. In terms of the strength of the framing value, strong framing of the sequencing rules means that the teacher has more control over the order in which the content is transmitted, while weak framing means that more control is given to the learners to determine the next step of the pedagogic interaction.

Sequencing rules, as a dimension of framing, were used in this study to determine the degree of control that the teachers and learners had over the sequence of the content or activities carried

out during a lessons. This was needed, because the level of strength of the framing value on this dimension can be regulatory in the way that there is consideration for the goal which the teacher tries to work toward and, on the other hand, the understanding and needs of learners which have to be catered for. A balance in the strength of the framing value on this dimension, therefore, is required to maximize learning.

3.4.4 Framing of the pacing rules

It is the sequencing rules that imply the pacing rules, therefore "pacing is the amount of time for achieving the sequencing rules" (Bernstein. 2003, p. 198). If the frame of pacing is strong, then the teacher is in control of the time spent on a stage of the lesson, but if the frame is weak, the pace of progression is determined by the learners and their learning speed. Pacing as a dimension of framing was necessary for this study which investigated ways in which teachers may account for the disparities in student learning. Observation on this dimension helped illuminate the pace at which the teachers facilitated learning and the level of support rendered to learners during their pedagogic interactions.

3.4.5 Framing of the evaluation rules

Framing of evaluation refers to evaluative rules that form a part of instructional rules which, according to Bernstein, may implicitly be regulative. Evaluative rules spell evaluation criteria that "enable the acquirer to understand what counts as legitimate or illegitimate communication, social relation, or position" (Bernstein, 2003, p. 198). When evaluation criteria are explicit and specific, the acquirer is aware of the criteria that s/he has to meet; the level on which expectations have been met, and what still remains to be acquired. In the case where criteria are implicit, the acquirer is not aware, except in a very general way, of the criteria s/he has to meet. Daniel (as quoted in Bernstein, 2003) asserts that, if the criteria are not known and evaluation takes place, then:

> "it is as if the pedagogic practice creates a space in which the acquirer can create his/her text under conditions of apparently minimum external constraint and in the context and social relationship which appears highly supportive of the 'spontaneous' text the acquirer offers" (p. 201).

If this becomes the case, it would be regulative, because it is indicative of the support of the transmitter for the dominant culture or the culture that the transmitter may resonate with, and

in return may affect the other acquirers who may be from a different cultural orientation then the transmitter (Bernstein, 2003).

This dimension of framing was used in this study to determine the framing value of the evaluation of written tasks during lesson observations, as well as on lesson plans. The value was considered to be strong when the evaluation tasks had the criteria which were explicitly made known to the learners by their teacher. It also focused on whether the teacher helped learners identify what was still missing in their written work. This strength of the framing value was found to be a key variable in optimising working-class students' success in school (Rose, 2005; Morais, 2002).

A weak framing value of evaluation rules, on the other hand, was considered to apply in instances where the evaluation criteria were implicit, learners were told in a generic manner what to do, and the teacher did not monitor to guide learners.

As Bernstein puts it, "control is double faced, for it carries both the power of reproduction and the potential for its change" (1996, p. 19) and it can therefore describe the making and potential unmaking of social reproduction of inequality (ibid.). Thus, determining the framing value of evaluation would enable the study to identify factors of the pedagogic process that might constrain the development of literacy skills of some learners, if not all, and also the extent to which learning of language is supported at pre-primary level. As it was the case with classification, data on the different dimensions of the concept of framing were analysed by coding the degree of strength in the framing values of the dimensions for all the lessons presented by each of the participating teachers.

3.4.6 Framing of the recognition and realisation rules

Bernstein, through his theory of pedagogic discourse and practice, identified the link between the mode of pedagogic knowledge transmission and the process of acquisition through recognition and realisation rules (Bernstein, 1999). It is identified that one will be able to acquire legitimate understanding of context only when learners have developed recognition rules. Learners also need realisation rules to be able to put meanings together and answer questions and prompts (passive realisation) and be able to make them public by telling others about it (active realisation) (Robertson, 2008). Both recognition and realisation rules can only

develop when appropriate socio-affective dispositions of learners, such as motivation, interest and aspiration, are consistently developed (ibid.).

To acquire recognition and realisation rules, learners need to be oriented to the meaning of the subject under discussion. This is made possible by encouraging the use of an elaborated form of language which is promoted through use of questions that make learners able to make public their understanding of context through legitimate communication (Bernstein, 2000).

In this study, recognition and realisation rules were used to discover the degree to which the learners used oral language during pedagogic interaction. This dimension of framing was used to evaluate the extent to which learners were motivated during lessons to use the language beyond recognition of context; the types of questions that the teachers asked, as well as the kind of linguistic code that the learners used during interactions.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology that was used in this study. The chapter starts with an outline of the research goals, and thereafter the research design is discussed, starting with the paradigm in which the study is located, the data collection methods, tools and process, and how these were used to collect data for the study. Participants of the study are introduced by a discussion of the sample and techniques that were employed to choose them. Lastly, the way in which validity and trustworthiness were ensured, as well as ethical considerations made during the research process, are conveyed.

4.2 Research goals

The goal of the study was to discover underlying causes of deficiencies in the literacy readiness of learners by looking at the phenomenon from the perspectives of the teachers and their literacy teaching practices in the classroom. As Maxwell (2005) puts it, it is one's goals that inevitably shape one's descriptions, interpretations, as well as one's choice of the resources one can draw on in planning and conducting one's research. These are presented below.

4.3 Research design

4.3.1 Research paradigm

The study is located in the interpretive paradigm. Studies located in this paradigm allow researchers to interpret the meanings of social action and then give explanations of the way in which action proceeds, as well as the effects that it produces (Weber, as cited in Beltram & Christiansen, 2014). This was chosen, because interpretivists hold a belief that "social research must include understanding and explanation of social phenomena which are not necessarily observable by the senses, but can be interpreted by the researcher" (Mathews & Ross, 2010, p. 28). The paradigm was, therefore, fit for this study that intended to find the teachers' perceptions of the causes of disparities in literacy readiness of learners. Results from the study were derived from in-depth exploration and dialogue with participants to explore their understanding of the contexts in which they work.

4.3.2 Research approach

The study was qualitative in nature. The qualitative research approach was chosen because participants' thoughts and experiences were explored for a better understanding of the phenomenon. Qualitative designs are naturalistic, allowing the researcher to engage in a naturalistic enquiry, because they are "ordinary events in natural settings" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10). Clough and Nutbrown (2002) describe the approach as involving listening to a participant's voice, whereby the researcher can justify what has been voiced and make it clear by way of interpretation. What the teachers said and did was described in words as data for this study, and was read and made sense of by way of interpretation.

4.3.3 Case-study research style

This study used a multiple-case study research style (Yin, 2009) using a sample of three case studies. It is multiple, because it involved three cases of teachers studied separately in their own classrooms. A multi-case study was chosen as a research style to enable the researcher to investigate the phenomenon from different points of view and contexts. A case study is a snapshot of a particular real-life context in time. The researcher can only comment on the phenomenon at a particular school, with the chosen participants, at that particular moment in time. It is defined as an "investigation into a specific instance or phenomenon in its real life context" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011, p. 222), and allows for an exploration and understanding of complex issues (Zainal, 2007).

The case study is descriptive in nature and thus aims to capture the realities of participants' lived experiences and thoughts on their particular situation (Cohen, et al., as quoted by Beltram & Christiansen, 2014). The data were described and compared as they occurred, before the phenomenon in the data was explained (Yin, 2009). A case study also has its demerits, in that it provides little basis for scientific generalisation to a population, even though the results can be generalized to theoretical propositions (ibid.).

The cases in this study were three pre-primary teachers. Each of the three teachers was studied with her learners (whole class), in her real context, her own classroom in which she taught. In all cases, learners were involved to enable the study to observe real practices of the teachers during normal literacy lessons in the contexts of their own classrooms and the learners they normally teach. However, the focus of the study was on the teachers, as the aim was to find their understandings from their own perspectives. This was to discover ways in which their

perceptions of the causes of disparities manifested in their practices, and also to see the extent to which their practices were enabling or constraining the development of literacy skills of some/all the learners in their classrooms. This was discovered using several data collection processes and sources, as discussed below.

4.4 Data generation process, instruments and rationale

4.4.1 Phases of data collection

During the data collection process of the study, data were collected in the following phases from the onset of the study:

1. **Phase 1:** In the first phase of the data collection process, access was negotiated in two schools which were not a part of the sample, for the purpose of piloting the data collection tools. When access was granted, all data collection tools were piloted at the sites. Afterward, it was discovered that the classroom observation schedule needed to be enlarged so that the different dimensions of the framing values of the theory could be allocated individual columns. It was discovered that the interview questions needed to be restructured to increase correlation between the data and the theory that framed the study. After the piloting process, the tools were refined before actual data collection commenced.
2. **Phase 2:** In this phase, before actual data collection was carried out, the researcher went to the research sites to negotiate access and speak to the envisaged participants. After access and consent were secured, the researcher made appointments with the teachers for the interviews to be carried out. A round of visits to the schools was then done to interview the participants.
3. **Phase 3:** The third phase of the research process was data collection from classroom observation. After the interviews were conducted, an appointment was made with the participating teachers to visit them for classroom observation. The schools were then each visited three times to observe lessons and collect data on the actual teaching practices of the teachers.

4.4.2 Data collection techniques, tools and rationale

Interviews

A structured interview was used to collect data. The teachers were interviewed to understand their experiences and explanations for the disparities in the learners' performance in literacy. Interview was chosen because it is an oral way of enabling the researcher to elicit information,

feelings and opinions from participants using questions and interactive dialogue (Mathews & Ross, 2010). In this study, interviews were used to generate data based on the perceptions, knowledge, values, preferences, attitudes and beliefs of the teachers (Bertram &Christiansen, 2014). This was done to find reasons for the disparities in literacy readiness and ways in which literacy development was supported through pedagogic practices. Interview was chosen, because it is flexible, allows for probing using follow-up questions and the use of paralinguistic features for more information which contributes to in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Cohen, et al., 2011).

In this study, a semi-structured interview was used whereby an interview schedule of questions (see appendix G) was set in a pre-determined order (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The interview process followed the order of the pre-set questions, but left room for emerging follow-up questions, based on context. The course of the interview was directed by the respondents' responses, whereby probing questions were asked for further explanation and clarification where needed. Each of the three teachers was interviewed once in his/her own classroom and the data were transcribed. A follow-up visit was paid to the participants to verify data and close gaps that were identified in the data after transcribing.

There are demerits of interviews as a data collection process. An interview is a social and interpersonal encounter and can, therefore, be influenced by power relations between interviewer and respondent, thereby affecting objectivity in the data collection process (Flick, 2011). I felt that this may have been the case in this study, because my fieldworker was still an officer stationed at the regional office, although he did not work directly with the teachers in his professional capacity.

Documentary evidence

Documentary evidence was used in the study as a source of data. The sources used were needed for content analysis. This enabled the researchers to make comparisons between their interpretation of events that they observed in action and those recorded in documents related to those events (May, 1997). Curriculum documents, such as the syllabus and teachers' manual, were analysed to find data on the strength of classification between curricular areas of the pre-primary programme, as well as between different literacy skills (Bernstein, 2000).

The teachers prepare weekly, thus three lesson plans for the two previous weeks, plus the week of the observation, were collected as documentary evidence. The lesson plans were analysed against the syllabus to collect information on the teachers' compliance with the literacy curriculum for pre-primary. Lesson plans were further analysed to provide information on sequence and pace (Bernstein, 2000) at which the teachers covered the curriculum. Further analysis of the lesson plans enabled the researcher to discover the extent to which teachers make provision for practice and consolidation of the practised literacy skills, and how assessment and evaluation of learning was planned for.

An analytical table for the documentary analysis was developed to enable the researcher to find patterns in the teachers' practices as regards implementation of the curriculum, as found in the documentary evidence.

Classroom observation

Non-participant observation that Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006, p. 114) defined as "the recording of events as observed by an outsider" was used in this study. This data collection method enabled the researcher to collect first-hand data by going to the site of the study to observe what was taking place there (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The aim of conducting classroom observations was to discover ways in which teachers' perceptions which were revealed during interviews, manifested in their classroom practices. The method enabled the researcher to gather information on interactions, both verbal and non-verbal, between the teachers and learners and also between learners (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). It enabled the researcher to get a sense of the kind of resources and ways in which they were used during lessons, as well as the overall learning atmosphere, which other methods could not reveal. Observation was used to illuminate ways in which the teachers' classroom practices may constrain/enable the development of various literacy competences of pre-primary learners during lessons.

To gather data from observation, the three participating teachers were observed during literacy lessons in their schools. Each of the participants was observed three times on three different days, to enrich the data. The focus was on different literacy skills, such as listening and speaking, incidental and preparatory reading, as well as preparatory writing. Observations were conducted for 30 minutes per lesson, as per class time table. An analytical observation schedule

with indicators of various aspects of literacy was developed and used as a tool to collect data as shown in appendix I.

The analytical observation schedule included data on the type of support provided to the 2nd language learners in an effort to minimise the achievement gap between learners. The tool also enabled the researcher to collect data on the language code used by the learners and the teachers and observe the application of recognition and realisation rules (Bernstein, 1999) during pedagogic interactions between the teachers and learners. This was done to relate the data to the theory of pedagogic discourse which framed the study, as illustrated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Example of an analytical classroom observation instrument that was used.

Literacy skill being taught	Description of activity	Resources being used	Specifics of activity	Learner response	Types of questions being asked	Kind of support to L2 learners	Language codes used by learners	Recognition and realisation	Language code used by teacher	Locus of control (selection, sequence, pacing and evaluation)
Listening and speaking	Oral compre-hension	Story book	Teacher reads a story aloud and then asks learners questions. Learners required to respond	Learners eager to respond. Learners not participating. Learners struggling to comprehend the questions	Closed ended Open ended Rhetorical	Teacher re-reads the text, highlights new words and collaboratively defines their meaning through the use of a dictionary.	Restricted: only words were said	Able to understand meaning Passive realisation: Active realisation:	Elaborate	Strong framing of the selection of content. Only the teacher had control over the content to be learned. Learners did not contribute to the content.

All the lessons were filmed and transcribed, but this was backed up by completing the observation schedule and field notes on activities for developing literacy skills, observed during the lessons. Filming of the lessons was done to ensure that the whole lesson, including implicit modes of learning and teaching, was accessible for review during transcription and analysis.

4.5 Sampling, sites and participants

4.5.1 Research sites

The study was carried out in three different schools in the Kavango East Region of Namibia. The schools were selected across socio-economic contexts to ensure understanding of the phenomenon from varying contextual points of view.

The first of the three schools, School A, is a primary school that offers pre-primary to Grade 7. It is based in an informal settlement of a town. The school has high enrolment rates with up to 10 Grade 1 classes, but has only one pre-primary class of 25 learners, as per admission directive of the Ministry of Education. School A cannot open more classes due to a lack of classroom space. The registration of learners is done on a first-come-first-serve basis and does not take into account a child's home language in relation to the medium of instruction, hence the problem of many learners learning in a second language instead of mother tongue, as provided for in the broad curriculum policy guide (Ministry of Education, 2010).

School B is located in a suburb. It is a junior primary school that offers pre-primary to Grade 3. The school is large, with 13 Grade 1 classes that use three different local languages as mediums of instruction. The school has two pre-primary classes of 25 learners each, that both use Rukwangali as a medium of instruction, thus learners from different linguistic backgrounds are taught in the one language offered at the school.

The third site, School C, is a rural combined school located about 30 km out of town. The school uses Rumanyo as medium of instruction from pre-primary to Grade 3. The school has one pre-primary class of 23 learners that feeds two Grade 1 classes, and there are learners from language backgrounds that are different from the medium of instruction.

4.5.2 Sample and sampling procedures

A sample of three schools was selected for the study. The sample was chosen to make the study focused and to enable the researcher to collect rich data from the study participants. Three

schools were chosen on the criterion of representing different contexts, as described. This befitted a non-probability sampling technique (Bless, et al., 2006)..

The teacher participants were "purposefully" selected (Maxwell, 2008) in that the choice was based on criteria relevant to the needs of the study. The criteria for selecting teachers included:

1) Qualification: Only teachers with a minimum qualification of the Basic Education Teachers Diploma (BETD) are appointed permanently at the junior primary phase. However, most of the teachers teaching at pre-primary level, due to a lack of qualified teaching staff, are unqualified and only have Grade 12 as their highest qualification. Qualification was a chosen criterion to ensure that participating teachers had received professional training in teaching at the junior primary level.
2) Training on implementation of the curriculum: Teachers teaching at the level of pre-primary attend professional development short courses on the implementation of the curriculum, after they are appointed, mostly because pre-primary education was not part of the BETD course curriculum. This was a criterion to ensure that the teachers have received professional development support training on how to teach at the level of pre-primary.
3) Experience of teaching at pre-primary level: Varying experiences was thought to be a necessary criteria, because it enabled the study to collect rich data by looking at the practices of teachers with various levels of teaching experience (Table 2). Only teachers with more than one year of experience were selected, because these teachers were expected to have completed their induction course, which usually takes place during their first year of teaching at pre-primary.
4) First language: This criterion was needed because pre-primary is taught through the medium of indigenous languages. The language backgrounds of teachers teaching at pre-primary level were needed to enable the study to discover the possible influences of language on their literacy teaching practices and for a better understanding of the participants' situation.

The selection criteria for teacher participants, as elaborated above, were necessary in the sense that they attempted to exclude factors that may have had an influence on pedagogy during the lessons, such as unfamiliarity with the curriculum, insufficient content knowledge due to poor academic standard, language barrier, and lack of experience in the implementation of the pre-primary curriculum (see Table 3)

Table 3: Participant profiles

Name of teacher	Qualification	Years of experience	Training attended	Teacher's first language and MoI
Teacher A	BETD	2-3	Yes	different
Teacher B	BETD	6 or more	Yes	same
Teacher C	BETD	4-5	Yes	same

4.6 Data analysis

Bertram and Christiansen (2014) define data analysis as a close and systematic way of dividing a whole into parts for the purpose of study. Data were analysed inductively. Data were analysed following what Miles and Huberman (as quoted by Bertram & Christiansen, 2014, p. 116) described as "flows of activity". The process commenced with data reduction whereby data were transcribed and different sections of the data coded by identifying aspects which were relevant to the research questions and to concepts of the theory (Mathews & Ross, 2010). Afterward, separate tables of coded data extracted from observations, interviews and documentary evidence were created. This was done to make it easy for the researcher to discover patterns of relations between different data sets and between participants. Thereafter, the identified aspects of data across data sources and participants were used as categories under which findings were presented and discussed. Concepts of Bernstein's pedagogic discourse were used as theoretical lenses to make sense of the data, and to explain causation of the disparities in literacy readiness of pre-primary learners, as discussed in the findings.

4.7 Limitations of the study

The main limitation was the sample size of the study, as only three teachers were studied. This is acknowledged as a limitation, because the sample size and duration of data collection process would not lead to a broader understanding of the situation, and thus the findings cannot be used to make a general comment about the literacy teaching situation in the pre-primary programme of the whole region or country.

Another factor that I found limiting was my choice of theory. I found that Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing could not be used to frame all aspects that emerged from my data, given the multi-dimensional nature of literacy instruction in pre-primary. Given the constraints of a mini dissertation, I was not able to explore additional theorists who may have supported other findings. This could however form the basis for a PhD.

4.8 Validity and trustworthiness

To ensure credibility, "the study must reflect the participants' reality" (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014, p. 188). During the course of the study, the researcher guarded against any threats to the credibility of the study. Content validity was ensured by using data collection methods that captured the essence of the information (Flick, 2011), thus video and audio-recording devices were used to record lesson presentation and interviews verbatim.

Data were collected using different data collection methods and tools to ensure "methodological triangulation" (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 142). This was done to increase the trustworthiness of the data.

To "encourage convergent lines of inquiry", data were collected through the use of multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2009, p. 42). This was done by looking at data from different sources, such as interviews, classroom observation and documentary evidence, to support a particular finding of the study before conclusions were drawn. The data collection instruments which were used allowed the researcher to compare the data against one another as evidence for a particular case or across cases to ensure trustworthiness.

To avoid validity threats and subjectivity, interviews for the study were conducted by a field worker who did not have a direct professional relationship with the participants. This was done because the researcher was responsible for rolling out the pre-primary programme in the region of research during the data collection period.

With regard to the use of observation as a data collection tool, "investigator triangulation" (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 142) was used whereby the field worker offered to review the data transcriptions of the first observation of each teacher to see if the data collected reflected the situation of the classroom. This was done to increase trustworthiness of the data. Blind spots

and omissions were discussed and consensus reached on the information that was suitable to count as data.

After the data from the interviews were transcribed, the participants were asked to cross- check the transcriptions to ensure that they reflected the truth of what was said during the interview and corrections were made where there were omissions or misrepresentation of participants' perceptions and opinions.

Peer review of preliminary findings was again done by the field worker early in the data collection process, and also by one critical friend after the data were tabulated. This was done to avoid biases and address rival explanations (Yin, 2009). The process was found to be helpful, because the reviewer was able to offer alternative explanations for some of the findings and suggested some corrections to be made in the classification of data into different categories. Credibility was ensured during data processing and data analysis phases of the study by reading the data thoroughly so that data were fully unpacked to be sure of the directions that the data were pointing towards, before conclusions were drawn (Bertram &Christiansen, 2014). (see interview data in Appendix H)

4.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were taken into account from the onset of my research journey. It began by writing a letter to my supervisor to ask for permission to leave my workplace for a few hours on the days that I had indicated on my project plan. In this letter, the nature of the study that I intended to carry out was explained. The Chief Education Officer, who was my immediate supervisor, signed the letter to recommend that I carry out the activity. The letter was then taken to the Regional Director of Education for approval and this was granted to allow me time to use office time and to carry out the study in school (see appendix A).

After permission to leave my work place was acquired, selection of the schools which were envisaged to be research sites for piloting, as well as actual data collection were selected and listed. Thereafter, letters asking for permission from principals to conduct research in these schools were written. In the consent letters, the purpose, nature and envisaged participants of the study were introduced. Voluntary participation of the schools and teachers in the study was explained, as well as the anonymity of the research site and participants. The letters specified whether access was sought for piloting or for actual research purposes. The letters were hand-

delivered at schools and further explanations were provided where needed (see Appendix B-C).

After access was acquired from schools, I went to the individual teachers to get their consent. Letters were presented to the teachers in which the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, withdrawal rights, and anonymity were explained. The consent of the teachers was acquired for both piloting and actual research (see Appendix D-E).

Since the study involved classroom observation in which children were going to be involved, a discussion was held with the principals and the teachers on ways in which consent from the parents could be obtained. Different schools had different strategies on how to communicate with parents, thus letters were written in the local languages used in the community of the schools to explain the purpose and participatory rights of children in this study (see appendix F). At some of the schools, letters were sent to the parents, especially the town-based schools, and at other schools parents were invited to come to the school to receive explanation and to sign the consent letters. School C decided that parents should sign on a class list, next to their children's names to make it easy for the teacher to track the number of parents who still needed to sign.

During the data collection process, participants were constantly reminded of the terms and they were informed in advance, before they were visited for interviews or classroom observation. Lessons of all teachers were filmed and teachers were informed as to why the videos were needed and that the data sources would not be given to any other person without their permission.

In the data and report of the study, codes instead of participants' real names were used. The teachers who participated were coded with letters as Teacher A, B, and C, and learners were reflected in the data using the first letters of their names only. Where first letters of different children's names where similar, first letters of both surnames and first names of the child were used as pseudonyms.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research design which was employed from the beginning to the end of the study process. As part of the design, the techniques and tools that were used to collect

data were elaborated and their choice rationalised. The process that the study adopted for analysing the data was signposted in line with the paradigm in which the study was located. Limitations of the study that emerged, due to various circumstances, were identified and presented and everything possible was done to minimise their impact. This chapter was concluded by an overview of ways in which validity and trustworthiness were ensured, as well as considerations that were given throughout to ensure that the study was responsive to ethical standards of research.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data which was collected from all data sources used during the inquiry period of the study. Sources of data that the study used included interviews, classroom observations and documentary evidence. The use of interviews was to source data on the teachers' perceptual understanding of the causes of disparities, as well as the rationale for their classroom practices and decisions. Classroom observations provided data on the participants' empirical experiences of literacy teaching. Documentary evidence of teachers' lesson plans and curriculum documents, on the other hand, gave an account of the legitimacy of their pedagogic content and the ways in which the documents supported the development of literacy skills at the level of pre-primary. Due to the fact that various data sources were used for the purpose of triangulation, data collected using all data sources were presented under themes that were pre-set and those that emerged from the initial stage of data analysis, as highlighted in this chapter.

5.2 Teachers' Perceptions of literacy readiness

There was a general consensus among teachers as regards their description of the literacy readiness of learners. When teachers were asked to describe the literacy readiness of learners, they acknowledged that there were descrepancies, but all three participants unanimously expressed confidence in their learners' readiness after the pre-primary school year. Teacher B, in her description of her learners' readiness, expressed certainty by relating the level of readiness to the learners' ability to do Grade 1 work. She said:

Excerpt 1:

> *"According to my observation, most of them get school ready. May be 80% of them get ready for Grade 1. For some of them, even the readiness programme in Grade 1 for the first 5 weeks is not necessary. I can also say that they are over ready for Grade 1, because even Grade 1's work they can do."*

After commenting on the general readiness of their learners, teachers were asked during interviews to say what they perceived to be factors contributing to discrepancies in the learners' literacy readiness. All three teachers indicated that language was the main barrier to literacy readiness. This is what they said:

Excerpt 2:

Teacher A:

"....Now when they come here to be taught in one language then it becomes a problem....."

Teacher B:

"Speaking, yes, learners cannot speak the language we use at school. That is the main problem we have here"

Teacher C:

"It is mainly language, they come from houses where they do not speak the language we use in school. It is a problem, because it is difficult to speak with them. They keep quiet when you ask them questions."

Even though this was a unanimous position for all three teachers, Teachers A and C further indicated that, although language was a challenge, children could still benefit from instruction. Other factors, such as a lack of exposure to early childhood activities prior to pre-primary, as well as absenteeism, were mentioned as contributing factors to the disparities.

Teachers were further asked about the type of professional development that they required to help them support their learners' literacy skills development better. To this question, two of the three participating teachers indicated that they did not need support in their own professional knowledge. Teacher B indicated that it all depended on the effort of the teacher to do more than the curriculum prescribes, for learners to learn more. Teacher A shared the sentiments that the teacher could do it all, but acknowledged that parents could also help. Although Teacher C had initially expressed confidence in her learners' readiness, on the question of professional support, she indicated that she had a need for support in facilitating speaking during her lessons. This is what they had to say:

Excerpt 3:

Teacher A:

"No there is not really much. The only thing I think that can support us is the parents. One should involve parents whereby experiencing learners with language problems."

Teacher B:

"In language, mostly in listening and speaking. I experience problems with some of the children. May be I have selected that I am going to concentrate on this learners, but when you try to ask them questions to answer, they do not want to speak. When you ask them to tell a story, they would just say one word and keep quiet, then I wonder what to do to make the child come to the level of others."

It was further established that, of the three participating teachers, two had little or no confidence in the curriculum for literacy at pre-primary level. When they were asked to comment on the curriculum, Teacher A reserved her comments and said it was fine. Teacher B complained that there was a lack of support in the provision of resources. She explained that her classroom was small, which forced them to remove desks so that the children can sit on the carpet, which she said was not supportive to the development of learners' writing skills. In her explanation of the challenges she experienced, she further implied that there was little appreciation of the role of the programme by her school management. She said:

Excerpt 4:

"They are just thinking that pre-primary is just for learners to sing and for learners to play around and not for learning. The curriculum should be more specific and tell our supervisors that pre-primary is not for playing only"

Teacher B implied that the curriculum was insufficient to prepare learners for Grade 1. She emphasized the need for teachers to teach more than the curriculum prescribes for learners to attain readiness. Teacher C similarly indicated that the curriculum was ineffective. This is how they expressed it:

Excerpt 5:

Teacher A:

"My view is for the teachers to add more, not to end where the curriculum ended, but they have to put more effort for learners to know much of what is expected of them, because if you end where the curriculum ended, that learner will not recognize much even the simple t starting letter or even the sound."

Teacher B:

"In my view, it is more of playing than teaching itself"

When she was asked to explain why she felt that it was more playing than learning, she said:

Excerpt 6:

"Yes, according to what I see, most of their learning is through play like they can count, clap and the like, but their writing is only those simple activities like to draw circles and use them as numbers like that. May be it needs a bit of formal work that will make them learn also things like 1+1, those basic sums that they can add and write the answer, not only circles or counting people, because when they reach there[in grade1] then it is a problem."

"Here at our school when your learners move to the next grade, you also go there for a few days to see how your learners are doing. Now when they go there and find that there is formal teaching there, to start it there it becomes like difficult for them. When you arrive there you will see that their counting here was to use things to count, but getting there and to be asked to count on their own, to go and get what they need to count on their own or the teacher to say count this, then for them it is like difficult. At least if they start here with formal work, at least in the third term to start with something a bit formal like copying from the chalkboard it will help"

When she was asked to share whether she experienced challenges specifically with regard to the literacy curriculum, she similarly expressed a view that it was not adequate. She explained that:

Excerpt 7:

"No, with language is just back on writing, because here it is more on pictures then writing letters which is not enough.. They could put in at least some sentences which the children could copy. Even on the pictures, they can also put on a few words that the children can copy to help them after drawing when they move to Grade 1 they know if there's something on the chalkboard they can also copy or in the book they can copy."

5.3 Integration in pre-primary literacy

Teachers' pedagogic practices were interrogated in terms of their use of subject integration during literacy teaching. This was done to understand ways and the extent to which different subjects support the development of literacy skills, as well as ways in which literacy skills are integrated to support each other during lessons. Data on this dimension of the study were collected using interviews, observation and documentary evidence.

When the teachers were asked whether they practised subject integration, all three teachers said that they do practise subject integration. When they were asked how they do it, all teachers shared unique examples of ways in which the development of language skills is supported by other subjects, such as Arts, Physical Development and Religious and Moral Education in the areas of speaking and writing. Teacher A indicated that she integrates language in Art, but only as extra activities after the learners have finished drawing. This is what she had to say:

Excerpt 8:

> *In Art for example, in language may be they have done listening and speaking on a certain topic. In arts then they have to draw it, sing songs on the topic. This will support language also by discussing their art work, for example if they have drawn houses and they are done drawing and you do not have any other work to give them. You can then ask them to tell you what you have drawn, then they say; I have drawn a brick house with grass on the top or I have drawn a house made of grass with walls made of clay. There you can see that there is language involved.*

For Teacher B, integration was a part of the curriculum, because all physical development activities develop physical skills that support literacy development. She explained the way in which physical development develops motor skills and hand-eye coordination that children require in writing.

Most interestingly, all three teachers indicated that they integrate language and Environmental Education and that there was already a relationship between Literacy and Environmental Education which teachers A and B referred to as 'the same'. Although Teacher C did not specify the perceived 'sameness' of the two subjects, she implied this with the practical example she

provided on the way she integrates the two learning areas. This is what they said on the relationship:

Excerpt 9:

Teacher A:

"Yes, In Environmental learning as well, because it is almost the same as language."

Teacher B:

".....Like in environmental and language is the same, what they learn is not different, because if learners have learned that In Environmental education, then in language they are just going to add more to what they have already done. It makes it very easy for the children."

Teacher C:

".....Like when we teach my body, in Environmental learning we concentrate on all the body parts, but when you are going to teach this in Language, you are not going to concentrate much on the body parts, you are going to just take out some and also may be discuss the function or the story about the body. In Environmental learning itself is where you are going to teach more."

On the topic of integration, the pre-primary syllabus, in agreement with the teachers' understanding, indicates that, *"there are deliberate connections between learning areas to allow transfer of learning from one context to another"* (MoE, 2015, p. 4). This integration of subjects was evident in the articulation of basic competencies of different learning areas as represented in the next extract that depicts integration of language skills in Environmental learning from the syllabus (MoE, 2015, pp. 15-16).

Excerpt 10:

-identify and name family members

-discuss the roles and responsibilities of family members within the household

-talk about rights and responsibilities of children

-tell traditional stories.

Integration was equally noted in the teachers' manual that comprised suggested activities and resources to give the teachers hints on how different skills can be developed. There was evidence of literacy skills integration into Preparatory Maths in suggested activities such as listening and following instructions and discussing concepts and differences of shapes and numbers as well as rhymes. There were suggested activities of Art that support literacy skills development such as singing, scribbling, as well as role playing and dramatizing.

It was found that lesson plans of the teachers which were reviewed depicted thematic integration as all lessons were based on one theme of 'My Body'. Skills integration could not be found in the teachers' lesson plans as the skills were highly demarcated, although listening and speaking were integrated during teaching. There was some evidence of integration of Art into Literacy, as activities for preparatory writing were found on the lesson plans for all three teachers, as exemplified in the following extracts.

Excerpt 11:

Teacher A *1: "Colour the body parts"*
Teacher B *2: "Give them the papers and tell them to colour the pictures"*
Teacher C *1: "colour body part picture"*

5.4 Resources used during literacy teaching

Data on the type and ways in which resources were used were collected from interviews, lesson observation and documentary evidence. Teachers during interviews were asked whether they use resources during literacy teaching, the types of resources they use, and why they use them. All three teachers responded that they used resources during literacy teaching. On the type of resources used, teachers indicated similar type of resources, as shown in this extract:

Excerpt 12:

Teacher A*:*
"Pictures, games, real objects, rhymes and songs."
Teacher B*:*
"Pictures, and sometimes I use the real objects and tell the stories. There are also one story. I saw it on TV and what I did is I recorded the story and when I came I came with the laptop for them to see the story"

Teacher C:

"Pictures, and also concrete materials."

When the teachers were asked why they use these resources during literacy teaching, Teacher A was specific and more explicit in her reasoning, while teachers B and C were general in their responses. They said:

Excerpt 13:

Teacher A:

"It helps learners understand better and it also improves the participation of learners. It makes the lesson much more interesting than talking to them about things which they cannot see what you are talking about. It also brings real life situation in the classroom."

Teacher B:

"It is because I believe that to teach learners, learners learn by seeing, touching, and tasting."

Teacher C:

"I believe learners learn best when they see things and touch them"

On the type and use of resources, documentary evidence from the teachers' lesson plans indicated a wider variety. The lesson plans indicated that teachers planned to use resources like pictures, word cards, as well as other real objects such as cell phone, pegs, balls and writing tools. In most cases 'real objects' were indicated as such, but not specified. In some cases the utilisation of resources listed were not reflected in the teachers' and learners' activities on the teachers' lesson plans, so their use was not specified.

It was found from classroom observation that there were book corners in teachers A and B's classrooms, with a few story books, all in English, however, only Teacher A during interviews mentioned picture books as a resource she uses. Neither observation nor documentary evidence of all the teachers' lesson plans, and teachers' guide, indicated book reading as an activity. The syllabus, however, indicates "pretend to 'read' picture books with/without print" (MoE, 2015, p. 11) as a competency, but picture-book reading was not observed in the teacher's manual or the teachers' lesson plans. Workbooks were observed being used in Teacher A's class, but were

used for learners to colour and match pictures as an independent activity, as they contained only pictures.

During classroom observations, pictures were found to be the dominant teaching resource used during literacy teaching in all three classes. The pictures used mostly depicted characters in stories that the teachers told, thus they were only used for learners to identify the characters in the stories, as shown in the following excerpt from Teacher A's lesson:

Excerpt 14:

Teacher: Look at this picture [raising up an A4 poster], what do you see here. Raise up, raise up!

Learner: [11 learners raise up their hands quietly.]

Teacher: P...., what do you see here on the picture?

Learner: Mother.

Teacher: Mother.

Teacher: S....., what do you see here?

Learner: Father.

Teacher: Father.

Teacher: F....., What do you see on the picture?

Learner: Ginger cake.

Teacher: Ginger cake.

5.5 Interpersonal interaction during literacy teaching

As an important dimension and determiner of literacy readiness (Klibthong, 2012; Lisanza, 2014), data on the kind of interpersonal interactions that took place during literacy lessons were collected through interviews, observations and documentary evidence. When teachers were asked to share ways in which they promoted interactions during literacy teaching, they all responded that they used various methods to interact with their learners. This is what they said:

Excerpt 15:

Teacher A:

"It is only the activities whereby you ask a question. You know that the child will not be able to answer, but you direct the question to them so that you can see whether the child will be able to answer the question."

Teacher B:

"We try mechanisms like during storytelling, you try to use things so that they can see you act out the story as you are telling it."

"Mostly, if they are given work in groups to work together so that they can speak to their friends.

Teacher C:

"During free play in the classroom, I put them together with others who know the language so that when they play, they can start to communicate with others and respond in the language that they don't know."

Although data gathered through teacher interviews indicated that there was interaction during lessons, classroom observations indicated that, in all three participating teachers' lessons, learners mostly spoke at the level of a single word or phrase and it was rare for learners to speak using a complete sentence. It was noted that, during the listening and speaking lessons, there was more one-one interaction with the learners in Teacher A's class, because she mostly asked children to respond individually to questions, although these encounters were not conversational. For teachers B and C, learners mostly spoke by shouting out words in chorus. Teacher B did most of the talking, and learners were only expected to concur with her at the end, as exemplified in the following extract from their oral comprehension lessons:

Excerpt 16:

Teacher B:

Teacher:.....Then the old woman ran after him, but the ginger bread boy was running away. The old woman and the old man ran after it, because it was their bread, right?

Learners: Yes. [in chorus]

2. Teacher:.....The cow then smelled the bread "fhfhfh" and said, "mmmm, that's nice to eat. It is better than this grass that I am eating". Grass is not sweet, right?'

Learners: Yes. [in chorus]

Teacher C:

***Teacher**: What do we see here on this picture?*

***Learner**: Bears. [in chorus]*

***Teacher**: How many bears?*

***Learner**: Three. [in chorus]*

Furthermore, no evidence of role-playing, story dramatization or group activity learning, as shared during interviews, was observed in any of the three teachers' lessons. During writing activities, all the teachers discouraged student talk, by constantly reminding learners to keep silent and not speak to each other.

Contents of the lesson plans were analysed to find evidence of activities that promoted learner creativity, talk and collaboration. It was found that the lesson plans of the teachers similarly indicated no provision for interactive activities, as epitomized in this extract from Teacher A's oral comprehension lesson plan:

Excerpt 17:

Teacher activities	Learner activities
Recap	Give possible answers
Tell the story	Listening to the story
Discuss the functions of the body parts	Functions: run with legs; see with eyes; talk with mouth.
Use puppet to talk about the body parts	Tell the body parts that they see on the puppet.

Thereafter, data were collected by comparing the activities on the lesson plan with the activities that the teacher used in class. This was done to see whether there was evidence of, or adaptation

made to the planned activities in an effort to accommodate learners' contribution to the content of the lesson.

It was, however, evident that the activities that teachers used were derived from the teachers' manual, but most interestingly, interactive activities that were derived from the manual and included in the lesson plans, such as games and role plays, were omitted during the first lessons of teachers A and B. This was the only adaptation that teachers made to their lesson plans during observation.

5.6 Type of questions asked

To evaluate the extent to which teachers used questions that encouraged discussion and use of language, data were collected using interviews, classroom observation and documentary evidence on the questioning techniques of the teachers. The focus of inquiry was on the types of questions that the teachers asked, as well as the kind of linguistic code that the learners used during classroom interactions.

During interviews, teachers were asked to share the type of questions they use during literacy teaching. Although teachers could not specify the types, they explained their questioning techniques with practical examples. It was then found that teachers A and C asked questions that tested learners listening skills, while Teacher B considered the children's emotions. This is how they explained their questioning techniques:

Excerpt 18:

Teacher A:

"I ask any question, I do not really regard the type of question. It also depend on a lesson. If it is a story I have told them and I want to ask questions, then I ask any questions for me to see if they listened, but I don't regard the type."

Teacher B:

"Like in the story of the little pigs, u tell them that Mother pig told the little pigs; go my children, this house is small for us, go and build your own houses. Now when u ask them, what made them cry? And you have imitated how they cried, the children will know that they cried, because they had to leave their mother. Then u are discussing. If you ask

them, what made you cry? They will tell you stories about what made them cry, because they have enjoyed the story. That's how we discuss with them."

Teacher C:

"If it is a story and they listen to it first. I then ask them easy questions about what I have told them then soon thereafter I ask them to repeat what I have told them in the story. Then thereafter, I tell them a few lines then I ask the question so that they can try to remember what I have said, then you will tell the whole story to the end so that they can retell it on their own. This help them memorize what they have heard in the language."

Although this was shared during interviews, all three teachers during classroom observation, were observed using a similar questioning technique. In their listening and speaking lessons, the teachers told stories to the children and they mostly used factual, closed-ended questions that required learners to provide pre-conceived responses based on the topic of integration and characters in the stories. Although similar to the other two teachers, Teacher C mostly asked questions that required learners to agree with her statements. She only alternated between the aforementioned and closed-ended questions that mainly depended on repetition, as illustrated in the excerpts below:

Excerpt 19:

Teacher A:

Teacher: Yes, the jackal. Where did the jackal find the bread? D.....

Learner: At the river.

Teacher: Yes, at the river. Right?

Learner: Yes.

Teacher: Who baked that cake?

Learner: [Eight learners raise up their hands.]

Teacher: M.....

Teacher B:

Teachers: What parts were put on the ginger bread? P....

Learners: The body.

Teachers: The body and what else? A.....

Learners: Eyes.

Teacher C:

Teacher: Here are three bears and the story is about the three bears. How many bears?

Learner: Three. [in chorus]

Teacher: Three. There were three bears. Father Bear, mother Bear and baby Bear. Who were in the family?

Learner: Father Bear, mother bear, baby bear. [in chorus]

Documentary evidence indicated that only Teacher B planned the question she asked in advance, because the same examples of closed-ended questions used during the lessons were observed in her lesson plans. There were no data on the type of questions used in teachers A and C's lesson plans. It was similarly found that the teachers' manual does not specify the questions that teachers are expected to use during oral comprehension lessons.

5.7 Support to second-language learners

To understand the way in which the teachers support learning and overall development of literacy skills in learners, data was collected using interviews, classroom observation and documentary evidence. When teachers were asked whether they provided learning support to learners during literacy teaching, all three teachers unanimously said that they did provide learning support to learners. When they were asked to identify learners that they provided support to, all three teachers identified learners who were second-language speakers. They said:

Excerpt 20:

Teacher A:

"Learners with language problems."

Teacher B:

"Especially learners who have problems in language, like in my case in this class there are learners who did not attend kindergarten. They just come straight from home to pre-primary. These learners are always having problems."

Teacher C:

"Those who are not using Rumanyo at home."

When teachers were asked about the kind of support they provided to these learners, the teachers varied in their approaches. This is what they said:

Excerpt 21:

Teacher A:

"Mostly it is pictures and real objects that we use in the classroom, it help the learners to catch up easily. Even the language that we use if learners did not understand at least the picture will give a clue and the learner will focus on the picture or the material that you are using helps the learner to understand easily."

Teacher B:

"I always remain with them so that I can reteach at their level to cope with others and there are also some learners who do not understand the language I use especially Rukwangali language. They cannot even understand English. For me to help those learners, I have to remain behind after school with them so that I can use especially teaching aids for them to cope with others."

Teacher C:

"Free play, role play in Rumanyo, and also games which encourage learners to speak. Those that do not know the language mostly are told stories. I then concentrate on those with problems so that they can repeat what they have heard in the story to know how those words are pronounced, because their languages are different so that they can also learn some words in Rumanyo language."

"We also use songs with actions. They [learners] *can also learn words through songs example bend and the action."*

When the teachers were asked about what they do if learners could not answer the questions or carry out activities correctly, teachers unanimously replied that they would ask another child to answer and then ask the first child to repeat it. In addition to that, Teacher C shared that she changes the question to try and give an easy one. In their own words:

Excerpt 22:

Teacher A:

"Usually they answer in their home language, like some will say that it was built using "musoni" [grass], but the word musoni is not Rukwangali, but Rumanyo although the answer is right. Then you involve others who can speak Rukwangali to tell him how grass

is called in Rukwangali. The others will say "wayi" in Rukwangali, then you ask the child to repeat it as well."

Teacher B:

"If that child cannot answer a question, like the way I do it, I ask the child the next question and if the child cannot answer, I ask another child, if that other child answers it correctly, I go back to the first child and ask him/her to repeat what the other one said. If the child cannot repeat then they are perhaps not following or there is a problem of some sort."

Teacher C:

"I give them another easy one and then I give the other question to another one who is able to answer it then the first one who couldn't should still repeat the answer that the other one has given."

The opinions of the teachers shared during interviews were observed in their practices during lesson presentations. It was evident from Teacher A's lessons that there were learners who were second-language learners, because language errors and corrections by the teacher were witnessed. However, repetition of the correct responses was done by the whole class in chorus, not by individual learners who made mistakes, as shown in this extract:

Excerpt 23:

Teacher: What animal did he find eating grass? Yes, S…

Learner: A cow and a duck. [saying duck in another language-"lipato"]

Teacher: Yes, what do we call a duck in Rukwangali?[asking the whole class]

Learner: Epato. [in chorus]

Although repetition was identified by teachers B and C as a strategy they use, not much was observed during their lessons. They said that learners were supported by asking them to repeat after the teacher, but these strategies could not be identified during the lessons. This situation could be attributed to a lack of interaction with individual learners, as most of their questions were answered by the whole class in chorus.

Data yielded from lesson plans and teachers' manual indicated no evidence of provision for learners with language problems. Activities were all the same and no differentiation or learning support activities could be found in the teachers' lesson plans or the teachers' manual. There was, however, repetition of activities in the teachers' lesson plans, although not well planned. The teachers, in most cases, indicated 'recap of previous activities' in the lesson plans (see Excerpt 16) without specifying the content or activities that learners were going to do. An analysis of the teachers' manual did not indicate provision of activities for learning support, but it was found that provision for revision of activities was made, as indicated through the provision of three weeks per theme. Within a three-week period provided in the manual per theme, the teacher would have sufficient time for revision.

Another dimension from which support for learning was evaluated was through examining the sequence of activities set by the teacher. Data on this dimension were collected from classroom observation and documentary evidence. It was found that the activities of teachers A and B, during oral comprehension lessons, were in a meaningful order. During presentation, the teachers progressed through a supportive sequence of activities. They started with learners listening to the story, naming parts of the body from the story, identifying body parts from cut-out papers, and then asking learners to name the body parts on their own. There was a link between the activities, and the sequence progressed from more supportive to independent work. The nature of activities, as shown in this extract from Teacher B's lesson, was not supportive to literacy skills development as they were more content-based.

Excerpt 24:

T: Our story is the one about the gingerbread boy. We can still remember it, right?

L: Yes.

T: Ok listen carefully then.

2.

T: What parts did she put there?

3.

T: This is a head, leg, nose, hand, ear. [while pointing to the pictures of the parts on the chalkboard] *Learners: [Learners join in naming the parts with the teacher.]* *Teachers: Can you name them again for me? [pointing at them one by one on the chalkboard]* *Learners: Head, leg, nose, hand, ear. [all learners say in chorus]* *Teachers: Who will tell us alone? In that same order?*

Evidence from her lesson plans similarly indicated that there was a logical sequence in the activities. The sequence depicted progression in terms of skills and levels of complexity, but evidence from analysis further showed that it was not consistently done.

Further analysis of preparatory and incidental reading lesson plans indicated that the order of activities was not consistently logical as there was no smooth transition from oral to reading activities. The link between the activities was not always noticeable, as shown in the next example from Teacher A's incidental reading lesson plan:

Excerpt 25:

Teacher activities	Learner activities
Recap from the previous lesson. *Show word cards of body parts and ask learners to read.* *Ask learners to read the days of the week.*	*Give possible answers.* *Read the name cards shown by the teacher.* *Read days of the week on the wall.*

However, deviation from the pre-determined order of activities was observed during presentation of this lesson, as the teachers preceded reading with an activity of identifying body parts in the pictures.

5.8 Writing done during literacy teaching

Writing as a part of early literacy develops simultaneously with reading. Young children need reading to help them learn about writing and they need writing to help them learn about reading. (Roskos, Christie & Richgels, 2003). The teachers during lesson presentation were observed to ascertain the types of written tasks they used and how those activities promoted the development of writing skills. The process by which they conducted writing during lessons was similarly observed to perceive the form of support provided to learners during writing. It was noted that all three participating teachers gave written tasks to learners toward the end of the lessons. These activities required the use of skills which were not practised during the lessons. It was observed that preparatory writing was not adequately practised. Teacher A gave a written task toward the end of lessons 1 and 2, but teachers B and C gave preparatory writing activities only once in the three days they were observed. Analysis of their lesson plans indicated that writing was not integrated and it was only done when the focus of the lesson was on preparatory writing. It was principally found that all three teachers made use of either colouring, matching, and cutting and pasting as writing activities.

During the activities, it was, however, observed that all three teachers explained the activities clearly and systematically, as exemplified in the following extract from Teacher A's first lesson presentation:

Excerpt 26:

Teacher: Let us then listen carefully. On this body, we are going to match this pictures to the body parts where they belong. Example, this person's body is here in full, right?

Learner: Yes.

Teacher: Ok, we are now going to put there what belong there. This is an arm. Can you see where I am pointing with my pencil?

Learner: On the arm.

Teacher: And this things here are called the.....? [pointing at the picture]

Learner: Fingers.

Teacher: This are fingers right?

Learner: Yes.

Teacher: I am going to connect it to the…….?

Learner: Fingers.

Teacher: Yes, to the fingers. Can you see how I connected them? [showing learners the book on all sides]

It was similarly observed that not all teachers closely monitored or engaged with learners to provide support when they were doing writing activities. Teachers B and C monitored, but they only managed the class, by telling learners to keep quiet and work. There was, however, close monitoring of the learners during the matching activity in Teacher A's class. The teacher walked from desk to desk to look at the learners' work and gave them individual guidance as shown in this extract:

Excerpt 27:

Teacher: [Teacher walks from child to child] What is this?

Learner: [saying something softly]

Teacher: Ok, can you find another here? [pointing to the whole body

Learner: [pointing to a body part on the main picture]

Teacher: Yes, now do the same with all others.

Although the activities were clearly explained, it was observed that the assessment criteria for the activities were not always explained to the learners. During the activity, only Teacher C attempted to explain the criteria, but it was not in detail as learners were only told not to cross the outer line when they coloured their pictures, but the children were not given the reason for this.

Children were not given feedback on their written tasks in all the lessons. Teacher A asked the learners to close their books after a while without looking at what they had written. Similarly, Teacher B told learners to hand in their collages, but the teacher did not make any comment.

Teacher C made an attempt and marked with a tick across each child's picture, but did not make any verbal or written comment on the children's work. It was noted from documentary evidence of lesson plans and the teachers' manual that the preparatory writing activities administered by the teachers were indicated as assessment tasks, but no assessment criteria were provided. The tasks on the lesson plans were not elaborated, but were only shown in phrases, such as 'colour pictures; match body parts.' It was evident that the writing activities correlated with the stated objectives and competencies for the lesson, although they were not practised during lesson presentation.

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter presented empirical data on the perceptions, experiences and practices of the participants in this study. Data derived from analysis of documentary evidence of the curriculum of the pre-primary programme and the teachers' own lesson plans were presented to support the discourses and practices of the teachers. The findings are further discussed and analysed in the next chapter to answer the research questions proposed for this study.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion and analysis of the data which emanated from the inquiry carried out to discover the causes of disparities in literacy readiness of learners at the level of pre-primary, as presented in the preceding chapter. Data which was collected from the interviews, observations and documentary evidence is discussed in light of the reviewed literature. Analysis was done using Bernstein's pedagogic discourse and practice as the theoretical frame to communicate the findings of the study. Themes that emerged from the primary data are used as a framework for organising the discussion of the findings through the following research questions:

1) What are the causes of disparities in literacy readiness of learners at the level of pre-primary?
2) To what do teachers attribute the disparities in literacy readiness of pre-primary learners?
3) How do teachers' perceptions relate to disparities in literacy readiness of learners?
4) In what ways do the teachers' pedagogic practices support or constrain the development of pre-primary learners' literacy skills?

6.2 The interface between teacher perceptions and literacy readiness

Understanding the teachers perceptions of the causes of disparities in their learners' literacy readiness in this study was important, because as Sibanda (2014, p. 260) puts it, "teachers' beliefs profoundly impact their classroom practices". Inquiry on teachers' perceptions, which was conducted by way of interviews, indicated that teachers overrated their learners' literacy readiness after the pre-primary programme. Even though the teachers indicated that their learners are usually ready for Grade 1, this position conflicted with their perception of the effectiveness of the pre-primary curriculum which they described as 'ineffective' and does not adequately prepare learners for Grade 1 (see Excerpts 5-7). Teachers described learners' readiness as the ability to do Grade 1 work. This was an indication that the teachers did not comprehend the intentions and aims of the curriculum to be able to draw a line between the curriculum intentions of Grade 1 and that of pre-primary.

Teachers attributed disparities in literacy readiness to the difference between the home languages of learners and the language of teaching and learning at school (see Excerpt 2). In addition to the language barrier, absenteeism was pointed out by teachers B and C as a contributing factor to the disparities. Although it was commendable that teachers identified the centrality of language in the literacy readiness of learners, their perception was an indication that teachers were not reflective of their own teaching practices, because no factor related to classroom condition or pedagogy was mentioned.

This trend was still noticeable in their responses to the question that asked them to identify their need for professional support. Only one of the three teachers indicated need for support (see Excerpt 3). A closer look at this data indicated that the teachers did not accurately identify their own knowledge and pedagogy in literacy teaching. Their inability to identify constraints in their pedagogic content knowledge and pedagogic practices was an indication that their knowledge of pedagogic practices was not well calibrated (Cunningham, et al., 2009). It is important that teachers are well calibrated in their knowledge of content and pedagogy, so that they can focus on areas where their knowledge needs improvement (ibid.). These perceptions, according to Kuzborka (2011), have an effect on compliance, level of effort, teaching goals, procedures, materials, and classroom interaction patterns which may adversely impact on literacy readiness of children. As a result, teachers' beliefs and perceptions may form a part of what Bernstein (1996) termed regulative discourse which is capable of changing the course of instruction (Christie, 1999).

Regulatory functions resulting from the perceptions of teachers might manifest in a lack of support for children's actual developmental learning needs. Teachers might not provide sufficient support for learners from different language backgrounds. This might be because teachers have already attributed failure to language differences without considering that all children, including those from low economic classes, have had some exposure to early literacy skills in their homes and communities, and teachers can build on this to advance learning and readiness (Henok, 2014).

6.3 Integration during pre-primary literacy teaching

By thematic approach to teaching it is meant that different learning areas are connected using a common theme. A study conducted by Niipare (2007) underscored that teachers have a shallow conceptual understanding of a thematic teaching approach, thus experience problems in its

implementation. This was in line with the findings of this study on the teachers' understanding of subject integration.

It was found that activities for different subjects in the teachers' manual are connected to themes of integration and the syllabus for pre-primary similarly promoted integration as indicated (see Excerpts 10 and 11).

Although teachers as well shared during interviews that they practised subject integration, document analysis and classroom observations evidenced that teachers had limited understanding of its implementation, especially in the area of language. Classroom observation and lessons plans showed that there was excessive integration between Language and Environmental learning to the extent that teachers referred to the two learning areas as the 'same' (Excerpt 9). This understanding influenced their pedagogic practices and planning by directing their focus to the content of the theme instead of literacy skills during oral comprehension lessons.

Based on the data from lesson observation and document analysis, it can be argued that teachers have limited understanding of the concept of a thematic approach to language teaching, a situation which constrained literacy skills development in learners (Niipare, 2007). Bernstein (2000), in his theory of pedagogic discourse, identifies integration between literacy and environmental learning as weak classification of discourses, whereby the insulation between contents and boundaries of the two subjects were weakened and blurred, a condition that allows the transmitter to overstep boundaries. The boundary maintenance between the two discourses (literacy and environmental education) during lessons was so fragile that the difference between the two subjects could not be realised with ease. According to Bernstein (2000), this value of classification affects learning, because content and goals of lessons, in this case language, were not explicit for learners to attain as learners were expected to memorise topic contents instead of practising literacy skills.

6.4 Resources used during literacy teaching

Resources intrigue learners and extend their imagination, thus can enable learners to contribute to learning content through varying viewpoints that emanate from their various manipulating experiences (Morrow & Asbury, 1999). Resources are multi-informational, thus a literacy-rich classroom environment is supportive to the development of literacy skills. It is similarly argued

that as much as a literacy-rich classroom is important, teachers' skilful use of resources is what makes a difference (ibid.).

An examination of the resources used by teachers during literacy instruction indicated that, although there was a genuine understanding among teachers of the role of resources in literacy development, their practices were contrary to their understanding. Contrary to what was indicated in the lesson plans and teacher interviews (see Excerpt 12), the evidence of resources that were used in the observed lessons were word cards and pictures. This was true of all three teachers. The word cards that teachers used were of days of the week, body parts and learners' names. Learners were asked to identify the words on the cards as an incidental reading activity in all three classes, thus neither activities in phonological awareness nor print knowledge were observed.

Pictures were a common resource used to help learners identify body parts as part of the theme entitled 'My body'. This use of pictures was, however, not found to be supportive to the development of literacy skills, because learners were only asked to identify what they saw in the pictures (see Excerpt 14). Although the teachers demonstrated an understanding of the importance of using resources during interviews (as in Excerpt 13), the actual use thereof was contrary to their perceptions.

Resources pointed out by the teachers did not include story books, although a number of books were observed in two of the three classes. The use of the story books was not observed nor explained by teachers during interviews. The reading corners did not indicate functionality as there were no chairs for learners to sit on. This was an indication that story book reading was not modelled to the learners nor shared during lessons. In addition, the books were all written in English and not in the language of teaching and learning, which made them inappropriate for story book reading. Story book reading is not promoted in the curriculum as a literacy activity. The syllabus and teachers' manual do not have competencies or examples of activities based on story book reading, although the literature places it as a central skill in literacy readiness (Justice, et al., 2009; Nel, 2016).

The teachers' use of resources, according to Bernstein (2003), indicated that the degree of control over the selection of content was of strong framing value, because the teacher was in complete control of the selection of the content used during the lesson. This was so, because

only the teachers decided what learners were going to say about the story and the pictures (see Excerpt 14). There was no freedom of creativity in the use of resources, thus learners were not given an opportunity to add to the content of the lesson. Resources were not used to promote language development by sharing experiences through co-construction of meaning (Klibthong, 2012) as learners were only asked to reproduce what the teacher had provided through resources as learning content.

6.5 Interpersonal interaction during literacy teaching

Interpersonal interaction is considered pivotal for literacy readiness (Lisanza, 2014). Interpersonal interactions in this study refer to the communicative relationship that occurred between teachers and learners and between learners themselves during teaching and learning of literacy. Despite all teachers professing that they promoted interaction between themselves and learners, and among learners in their classes (see Excerpt 15), their actual practices testified that much was still to be done to maximise classroom talk. It stood out in the response of Teacher A (see Excerpt 15) where she said that she asks questions even though she knows the child will not be able to answer. This indicated that the teachers have pre-assumptions of their learners' inability and yet do not try to put mechanisms in place to assist learners to speak. As a result, their classes were dominated by teacher-talk[1], with learners in most cases saying single words or short phrases in response to questions (see Excerpt 16).

It was observed that learners mostly answered questions as a whole class by chorusing. Speaking in this fashion was not supportive to the children's communication skills as the individual language needs of learners could not be identified. The provision of wait-time, which is a silence period after a question has been posed to allow a child to think, was not considered and this, according to Yataganbaba and Yildirim (2016), obstructs learner participation and learning opportunities.

Retelling of a story was the only opportunity for learners to use language beyond the level of reciting a phrase, but this too was not effectively facilitated because the participation of learners was minimal. Only one learner was given a chance to retell the story in Teacher A's class. Teacher B asked up to three learners to say what they saw happening in the pictures, and Teacher C asked up to five children to retell, but the children were, in fact, only saying phrases

[1] Teacher-talk: Language used by teachers to give directions, explain, check student understanding and provide feedback on students' learning (Theo, 2016).

and the teacher was repeating the phrases without using probing questions that gives an indication of curiosity or emotion to encourage learners to speak more (Strickland & Marinak, 2016). In the case of Teacher B, she wanted the stories to be told as depicted in the pictures, and this was discouraging to the learners as they could not remember all the words. It was noted that teachers were not interactive by way of probing for further elaboration to enable the children to express their understanding and to contribute to the content from their own experiences (Bernstein, 2000).

Interaction among learners was the subject of another perception which was not observed in practice. The learners during all their lessons were not observed engaging in learner-learner talk as no group or pair discussion or game, as alluded to by the teachers, were used in any of the lessons observed. Interaction was similarly discouraged during writing; all teachers discouraged learner- talk by constantly reminding learners to keep silent and not speak to each other. It was evident that teachers did not plan to make their lessons dialogic as lesson plans did not indicate consideration for classroom interaction (see Excerpt 17).

This lack of interaction, according to Lisanza, Morrow and Asbury (2014, 1999) discourages collaboration and social learning through which language is acquired with ease. A lack of interaction during the lessons was evidence that the teachers had control over the selection of content, making the degree of control on this dimension of framing very strong. According to Bernstein (2000), this value of framing might disadvantage learners who may not resonate with the context in which the content is based; their ideas were not added to the content to demonstrate and contribute to their comprehension. It can be argued that literacy experiences in the classrooms, as a result of this framing value, did not benefit learners' linguistic, intellectual, emotional, social and creative life (Klibthong, 2012). Literature on literacy readiness advocates, as central in early literacy and overall language development, the need for interaction between learner and teacher in order to develop the learner's foundational literacy (Nel, 2016; Lisanza, 2014; Justice, et al., 2009; Naude, et al., 2003).

6.6 Types of questions asked

Acquisition of higher-order thinking skills is similarly pivotal for success in school and social life (Naude, et al., 2003), therefore orientation of learners to low-order thinking skills only during pre-primary education is not sufficient to lay a solid foundation for learning.

Data collected on the types of questions that the teachers used were basically similar. Although the teachers could not specify the types of questions that they used, it was noted, based on the description of their questioning patterns that all teachers used closed-ended and factual questions during their lessons (see Excerpt 18). The fact that teachers could not identify the types of questions they used signified limited knowledge of the various types of questions that can be used and therefore a lack of planning to accommodate learning. This is because the perceptions that the teachers shared during interviews were inconsistent with their practices observed during lesson presentation (see Excerpt 19). Although Teacher B implied during interviews that she recognised learners' personal experiences during oral comprehension lessons, in practice she followed the same pattern of questioning that the other two teachers used. Even the frequency of her factual questions was limited as her learners mostly conformed to her own statements which were repeated in a choral manner. This was evidence that the teachers did not think about the importance of using open-ended questions and were concentrating on listening for memorising rather than developing the learners' speaking skills.

On the basis of the evidence presented on this area of inquiry, it can be concluded that the questions used by teachers were not varied. Teachers in all three classes focused on the facts about the stories that they told, thus only closed-ended and factual questions were asked thereby closing the opportunity for discussion. This made the learners depend on their memory and to an extent on repetition of the teacher and peers' utterances in order to respond to questions asked.

The fact that the teachers' manual does not provide examples of questions that can be used, suggests that the curriculum and teacher training may not have highlighted the importance of this aspect of pedagogy to enable teachers to consider it during planning and teaching. As a result of this, teachers and learners did not engage in any conversation that would develop the oral language competence of the children. Although factual and closed-ended questions are needed as a starting point for discussion, the dominance of this mode of questioning as it was found in this study is what Vaish (2013) contests by arguing that orientating learners to closed-ended questions only, does not provide for high cognitive strategy. This is because, it does not elicit talk-for-learning in the classroom. In support for this position, Davis and Torr (2016) assert that closed-ended questions do not allow learners to engage in extended conversations that stimulate their thinking thereby suppressing their reasoning capabilities.

Without learners' engagement in dialogic activities due to constraining questioning patterns, Bernstein's (2000; 2003) pedagogic discourse and practice theory establishes that the learners will be able to acquire recognition rules, but will not advance to the acquisition of realisation rules. Recognition rules, are developed when learners have acquired understanding of the context which is demonstrated through responses that do not require elaboration as confirmed by evidence of the data presented in this study.

On the basis of the evidence, it can be concluded that questions used by the teachers in this study cannot facilitate the acquisition of realisation rules. This is because realisation rules according to Bernstein (2000) are only acquired when learners are able to put meanings together by themselves to answer questions and prompts without relying on memory and repetition. After that, learners then progress toward the ability to make it public by telling others about their understanding, their views and opinions.

Acquiring realisation rules, according to Bernstein (2000), is only possible when the use of an elaborate form of language is encouraged during literacy lessons. Elaborate form of language is a form of language use that demands users to apply thoughts to the way they express their intent thereby further promoting a higher level of syntactic organisation and lexical selection (Bernstein, 1964). To encourage learners to use an elaborate code, teachers should use a variety of questioning strategies to probe further elaboration, provoke speculations and extend imagination (Harris &Williams, 2012). If this is not done, first, the pre-schoolers will lack verbal fluency, associative reasoning and relational thinking which will result in impaired knowledge acquisition processes and readiness to cope with learning demands in elementary grades (Naude, et al., 2003; Nel, et al., 2016). Secondly, the children from backgrounds that are not supportive to the development of their language competencies and those who are second-language speakers will struggle to catch up with their peers.

6.7 Support to second-language learners

Acquisition of literacy skills by learners including those who are second-language learners dictates that literacy instruction is done systemically to ensure that all learners benefit from instruction (Cunningham, 2009).

As regards support for second-language learners, teachers have recognised their need for support in addressing the learners who were struggling. Although second-language learners

were identified as the ones in need of support (see Excerpt 20), evidence has indicated that this support was in the form of perceptions only. While teachers described a variety of potential support mechanisms that they could implement, none of these was observed during classroom observations. The second-language learners were not distinguishable from first-language learners during the observed lessons because the pedagogic style did not address individuals preferring to favour a 'chorusing' approach to learner response. Furthermore there were limited opportunities for second-language learners to practice their language of teaching and learning which suggests that this was not seen as a priority on the part of the teachers.

The strategy shared and to some extent used by teachers of asking learners to repeat after others as a way of supporting learning (see Excerpt 22) was not effective. This is because it did not afford learners who demonstrated the need for support a chance to learn, as repetition does not enhance the children's understanding for meaningful learning or assist them in drawing from their existing knowledge. Although repetition can be used to aid pronunciation, doing this in chorus (see Excerpt 23) was an obstruction to learning opportunities, because learners were not given individual chances to practise pronouncing words in the target language.

The fact that curriculum as well as lesson plans of the teachers do not make provision for learning support is an indication that teachers are not sensitized on the need and ways in which learning support can be provided.

Although data from the documentary evidence indicated a weak framing of the external pacing rules (Bernstein, 2003) due to the provision for repetition of activities in the manual. Repetition did not seem to benefit learners much, because planning of the repeated activities was not explicit (see Excerpts 17 & 25) and was not based on the various individual learning needs of the learners.

Data from the interview and classroom observation seemed to suggest that the internal framing value of the pacing rules was very strong, because the teacher had control over the time that they spent on different stages of the lesson (Bernstein, 2000). This strength of framing was, because even in instances where some learners demonstrated the need for instruction and support, teachers opted to proceed by moving onto the next question or giving over the question to other capable learners to respond. The only chance that learners with problems got was to simply repeat what others have said without understanding. The pace of the lessons were not

determined by learning and acquisition, but by the teachers' need to cover the learning content and complete the lesson. According to Bernstein (2003) learning is affected when the pacing rules are strong, because the teacher does not regard learners' level of acquisition before moving on to the next stage of the lesson, thus does not take ample time to consolidate learning.

The sequence of activities was an element of the teachers' practices relative to learning support which was interrogated in this study. Not much consideration for the order of activities was made (see Excerpt 24) from observation. It was found from documentary evidence that the order of activities that teachers adhered to was not always logical and links between activities were not visible (see Excerpt 25). The activities as a result were segmented, thereby limiting smooth transition from one stage of the lesson to another, because for there to be progression, content or skills should be sequenced in a meaningful way from the start to the end of the lesson (Bernstein, 2003).

Based on the available evidence, it can be concluded that there was a strong framing value of sequencing rules across teachers. This is because teachers were in control of the sequence in which the activities of the lesson were carried out between and within lessons. As a result of this, learners learning and acquisition did not influence the order of activities nor determined the next step of the pedagogic interactions for the purpose of learning support. The sequence of activities was found to be regulatory in that learners' learning needs were not considered nor catered for during lessons, thus a balance in the strength of the framing value on this dimension was required to maximize learning (Bernstein, 2003).

6.8 Writing done during literacy instruction

As regards writing, data were collected through observation and documentary evidence to investigate the manner in which writing was facilitated during the lessons.

It was evident from the data found that all the teachers administered similar types of writing activities for example, matching body parts, colouring pictures or cutting and pasting to form a human body and there was little emphasis on emergent writing skills such as drawing and scribbling.

It was notable that all three teachers explained their tasks explicitly to the learners before they started working on their own (see Excerpt 26). This helped learners to know how they were

expected to do the activity. However, similar to all other skills of literacy, writing has to be taught, but teachers in their practice and plans including the teacher's manual indicated these activities in short phrases without elaboration on how learners will learn to do this tasks correctly. There was no chance for a detailed discussion or practising of the writing activities during the lesson and the writing tasks were essentially an unrelated activity.

Only one of the three teachers monitored their learners when they were doing the activity (see Excerpt 27). The fact that the two teachers left the learners alone without monitoring and support during the activity was not supportive to learning, because teachers have missed a chance to attend to individual children's needs during this time. Since the activity required production, the products of the activity were going to be evaluated, thus Bernstein (2003) proposes that every evaluation needs to have a criteria. It is further argued that in order to minimize disparities and optimize success for all learners, the criteria has to be made explicit to the learners. This will "enable the acquirer to understand what counts as legitimate or illegitimate communication, social relation, or position" (Bernstein, 2003, p. 198). The criteria enables the learners to be aware of the specifics that s/he has to meet, while constant monitoring and feedback will make them aware of the level on which they have met the expectations, and other parts of the competency that still remain to be acquired (ibid.). It is therefore vital that the teacher monitors to guide learners while they are working on their own.

The degree of framing over these evaluation rules was weak, because all three teachers did not determine nor explain the assessment criteria to the learners. Feedback that would inform the learners about how they have done what was expected was not provided. This according to Bernstein is regulative, because learners are not aware of the criteria that s/he has to meet and the level on which they have met the expectation, and what still remains to be acquired except in a very general way.

6.9 Conclusions

This chapter discussed the data presented in the preceding chapter. Interpretations of data presented on teachers' perceptions and pedagogical practices were discussed by pointing out ways in which they can contribute to disparities in the literacy readiness of learners. Based on the interpretations, conclusions for the study are drawn and correspondingly presented in the next chapter which further grounds the recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of disparities in the literacy readiness of pre-primary learners from the teachers' points of view. This chapter presents conclusions drawn and recommendations made based on data that has presented, discussed and analysed in the preceding chapters. The conclusions are drawn in relation to the research questions which were the foci of the study. The four research questions were:

- What are the causes of disparities in literacy readiness of learners at the level of pre-primary?
- To what do teachers attribute the disparities in literacy readiness of pre-primary learners?
- How do teachers' perceptions relate to disparities in literacy readiness of learners?
- In what ways do the teachers' pedagogic practices support or constrain the development of pre-primary learners' literacy skills?

7.2 Conclusions drawn

In light of the data presented and analysed, conclusions are drawn in response to the sub-research questions highlighted below.

7.2.1 To what do teachers attribute the disparities in literacy readiness of pre-primary learners?

It was found that the participant teachers attributed disparities in literacy readiness of learners to external factors, such as the difference between language of teaching and learning and children's home language, absenteeism and inadequacy and ineffectiveness of the curriculum for pre-primary. It principally emerged from the interviews that language was a barrier to learning during the preparatory years. The impression that their explanation gave was that teachers were of the understanding that knowledge of the language of teaching and learning automated literacy readiness. Teachers were also of the opinion that learners find it difficult to acquire readiness, because language difficulties made it problematic for learners to focus fully, and that the curriculum was not able to equip learners with competencies required for advancement to Grade 1. The basis for this perception, among others, was that the curriculum

for pre-primary is more play than learning, and that learners lacked orientation to formal work such as copying down words and sentences, as well as learning letter sounds (see Excerpts 5-7 in Chapter 5).

7.2.2 How do teachers' perceptions relate to the disparities in literacy readiness of learners?

Perception influences the decisions people make, thus teachers' assumptions and beliefs have an influence on their practices and the abilities of their students (Contreras, 2011). The fact that teachers perceived disparities in literacy readiness of their learners to be solely a result of external factors, such as second-language status, absenteeism and curriculum ineffectiveness, may bear consequences for their practices and learner performance. When this is the perception, as it was found in this study, teachers will not regard teaching as strategic in language and literacy learning, because they do not expect learners to learn and attain literacy readiness for the reason that they are second-language learners.

As the perceptions are that disparities in the readiness of pre-primary learners are solely caused by factors outside the classroom, such as second-language status, is only confounding to the authentic learning problems that learners may be faced with. This is because, learners' ability to speak the language of teaching and learning is considered by teachers to be the sole determinant of readiness in literacy. Teachers were oblivious to the fact that other literacy skills, apart from oral language, can play a vital role in establishing foundational literacies. As a result, this can negatively influence their' level of effort, teaching methods, materials and classroom interaction patterns, as found in this study.

As a result of this perception, teachers did not make an effort to evaluate their pedagogic practices and this could be obstructive to their innovativeness and their ability to improve their pedagogical content knowledge (Cunningham, et al., 2009). The effects of the teachers' perceptions were evident in their pedagogic practices, and in their lack of mindfulness of individual learners' needs. This manifested in a lack of support for learning, evidenced in learners not being engaged in meaningful learning during lessons. Teachers, as a result of their perceptions, were not able to identify their own role in the literacy readiness of the learners, thus little effort was made to expose learners to meaningful learning experiences during lessons.

7.2.3 In what ways do their pedagogic practices support or constrain the development of pre-primary learners' literacy skills?

Support for the development of literacy skills of learners in all the classes was limited. This is because teachers' pedagogic practices were found to be more constraining than supportive to the development of literacy skills, as highlighted.

Teachers had limited understanding of the thematic approach to teaching and, as a result, their literacy lessons focused on the content of the theme of integration rather than literacy skills development. Bernstein (2000), in his theory of pedagogic discourse, identifies this as weak classification of discourses, whereby the insulation between contents and boundaries of different subjects are weakened and blurred. Teaching in this manner is regulative, because it is constraining to literacy skills development, as boundaries between teaching goals for literacy and other learning areas were not explicit during lessons (ibid.), leaving lessons with no clear goals to achieve.

As much as the use of resources by teachers was appreciated, the way in which the materials were used was not supportive of literacy skills development. This is because teachers only asked learners to identify facts about the story pictures while focusing on the theme of integration. Teachers decided what learners were going to say about the stories and pictures. This use of materials was limiting to the learners' literacy skills development, because there was limited freedom of creativity by the learners. Learners were not given an opportunity to interact with the resources. Resources were not used to promote language development by sharing experiences through co-construction of meaning (Klibthong, 2012), because learners were asked only to reproduce what the teacher had provided through resources as learning content.

Bernstein (2003) establishes this as regulative, because teachers were in complete control of the selection of the content used during the lessons and learners did not contribute to it. This means that content emanated from the teachers' cultural and contextual orientation, which only a few of the learners may resonate with, thus impeding the understanding of those from contrary cultural and contextual orientations. In addition, it was found that books were not regarded as useful resources in the researched classes. Book corners were found to be dysfunctional and in some cases non-existent and, as a result, learners were not read to and story book reading was

not modelled to the learners, a factor limiting to the development of learners' emergent literacy and their acquisition of print knowledge (Nel, et al., 2016).

Although during interviews, teachers identified ways in which interaction could be sustained during lessons, interaction was still limited as the proffered dialogic activities were not used in practice. Social and collaborative learning did not take place and authentic interaction between teacher and learner and between learners was not promoted. There was a lack of learner participation during lessons and language use was constrained, as learners were not probed to use language beyond phrases. This was because only closed-ended and factual questions were used by teachers during oral comprehension and was limiting to the development of both first- and second-language learners' cognitive and language skills (Nel, et al., 2016). This, according to Bernstein (2000), will not facilitate the acquisition of realisation rules which are only acquired through the use of an elaborate form of language. Without the acquisition of these rules, learners will lack verbal fluency, associative reasoning and relational thinking, resulting in impaired knowledge acquisition and readiness to cope with learning demands in elementary grades (Naude, et al., 2003; Nel, et al., 2016).

A lack of support for second-language learners was similarly a part of the teachers' practices found to constrain literacy skills development of second-language learners, thereby increasing disparities. Learners missed out on the opportunities to acquire language fundamental to literacy skills development, because learners responded mostly by chorusing and repetition, thus missing the opportunity for support for individual needs. The pace of the lesson as well as the sequence of activities during lessons were not cognisant of the learners' learning needs and levels of acquisition. Bernstein asserts that the pacing rules have to be determined by learners' level of acquisition for learning to take place (2003). This will enable the teacher to consolidate learning at every stage of the lesson before progression, so that gaps are not created.

The development of writing skills was similarly found to be constrained during the lessons. Not much attention was paid to expressive emergent writing activities that are similarly foundational for school readiness. Teachers were not supportive, as evidenced by limited opportunities that were availed for learners to practise writing during lessons. There was a lack of monitoring and support during writing activities. The criteria for evaluating their written tasks were not made explicit for learners to attain. This, according to Bernstein, is regulative, because criteria "enable the acquirer to understand what counts as legitimate or illegitimate

communication, social relation, or position" (2003, p. 198) and if this is not made known, learners are not aware of the level on which they have met the expectations, and which other parts of the competency still remain to be acquired.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the children were not given the opportunity to establish foundational literacies that make them 'school ready' and that the teachers' lack of awareness about how to achieve this is grounded in pre-conceived ideas about what children should know or do in a pre-primary classroom environment. A lack of empathy for second-language learners in their classes, together with a pedagogic style which did not facilitate learning, depending on the needs of individual learners, prevented children from developing their literacy competencies. Treating the class as a single unit through chorusing, closed-ended questions that obstruct discussion, and teacher-controlled knowledge, means that the child at pre-primary level is not benefitting from the potential opportunity to establish foundational literacies. When a poorly designed curriculum and teacher manual is added to the mix, with teachers essentially requiring children to perform tasks that are at an inappropriate level (Grade 1), the child is not given a chance to develop according to his/her natural capabilities at pre-primary level. The danger is that children will become disheartened and adopt negative learning attitudes before they have even started their formal schooling and will not progress to a desired level of competency in the language of teaching and learning.

Teachers' pedagogic practices were found to have the potential to contribute immensely to the disparities that exist in literacy readiness of learners. Even though learners come from different social and economic backgrounds, where they are differently positioned as regards language and skills necessary for learning at preschool level, the classrooms continually widen the gap through use of pedagogic practices that mainly maintain the social status quo of the learners instead of helping all of them reach their full potential.

7.3 Recommendations

It is argued by Kelly (2004) that comparative evaluation and 'cannibalism' may constrain the success of curriculum implementation, thus I recommend that teachers and school management should be well informed about the importance of the curriculum for pre-primary, as well as why and how it differs from the curriculum for Grade 1. Doing this will reduce the effects of defective understanding, feelings and attitudes on the curriculum implementation process (Carl, 2009).

It was found that teachers did not promote learning, particularly through facilitation of interaction, questioning, as well as provision of learning support, at the level of pre-primary. Providing quality professional development courses will empower teachers with the best approaches to ensure readiness for all learners in the area of literacy. It could, additionally, be suggested that the training of teachers should be evaluated to determine if their core education provides for the gaps in their knowledge.

Story book reading and other emergent reading activities, although construed by literature as central to literacy readiness, were found to be missing from both the curriculum and learning activities of the teachers. Including these activities in the curriculum, coupled with provision of reading materials in the target languages, would be beneficial.

Teachers demonstrated compliance and reliance on the curriculum documents during planning and teaching of their lessons, thus the curriculum documents should be more substantial and more supportive to teachers in this regard. The teacher's manual should be designed in a way that does not only list activities, but also provides practical hints on the type of questions that can be used and ways of mediating activities to increase learner participation and creativity.

In my view point, the findings of this study seem to suggest that teachers as well as professional support personnel require more than a training workshop to be able to teach at the level of Pre-primary. It is therefore suggested that longitudinal and specialised courses should be made accessible to equip teachers and trainers with sufficient pedagogic knowledge capital required to be able to build a desirable foundation for the learners. A focus need to be evenly spread to both access and quality to enable the program to have an impact on the quality of education as intended.

Given the background of the program, it is suggested that more need to be done to bring about a shift in the perception that stakeholders at different levels of education hold about the importance of pre-primary education.

It is similarly deemed necessary that academics and officials in the field of education carry out research to bring to the fore hidden contextual factors that may constrain learning and teaching during pre-primary education. I finally suggest as a result of this study that inquiry into the actual pedagogic content knowledge of pre-primary teachers in the area of literacy development be done to discover gaps and areas in which they may still require support and training.

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APPENDIX A: Letter of permission

21 January 2016

The Director of Education

Kavango East Regional Office

Rundu

Request for permission to conduct research in schools

I am a part-time Master of Education Student in the Field of English Language teaching and literacy development at Rhodes University. For the purpose of this course, I am required to conduct research in Pre-primary classes at 3 schools (R Jp, K Ps and S Ps) with intent to understand causes of discrepancies in the readiness of Pre-primary learners in literacy.

The research project will require me to conduct interviews with teachers in the afternoons and also observe 3 lessons per teacher during language education periods in the mornings. This will require me to be away from office duty for several hours a day for approximately 15 days of term 1 that are yet to be agreed with the teachers for the purpose of data collection.

I therefore request for your permission to leave the office when necessary for this activity and I assure that work obligations will be given priority to ensure that the project does not negatively interfere with my work or the work of the teachers in the schools.

Your understanding in this regard is highly appreciated.

Hildefonsia Haingura

Comments..... The applicant can be granted a permission to conduct educational research and ensure that teaching and learning activities are not disrupted in the process.

..... 22/01/2016

Mr. N. Ngalangi — Date

Acting CEO: Professional Development

Comments..... Approval granted

..... 22/01/2016

Mr. M. Nauyoma — Date

Director of Education

Kavango East Regional Council

KAVANGO REGIONAL COUNCIL DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION 2016 -01- 22 DIRECTOR PRIVATE BAG 2134 RUNDU

APPENDIX B: Letter of permission: Principal 1

P.O.Box 2312

Rundu

Namibia

The Principal

Combined school

Rundu

Dear Sir/Madam

Request for permission to conduct research at your school.

I am a part-time Master of Education Student in the Field of English Language teaching and literacy development at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.

I request for your permission to conduct research for the purpose of my studies in the Pre-primary class at your school with intent to understand the causes of discrepancies in literacy readiness of Pre-primary learners. The study will involve teacher interviews after school and 3 classroom observations in the same class during first language periods on different dates to be agreed with the teacher.

I undertake to work ethically with the teachers and avoid any disturbance to school activities. The teacher will be informed about their voluntary participation and also provide their written consent. I will ensure that the details of the school and participants remain anonymous by using pseudonyms in the report of the study. In addition, teachers will be free to withdraw from participating at anytime without negative consequences to themselves.

If you require further input, you are welcome to contact my research supervisor and lecturer, Dr Giulietta Harrison at +27(0) 46 603 7221 by email at g.harrison@ru.ac.za.

Thanking you in advance

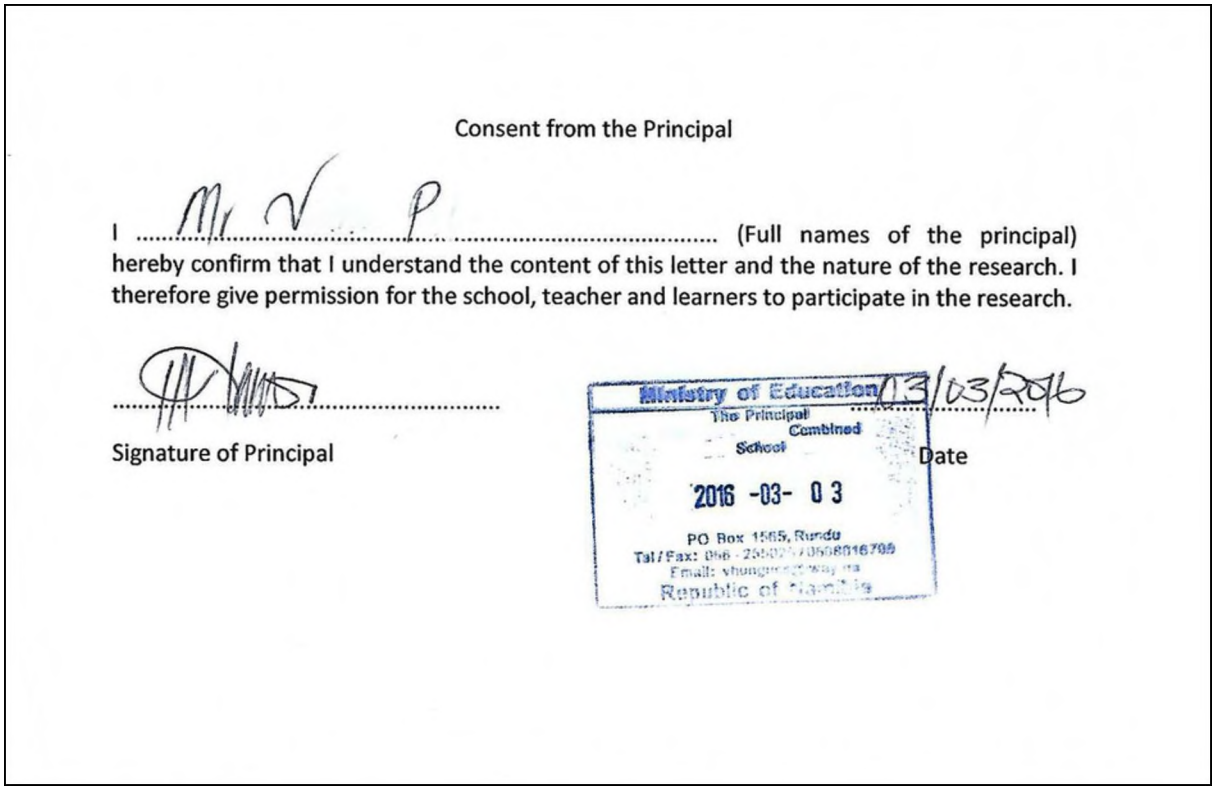
Yours Sincerely,

Name: Hildefonsia Haingura

Student number: 613H7063

Contact no: 0816161524

APPENDIX C: Letter of consent: Principal 2



Consent from the Principal

I Mr V P ..... (Full names of the principal) hereby confirm that I understand the content of this letter and the nature of the research. I therefore give permission for the school, teacher and learners to participate in the research.

.....

Signature of Principal

Ministry of Education
The Principal
Combined
School
2016 -03- 03
PO Box 1565, Rundu
Tel/Fax: 066 - 25502
Email: shungu
Republic of Namibia

13/03/2016

Date

APPENDIX D: Letter of consent: Teacher 1

P.O.Box 2312

Rundu

Namibia

Via The Principal

The pre-primary teacher

K Senior Primary school

Rundu

Dear Sir/Madam

Request for permission to conduct research in your classroom.

I am a part-time Master of Education Student in the Field of English Language teaching and literacy development at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.

I request for your permission to conduct research for the purpose of my studies in the Pre-primary class at your school with intent to understand the causes of discrepancies in the literacy readiness of Pre-primary learners. The study will involve teacher interviews after school and 3 classroom observations in your class during first language periods on different dates to be agreed with you.

I undertake to work ethically and avoid any disturbance to school activities. You and your learners' participation in the study are voluntary and you may decide to withdraw at any time without consequences to yourself. I will ensure that the details of the school and participants remain anonymous by using pseudonyms in the report of the study.

If you require further input, you are welcome to contact me or my research supervisor and lecturer, Dr Giulietta Harrison at +27(0) 46 603 7221 by email at g.harrison@ru.ac.za.

Thanking you in advance

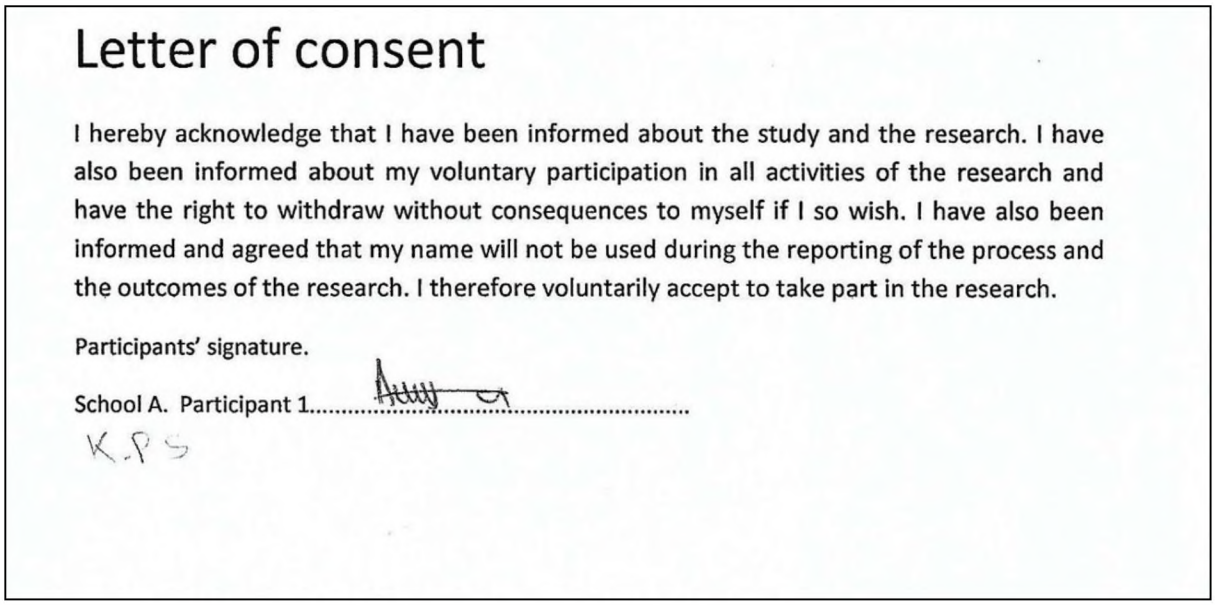
Yours Sincerely,

Name: Hildefonsia Haingura

Student number: 613H7063

Contact no: 0816161524

APPENDIX E: Letter of consent: Teacher 2



Letter of consent

I hereby acknowledge that I have been informed about the study and the research. I have also been informed about my voluntary participation in all activities of the research and have the right to withdraw without consequences to myself if I so wish. I have also been informed and agreed that my name will not be used during the reporting of the process and the outcomes of the research. I therefore voluntarily accept to take part in the research.

Participants' signature.

School A. Participant 1.....

K.P.S

APPENDIX F: Letter of consent: parents

To the parents /guardians of....S.....F.....

Request for permission for your child to take part in research being conducted at their school.

I am Haingura Hildefonsia, a part-time Master of Education Student in the Field of English Language teaching and literacy development at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.

I am conducting research for the purpose of my studies in the Pre-primary class at your child's school with intent to understand the causes of discrepancies in literacy readiness of Pre-primary learners. The study will involve 3 classroom observations in the pre-primary class during first language periods on different dates to be agreed with the teacher.

I undertake to work ethically with the learners and avoid any disturbance to school activities. The learners will only participate if their parents give permission for them to remain in the class during this observation. I will ensure that details of the learner identity will not be disclosed during the report of the study.

I also wish to inform you that should you change your mind about the child's participation later, you are free to inform me/teacher so that the child can be withdrawn.

If you require further input, you are welcome to contact me at 0816161524 or my research supervisor and lecturer, Dr Giulietta Harrison at +27 (0) 46 603 7221 or by email at g.harrison@ru.ac.za.

Please complete spaces below if you are voluntarily allowing your child to remain in the class during classroom observations for the explained research.

Parent/guardian's name: S.....M.....D

Signature.....

Date: 11/02/2016

APPENDIX G: Interview schedule

1. How would you describe the readiness of learners in literacy after a year in Pre-primary?
2. What in your view are the causes of disparities in the literacy readiness of learners?
3. Do you provide support to learners in literacy? Which types of learners do you support and how?
4. Do your learners participate in literacy lessons? In what ways do they participate?
5. Do you use questioning during lessons? What type of questions do you use?
6. Do you make use of resources when teaching literacy? What type of resources do you use and why?
7. What is your view of the Pre-primary curriculum for literacy?
8. Do you take an integrated approach to teaching literacy? How and why do you do that?
9. What is your view of the professional support required to teach literacy at this level?

APPENDIX H: Summary of teachers' responses to interview questions

Question 1: What is your view of the readiness of learners in literacy after a year of school readiness program?

Thematic responses	No. of teachers	Relevant teachers
There are discrepancies, but most of the learners are usually ready to start grade 1.	3	Teacher A,B,C
Some learners are so over ready that they can do gr 1's work.	1	Teacher B

Question 2: What in your view are the causes of discrepancies in their readiness in literacy?

Thematic responses	No. of teachers	Relevant teachers
Children speaking a different language from the one used for teaching and learning	3	Teacher A,B,C
Language problems improve by the end of the year	2	Teacher A &C
Children do not participate, because of language problems	1	Teacher A
Children have problems in speaking, but not in writing.	1	Teacher B
Some learners experience problems in writing	1	Teacher C
Some learners do no attend classes as expected	2	Teacher B &C

Question 3: Do you provide support to learners in literacy? Which types of learners do you support and how?

Thematic responses	**No. of teachers**	**Relevant teachers**
Yes, to learners with problems in LOTL	3	Teacher A, B, C
Learners who did not attend kindergarten	1	Teacher B
Remain/ Sit with them separately to help them	2	Teacher A, B,
Involve other learners to help them	1	Teacher A
Use resources to help them learn better	3	Teacher A,B,C
Involve them in activities with others who know the LOTL	2	Teacher B, C
Free-play roleplay and games to encourage them to speak	3	Teacher A,B,C

Using songs and rhymes	2	Teacher A, B
Using picture books	1	Teacher A
Play activities using toys	1	Teacher A

Question 4: Do your learners participate in literacy lessons? In what ways do they participate?

Thematic responses	No. of teachers	Relevant teachers
Learners participate by answering questions	3	A, B, C
By retelling stories	1	B
Through practical activity like building a body with loose parts	1	B
By telling what they see on the pictures	1	B
By role-playing stories	1	C
By drawing and explaining to others what they have drawn	1	C

Question 5: Do you use questioning during lessons? What type of questions do you use?

Thematic responses	No. of teachers	Relevant teachers
Do not regard the type	1	Teacher A
Ask to see if they have listened	2	Teacher A,C
Questions that relate to the learners' experience	1	Teacher B

Question 6: What happens when the child could not answer the question or perform an activity as expected?

Thematic responses	No. of teachers	Relevant teachers
Given more time	1	A
Ask another learner and later ask the wrong learner a different and easy question	2	A&C
Ask the wrong learner to repeat what the correct learner has said	3	A,B,C
Retain them after class and work with them individually	1	B
Call them to show them how they were expected to do it	1	C

Question 7: Do you make use of resources when teaching literacy? What type of resources do you use and why

Thematic responses	No. of teachers	Relevant teachers
Resources are used during literacy teaching	3	A,B,C
Pictures and real objects /concrete materials are used	3	A,B,C
TV or Laptop used for learners to watch story plays	1	B
Resources are used to help the learners understand better	3	A, B, C
The use of resources improve participation	1	A
The use of resources make the lessons more interesting	2	A, C
Learners learn best when they see and touch things	2	B, C

Question 8: What is your view of the Pre-primary curriculum for literacy?

Thematic responses	No. of teachers	Relevant teachers
It does not elaborate more on what learners should do	1	B
Learners should read more not pre-reading activities only	1	B
If the curriculum is adhered to, then learners will not learn more	2	B, C
It is considered by management as play only and not learning	1	B
It is more play than learning itself	2	C, B
Children need a bit of formal work	2	C, B
No comment on the curriculum	1	A
Curriculum activities for listening and speaking are not sufficient	1	C

Question 9: Do you take an integrated approach to teaching and learning? How do you do that?

Thematic responses	No of teachers	Relevant teachers
Yes, subject integration is used	**3**	**A, B, C**
By doing cross assessment	2	A, B
Use songs to teach content	2	A, B

Counting body parts is maths integrated in Env learning	2	B, C

Question 10: How in your view do other subjects support the development of literacy skills at this level?

Thematic responses	**No. of teachers**	**Relevant teachers**
Learners discuss their art work which improves speaking	1	A
Environmental studies also support language because it is almost the same as language.	3	A, B, C
Eye-hand coordination in Art supports writing skills	1	B
Visual art support pre-writing as well	1	B

Question 11: What is your view of the professional support required to teach literacy at this level?

Thematic responses	**No. of teachers**	**Relevant teachers**
Need support in the teaching of RME stories	1	C
Need support in the teaching of listening and speaking	1	C
Need more training	1	C
Need no professional support	1	A
Teachers need to work hard	1	B
Need parental support at home	1	A

APPENDIX I: Summary of lesson observation forms

Teacher A: Lesson 1										
Literacy skill being taught	Description of activity	Resources being used	Specifics of activity	Learner response	Type of questions being asked	Kind of support to language 2 learners	Language code being used by learners	Language code being used by teachers	Recognition/ realisation rules	Framing of selection, sequence, pacing and evaluation of learning
Listening and speaking	1.Oral comprehension	Pictures of gingerbread boy story	Learners asked to look at the pictures and say what is happening.	Most learners were willing to answer	Open- ended	Mistakes in the pronunciation of words were corrected	Elaborate: Learners were speaking in sentences and teachers prompted to share own perspectives	Elaborate: Giving detailed description	Realisation: Learners were using their own words to share their understanding	Weak framing of the selection of content: Learners were allowed to share their own ideas of what they thought was happening on the pictures.
		None	Learners asked to answer general questions on the story they were told	Most of the learners were eager to respond	Closed ended		Restricted: only one word or action is given for an answer	Elaborate	Passive realisation: only responding to prompts	Strong framing of the selection of content. Questions asked are only looking for one factual answer. There are no options for learners.
		2 puppets (big & small)	Learners asked to identify body parts on the puppets	Most of the learners are eager to respond	Closed ended	Wrong pronunciation of words were corrected	Restricted: Only names of the body parts were mentioned/pointed at by learners	Elaborate	Passive realisation: Only responding to prompts	Strong framing of the selection of content. The teacher was in control. There was no choice or room for creativity.
		Workbooks	Learners are asked to match loose body parts to the parts in the centre of the picture	All learners were working in their workbooks		Learners were assisted one by one			Passive realisation: Learners did not require comprehension to be able to complete the task.	Weak framing of the evaluation rules. Learners were assessed on the activity which was not a part of the lesson objective
Teacher A: Lesson 2										
Literacy skill being taught	Description of activity	Resources being used	Specifics of activity	Learner response	Type of questions being asked	Kind of support to language 2 learners	Language code being used by learners	Language code being used by teacher	Recognition/ realisation rules	Framing of selection, sequence, pacing and evaluation of learning
Preparatory and	Picture reading	Poster of labelled parts	Learners asked to identify body	Most of the learners were	Closed ended	Learners asked to repeat words	Restricted	elaborated	Passive realisation	Strong framing of selection rules as the teacher was in control of the content.

incidental reading		of a human face	parts on the chart.	willing to answer		as a whole group.				
	Incidental reading	Word cards of the body parts	Learners to identify words and read them aloud	Only 3 learners were willing to answer and all could not read any word correctly	Closed ended	Learners asked to repeat the words as a group after the teacher.	Restricted	Elaborate	Passive realisation	Strong framing of the selection and pacing. Teacher chose the words and did not prepare learners for the activity and the learning of the skill was not well consolidated. (Moved fast through)
		Word cards of the days of the week	Learners asked to read the word cards	No learner was willing to respond until they were told that they are days of the week.	Closed ended	Learners asked to repeat after the teacher as a whole group	Restricted	Elaborate	Passive realisation	Strong framing of the sequence. The teachers was in control of the sequence of the learned content.
Teacher A: Lesson 3										
Literacy skill being taught	**Description of activity**	**Resources being used**	**Specifics of activity**	**Learner response**	**Type of questions being asked**	**Kind of support to language 2 learners**	**Language code being used by learners**	**Language code being used by teachers**	**Recognition / realisation rules**	**Framing of selection, sequence, pacing and evaluation of learning**
Preparatory writing	Directionality	None	Sing a song while pointing to different directions	Learners were actively singing						
	Finger exercises	None	Learners asked to imitating light beams	Active and enjoying the activity	Closed ended: What makes like this?	Individual children were assisted to exercise alone	Restricted: It was mostly actions	Elaborate		
	writing	workbooks	Learners asked to look at the overlapping picture of a girl and a boy. Choose and colour one of them	Initially confused, but later could identify the two pictures	Closed ended/ open ended	Teacher ask the whole class to repeat the correct answer after a mistake. Individual children were assisted	Restricted: only words are said.	Elaborative: Explains and paraphrases questions. Say learners responses in sentences	Passive realisation. Learners responded to prompts only.	Weak framing of the pace of learning as learners were in control of the pace of learning
Teacher B: Lesson 1										

Literacy skill being taught	Description of activity	Resources being used	Specifics of activity	Learner response	Type of questions being asked	Kind of support to language 2 learners	Language code being used by learners	Language code being used by teachers	Recognition/ realisation rules	Framing of selection, sequence, pacing and evaluation of learning
Listening and speaking	Oral comprehension	Clay	Learners listen to the story and answer questions	All listening quietly and eager to respond	Closed-ended: What part did the old woman put on the bread.	Teacher asks whole class to repeat the correct answers	Restricted: They responded with only one word or action	Elaborate: The teachers did the story telling.	The context was recognised with the practical work that the teacher was doing. Clay moulding	Strong framing of the selection of the content, because the teacher was in full control of the content of the lesson.
	Game	None	Teacher gives instruction and learners carry them out silently	Learners were all eager to do the actions	Closed-ended: learners were not expected to speak, but act only.	Asked some learners to model the actions to others	Restricted: Only actions were performed silently	Restricted; teacher was only giving phrases	Recognition: acquired legitimate understanding of the context	Strong framing: The teachers was in control of the selection of content.
	Speaking	Pictures of body parts	Learners asked to pick a picture of a body part and tell others what it is called.	Learners were all eager to respond	Closed-ended: Who will come and take one picture? What is that called?	Learners asked to repeat the correct answers in chorus	Restricted	Elaborate: teacher was explaining in detail	The context was recognised, but was passively realised	Strong framing of the selection of the content. Learners had limited choice of the content to be learned.
Teacher B: Lesson 2										
Literacy skill being taught	**Description of activity**	**Resources being used**	**Specifics of activity**	**Learner response**	**Type of questions being asked**	**Kind of support to language 2 learners**	**Language code being used by learners**	**Language code being used by teachers**	**Recognition/ realisation rules**	**Framing of selection, sequence, pacing and evaluation of learning**
Preparatory and incidental reading	Revision of the previous work	None	Teacher retell the story of the gingerbread boy and asks comprehension questions	Learners are willing to answer	Closed-ended. What part of the body did the woman put on the bread?	Learners are assisted to pronounce the words correctly	Restricted	Elaborate	There was understanding of the content that was used to answer questions	Strong framing of the selection of content, because the teacher was in control.
	Picture reading	Pictures of body parts	Teacher paste pictures of the body parts on the CB and ask learners to name	Learners eager to answer	Closed-ended	Chance given to others when they make a mistake.	restricted	Elaborate	Recognised the context, but passively	Strong framing over selection and pacing as teacher was in control. Learners were not given a choice, but to adhere to the order and the chance was

			them in the order they are arranged							given over to others when one made a a mistake.
	Incidental reading	Pictures and word cards	Teacher show the part, learners identify and then look for the name of the part on word cards	Identifying words was a challenge. Only a few learners were willing to try.	Closed-ended: what is this? come and find the word..... here.	Learners asked to repeat saying words in chorus	Restricted	Elaborate	Recognition only	Strong framing of selection. No option of language use for learners.
	speaking	Story pictures	Learners asked to explain what happened in each picture	All learners not willing to answer, 1 raised up later	Open-ended	Chance given to another after a mistake	Elaborate	Elaborate	Recognition and active realisation of context	Weak framing of the selection as learners were in control, but strong framing of the pace as chance was given to another after a mistake.
Teacher B: Lesson 3										
Literacy skill being taught	**Description of activity**	**Resources being used**	**Specifics of activity**	**Learner response**	**Type of questions being asked**	**Kind of support to language 2 learners**	**Language code being used by learners**	**Language code being used by teachers**	**Recognition/ realisation rules**	**Framing of selection, sequence, pacing and evaluation of learning**
Oral fluency	rhyme	None	Teacher asks learners to say the rhyme of the body parts	Learners were all eagerly participating						
Speaking and communication	Story telling	Story pictures	Teacher puts up story pictures and asks learners to tell the story following pictures	Only 5 learners indicate eagerness to respond	Open ended: What happened in this pictures?	Learners are guided on the pronunciation of words	Elaborate: Learners were telling the story in detail using own words	Elaborate: Teacher prompting and asking questions to encourage extensive	Recognition and active realisation: Learners understood and were able to make their understanding public.	Weak framing of the selection and pacing of the learning content.
	Visual closure	Picture of the body parts	Teacher puts up a picture of a body with missing body parts on the chalkboard for learners to identify missing parts.	All learners were eager to answer	Closed ended		Restricted: Only required to say a word or pick up a body part	Elaborate: Was explaining in detail	Recognition of context	Strong framing over the selection of content as the teacher was in control.
		worksheet	Learners asked to complete the body by pasting on missing parts	All learners were eagerly doing the task	Closed ended: Can you see this? What is this?		Restricted: Learners were working individually	Elaborate: Was explaining in	Recognition rules	Strong framing over the rules of evaluation as the criteria was explicit.

					What is missing here?			detail on the process		
Teacher C: Lesson 1										
Literacy skill being taught	**Description of activity**	**Resources being used**	**Specifics of activity**	**Learner response**	**Type of questions being asked**	**Kind of support to language 2 learners**	**Language code being used by learners**	**Language code being used by teachers**	**Recognition/ realisation rules**	**Framing of selection, sequence, pacing and evaluation of learning**
Listening and speaking	Listening and responding	None	Teacher gives verbal instruction to learners to carry out.	All willingly participating	Closed ended. Jump once, clap your hands.		Restricted: Learners answered with action only	Restricted: Only short phrases were said	Recognition only	Strong framing over the selection of content.
	Visual perception	Picture cards	Teacher showed a picture and ask learners to identify what they see on the picture	All were willing to respond	Closed ended: What do you see here? What is the girl here doing?		Restricted: Mostly said yes or no and in chorus	Elaborate: Was telling the story and learners were only confirming	Recognition only.	Strong framing over the selection and pace of learning
	Oral comprehension	Picture cards	Teacher telling the story of the three little bears and ask questions	All eagerly listening	Closed ended: How many bears were there? Did you see the thief?	None	Restricted	Elaborate: The teachers told the whole story in detail.	Recognition only: Learners were only confirming what the pictures were depicting	Strong framing of the selection and pacing of learning.
	Auditory discrimination	1 Sticks and 2 containers	Teacher hits the containers with a stick so that learners can identify loud and soft sound	All responding in chorus	Closed ended: Is this a soft or loud sound	none	restricted	Elaborate	recognition	Strong framing over the selection and pacing of learning
	speaking	none	Teacher asks learners to retell the story of the 3 bears	Only 2 learners showed eagerness to speak	Open ended: Tell us what happened in the story?	Teacher repeated /elaborated what learners said in full sentences	Elaborate: A few learners spoke in sentences	Elaborate: finished what the learners were saying in detail	Active realisation	Weak framing over the selection and pacing of learning as a few learners had a chance to add to the content and time was taken to help learners explain.
	Listening and responding	none	Teacher gave instructions for learners to carry out	Learners were willing to respond and all did the actions	Closed ended	none	Restricted: Actions only	Restricted: Only short phrases were said	Recognition rules only	Strong framing over the selection, sequence and pacing of learning as the teacher was in control.
Teacher C: Lesson 2										

Literacy skill being taught	Description of activity	Resources used	Specifics of the activity	Learner response and level of participation	Types of questions being asked	Kind of support to L2 learners	Language code used by learners	Language code used by teacher	Recognition and realisation rules	Framing of the sequence selection. Pacing and evaluation of learning
Preparatory and incidental learning	Oral fluency	none	Learners sing a song about family	All willing to participate						
	Fine muscle control	Stacking cup	Learners follow with their eyes the movement of the stacking cup without moving their heads.	A few learners were willing to do it, some did not	Closed ended	Some individual learners were given chance to do it alone	restricted	restricted	recognition	Strong framing over the selection as learners did not contribute from own experiences.
	Incidental reading	Learners name cards	Teacher raised up a card for learners to identify and read the name	Only 2 learners showed willingness to respond	Closed ended: Whose name is this? What name is written on this card?	none	Restricted: Learners were only responding with single words	Restricted: only short phrases were used	Recognition rules only	Strong framing over the selection and pacing of learning. The teacher provided what learners had to read. No freedom of choice or creativity allowed. Teacher controlled the pace as chances were given to another after mistakes were made
		Name cards	All cards were put on the floor for learners to pick any name they recognised	All learners were willing to respond	Closed ended	none	restricted	restricted	Recognition: Only chose words without elaboration	weak framing over the selection as learners were given a choice of words.
	Oral fluency		Ask learners to sing a song about family: Where is father?	All learners were willing to participate						
Teacher C: Lesson 3										
Literacy skill being taught	**Description of the activity**	**Resources being used**	**Specifics of the activity**	**Learner response and level of participation**	**Types of questions being asked**	**Kind of support to L2 learners**	**Language code used by learners**	**Language codes used by teachers**	**Recognition/ realisation rule**	**Framing over the selection, pacing, sequencing and evaluation of learning.**
Preparatory writing	Speaking and communication (recap)	none	Learners are asked to retell the story of the 3 bears	A few learners willing to speak. The learners spoke in chorus	Open ended	Repeated and elaborated on the learners answers	Elaborate: Learners were speaking in short sentences and phrases	Elaborate: Told the details of the story	Active realisation: Learners attempted to make their	Weak framing over the selection and pacing of learning as a few learners tried to retell using their own words

									understanding public	and time was given to learners to try before proceeding.
		Story picture cards	Show learners story pictures and ask questions	A few learners were willing to respond(5)	Open ended: What is happening in this picture	Elaborated on the learners responses	Elaborate: Attempted to respond in full sentences	Elaborate	Active realisation	Weak framing over the selection and pacing of learning. A few learners contributed to the content from their experiences.
	Fine muscle control	none	Learners imitate different finger exercises from the teacher	Learners were eagerly doing the exercises	Closed ended	Some learners who could not endure were asked to do it individually	restricted	Restricted		Strong framing over the selection and pacing of content as the teacher ordered learners to do it the way she did.
	Preparatory writing	worksheets	Learners are given picture of a person to colour in	All learners were participating	Closed ended: Who is this? Do you know how to colour?	The teacher went around to assist learners by pointing out unfinished sections of the picture and encourage them to colour in time.	restricted	restricted	recognition	Weak framing of the evaluation rules as the criteria was not explicitly explained as to how the picture was expected to be coloured.