Developing a foundation phase preservice teacher preparation framework for English first additional language

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DECLARATION

I the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Jeannine Bridget Keating

28 February 2021

This study is dedicated to:

My grandchildren, Easton Walker and Colibri Rae Keating, and to all my future grandchildren.

May this inspire your quest for life-long learning and knowledge.

IF GRANNY CAN DO IT, SO CAN YOU!

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ABSTRACT

The lack of preparation of preservice student teachers to teach English First Additional Language in the Foundation Phase is currently a cause for concern, both nationally and internationally. A gap has been identified between what these teachers know and how they have been prepared during their initial teacher preparation programmes to equip them for this complex task. This lack of preparation impacts on the quality of education, on learner performance in terms of low literacy rates and even on the confidence of these teachers. Competent teachers are a vital factor in relation to the academic success of learners. The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of preparedness to teach English as First Additional Language as expressed by preservice student teachers and beginner teachers as well as by heads of department. This was used to inform and develop a Foundation Phase preservice student teacher preparation framework for EFAL that can be used by teacher training programmes.

The theoretical framework for the research for this study was situated in Shulman's knowledge domains. This included understanding the content to such a degree that it can be conveyed to learners in a comprehensible manner, that is, the clarification of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). One of the major challenges, in relation to the conundrum facing preservice teacher preparation, are the various issues in terms of an absence of a solid knowledge base. This includes a lack of subject content and pedagogical knowledge which has the required depth and rigour to ensure that learners are provided with a strong reading foundation for successful learning. This has necessitated the identification of the core components which must be included in the training of preservice student teachers to teach English First Additional Language in the Foundation Phase.

Utilising a constructivist-interpretive paradigm, qualitative research was undertaken to identify the problems related to this phenomenon and the related implications. The phenomenon in question is the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers and beginner teachers to teach English First Additional Language in the Foundation Phase. The core results of the study indicate an absence of thorough preparation for many of these teachers and therefore a lack of readiness to teach English First Additional language effectively in the schools. The inclusion of more modules, a more in-depth study of these modules was cited as some of the aspects which require more attention during training.

It is imperative that prompt action must be taken so that the training of these preservice student teachers is more rigorous and better aligned with decades of reading science to improve the

standard of their training. The outcome ultimately is to raise the literacy rates and prepare Foundation Phase learners for the demands of English as their language of teaching and learning from Grade 4. The suggested framework which has been developed can be utilised to structure the training of preservice student teachers to teach English First Additional Language in the Foundation Phase. This will contribute towards the provision of a more solid knowledge base which these teachers can use to teach English First Additional Language more effectively.

Key words:

teacher preparation, English First Additional Language, Foundation Phase, preservice student teachers, initial teacher preparation programmes, PCK, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge

OPSOMMING

Daar is tans nasionaal sowel as internasionaal kommer ten opsigte van die gebrek aan voldoende voorbereiding van BEd-Grondslagfasestudente om Engels Eerste Addisionele taal (EAT) te onderrig. Daar is ’n gaping tussen wat hierdie studente weet en hoe hulle voorberei word vir hierdie ingewikkelde taak in die aanvanklike voorbereidingsprogramme. Die gebrek aan voorbereiding het ’n impak op die kwaliteit van onderrig, leerderprestasies in terme van lae geletterdheidsvlakke en onderwysers se selfvertroue.

Bekwame onderwysers speel ’n belangrike rol in die akademiese sukses van leerders en die doel van hierdie studie was om die persepsies van die geïdentifiseerde onderwysstudente, beginneronderwysers, sowel as die departementshoofde te bepaal ten opsigte van hulle voorbereidheid om Engels as EAT te onderrig. Die data wat uit die studie gegenereer is, is gebruik om ’n Engels as EAT grondslagfasevoorbereidingsraamwerk te ontwikkel wat gebruik kan word om in onderwysopleidingsprogramme.

Shulman se beskouing oor die kennisdomeine waaroor ’n onderwyser moet beskik is gebruik as die teoretiese raamwerk vir die navorsing vir hierdie studie. Hierdie teoretiese raamwerk sluit in dat die onderwysers oor die nodige inhoudskennis moet beskik en dit op ’n verstaanbare wyse oor te dra aan leerders, wat dus as PCK verduidelik kan word. Een van die grootste uitdagings tans ten opsigte van onderwyseropleidingsprogramme is dat studente steeds nie oor goeie en gegronde inhoudskennis beskik nie. 'n Gebrek aan vakinhoudskennis asook pedagogiese kennis verhoed onderwysers om met diepte en noukeurigheid leerders met 'n sterk leesgrondslag toe te rus vir suksesvolle leer. Die identifisering van kernkomponente in die opleiding van Grondslagfasestudente vir die onderrig van Engels as EAT is noodsaaklik.

In hierdie studie is daar vanuit ’n konstruktivistiese, interpretatiewe paradigma gewerk. ’n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsmetodologie is gevolg om die probleme wat verband hou met die fenomeen en die implikasies wat daarmee verband hou te ondersoek. Die fenomeen wat in die studie ondersoek is, is die voorbereidheid van Grondslagfasestudente en beginneronderwysers om Engels as EAT te kan onderrig in die Grondslagfase. Die resultate van die studie dui op die onvoorbereidheid van hierdie voornemende- en beginneronderwysers om Engels as EAT effektief in die skool te onderrig. Die insluiting van meer modules en 'n meer diepgaande studie van hierdie modules word genoem as enkele aspekte wat meer aandag vereis gedurende hul opleiding.

Noodsaaklik en onmiddellike ingryping is nodig om die standaard van onderwyseropleidingsprogramme te hersien en te belyn met navorsing aangaande die wetenskap van lees en leesonderrig. Die uiteindelike doel is om Grondslagfaseleerders se geletterdheidsvlakke te verbeter en om hulle voor te berei vir die vereistes van die Graad 4 waar Engels die medium van onderrig is.

Die voorgestelde grondslagfase-voorbereidingsraamwerk, kan gebruik word om die opleiding van Grondslagfasestudente in die onderrig van Engels as EAT beter te struktureer. Die raamwerk sal verder ook bydra tot die daarstelling van 'n goeie inhoudskennis wat hierdie onderwysers benodig om Engels as EAT doeltreffender te onderrig.

Sleutelwoorde:

onderwysersvoorbereiding, Engels Eerste Addisionele Taal, Grondslagfase, onderwysstudente, aanvanklike voorbereidingsprogramme vir onderwysers, PCK, inhoudskennis, pedagogiese kennis

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BEd	Baccalareus Educationis
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
CDE	The Centre for Development and Enterprise
CHE	Council on Higher Education
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
EFAL	English First Additional Language
ELLs	English Language Learners
ENGF	English Medium of Instruction
ESL	English Second Language
FP	Foundation Phase
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HODs	Heads of Department
IP	Intermediate Phase
IRA	International Reading Association
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITERP	Initial Teacher Research Project

LITA	Literacy First Additional Language
LITG	Literacy Academic English
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
MRTEQ	Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications
MTES	Mathematics Teacher Educators
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NQTs	Newly Qualified Teachers
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy
PK	Pedagogical Knowledge
PrimTEd	Primary Teacher Education Project
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SACE	South African Council for Educators
TEIs	Teacher Education Institutions
TPS	Teacher Professional Standards
WIL	Work Integrated Learning

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 Background to problem statement and intellectual conundrum

The crisis in education in South Africa is not a new phenomenon; it is a long-standing problem which is yet to be resolved. There are multiple references to this phenomenon in the media and in research. For example, in 2013 Spaull referred to South Africa's education system as being in a *dire state*. In the World Development Report 2018 (The World Bank, 2018:71) there are several references that *education is in a learning crisis*. This report estimates that "globally, 125 million children are not acquiring functional literacy". This sentiment is shared locally by Draper *et al.* (2017), who refer to "an ongoing crisis in South African education". In line with this, based on the third Progress in International Reading Literacy (PIRLS) assessment of 2016, Howie *et al.* (2017:75) highlight that "South Africa faces many educational challenges as a developing country and raises concerns about the teaching of reading literacy in schools". The results of this assessment indicate that the "overall reading literacy achievement remains very low" and that "relatively few learners could achieve the Lowest Benchmark" (Howie *et al*., 2017:90) which constitutes basic literacy; this is despite the fact that learners wrote PIRLS Literacy, which is an easier version of the test. "Low" and "relatively few learners" equate to "78% of South African Grade 4 children were not able to reach the lowest benchmark" and this implies that they "could not locate explicit information or reproduce information from a text by the end of Grade 4" (Howie *et al*., 2017:73). This clearly shows the magnitude of the challenge that education in South Africa faces, specifically in terms of literacy.

While there are a variety of factors which contribute to this ongoing education crisis, including the low literacy rates in South Africa and poor learner performance alluded to above, one of the critical factors in relation to the low literacy rates is "inadequate and inexpert teacher training" (Maddock & Maroun, 2018:193). Rigorous teacher training is essential in order to equip teachers for the quality teaching of literacy in the Foundation Phase (FP), which is evidently problematic. In the World Development Report 2018 (The World Bank, 2018:71 & 80) it is stressed that "teachers are the most important determinant of student learning" although they "may not always have the necessary pedagogical skills; (and) teachers do not always have the necessary mastery of concepts that they are expected to teach." This is supported by Maddock and Maroun (2018:208) who found that "the teacher remains the most important resource in education". This argument is also confirmed by Deacon (2016b:3), who indicates that "education research the world over is increasingly in agreement that one of the most important determinants of educational quality is the competence of teachers". Draper *et al.* (2017:10) state that "the quality of a nation's teachers

cannot be divorced from the quality of its learners' exiting schools". As the link between teachers and the quality of teaching and learning is undeniable and thorough preservice student teacher preparation is of the utmost importance, it constitutes the focus of this study.

According to Taylor (2014b:4), "Initial Teacher Education (ITE) serves as a bridge between prospective teachers exiting the school system to enrol in teacher education faculties, on one hand, and newly qualified teachers (NQTs) embarking on a career in schooling, on the other". Leaving school as a scholar to being prepared to teach scholars is a process that takes four years to complete. Deacon (2016b:3) states that "ITE plays a crucial role in ensuring that teachers are able to create an environment that best facilitates learning and that they have adequate subject content knowledge and knowledge of how to present this content to learners of different ages and aptitudes". Although the preparation of FP preservice student teachers takes four years to complete, ensuring that they have the required level of subject content knowledge and the know-how to apply this knowledge is a substantial challenge.

The Initial Teacher Education Research Project (ITERP) "was prompted by concerns about the poor quality of schooling outcomes in South Africa" because research had shown "teacher quality to be a key determinant in learning outcomes" (Jet Education Services, 2019a) and that it therefore required an intervention. This research project found that "the cause of poor performance, by and large, lies not with teachers but with the teacher education system" and that it was necessary "to inform the debate about the quality of Initial Teacher Education (ITE)" (Jet Education Services, 2019a). As such, the ITERP findings point to challenges in ITE by indicating that the "overall quality of initial teacher education remains questionable" (Deacon, 2016b:18) and as such, must be attended to so that the quality of ITE can be improved. This is imperative as it will affect many aspects, such as improved preservice student teacher preparation and ultimately, literacy rates that will hopefully rise exponentially.

In line with factors related to poor teacher preparation, as documented in the Priorities for Education Reform in South Africa, Spaull (2019:3, 5 & 8) specifies the following education problems: "the majority of teachers (80%) lack the content knowledge and pedagogical skill to teach the subjects that they are currently teaching" in order to "impart the curriculum"; in terms of reading, as indicated previously, "nationally representative surveys (PIRLS 2016) show that 78% of Grade 4 learners cannot read for meaning in any language" (all 11 languages were assessed); there is also a "lack of improvement in reading between PIRLS 2011-2016" and "approximately half of South African primary schools (45%) could be described as 'cognitive wastelands', that is that not a single learner can read and make inferences". Additional factors are "a lack of

consensus on both a formal body of knowledge for framing teacher education and an evidence-base for what constitutes good teaching practice that supports learning gains" as well as "highly variable teacher education programmes" (Draper *et al*., 2017:2 and 35). There is also a need to "teach student teachers explicitly, both in theory and practice" and on "the most effective forms of reading instruction" which "South African universities pay little attention to at present" (Draper *et al*., 2017:4). According to Bowie and Reed (2016:105), "with reference to how much of what? in terms of course content the variation across universities is striking", despite the fact that the same content will be taught and applied in all the schools. This indicates that the course content for the same qualification for preservice student teachers varies greatly across universities. Another "area of the curriculum requiring close attention is English First Additional Language (EFAL) studied by 80 percent of the country's learners" (Draper *et al*., 2017:30). Since it will have an impact on the majority of learners in our schools it is imperative that the preservice student teachers should be adequately prepared to teach EFAL correctly and effectively.

Deacon (2016b:3, 8, 11 & 19) identifies some other problematic areas which include the following: "the teaching profession, as yet lacks the ability to determine its own knowledge and practice standards"; there is "little structural and conceptual coherence" to "weld together the teaching of subject and pedagogical knowledge with curriculum requirements"; there is "no common or core national ITE curriculum"; and there are "variations between institutions" in terms of time allocation, duration and the various levels of cognitive demand of the modules which also apply to the different universities in terms of the "duration, organisation, the quality and content of learning experiences and the form and nature of assessment" of "work-integrated learning". Such is the complexity of the problem that Deacon (2016b:26) suggests "a complete rethinking of ITE by the teacher education profession itself". A complete rethink indicates that everything in relation to ITE must be reconsidered so that the necessary changes can be made.

In his final report for the Initial Teacher Education Research Project, Deacon (2016b:17), after a review of initial teacher education programmes, states that "fewer than half were immediately worthy of full accreditation" and therefore not up to the required standard. There are, however, policies to guide ITE. The revised Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) (DHET, 2015:18) policy stipulates that the "primary purpose of all ITE qualifications is to certify that the holder has specialised as a beginner teacher in a specific phase" which, for the purposes of this study, is the FP. The FP beginner teachers must be prepared to teach learners from Grade R to 3 and include a "knowledge mix" of "disciplinary, pedagogical and practical learning" (DHET, 2015:23). Teachers in the FP must be able to teach EFAL and require "extensive

and specialised knowledge of early childhood learning to teach reading and writing to develop the key initial concepts and skills that lay the foundation for future phases" (DHET, 2015:26). This is to prepare the learners to cope in the Intermediate Phase where the focus shifts from learning to read to reading to learn and the number of compulsory subjects increases. Although the basic competencies of a beginner teacher, such as "newly qualified teachers must have sound subject knowledge", are stipulated in the MRTEQ (DHET, 2015:64), these are very general and not phase or subject specific. This policy merely "provides a basis for the construction of core curricula" (DHET, 2015:6) and as such allows for perhaps too much flexibility and room for interpretation. This policy does not set the standards; they must be "developed by the relevant teacher education communities of practice" (MRTEQ, 2015:8). In addition, although this policy "describes clear, specific requirements for the development of learning programmes, as well as guidelines regarding practical and work-integrated learning structures", it allows for "institutional flexibility and discretion in the allocation of credits within learning programmes, and encourages teacher educators to become engaged in curriculum design, policy implementation and research" (DHET, 2015:10). While this grants individual interpretation and flexibility, it also allows too much variation in teacher education programmes which has proven to be problematic in the long term - there is no national standard or consistency in terms of what must be achieved by a successful preservice student teacher graduate. What is regarded as important by one institution may not be valued by another institution, yet the learners are required, amongst others, to develop the skill of reading. While there are no hard and fast rules in this regard, there are certain basics which must be taught and achieved by the learners.

A project that has guided ITE is the Consolidated Literacy Working Group of the Primary Teacher Education Project (PrimTEd). It has drafted knowledge and practice standards for primary teacher education graduates, specifically for language and literacy, which is crucial in light of the PIRLS results discussed above. The origins of PrimTEd "lie in the concern that the country's teacher training institutions – the universities – were not teaching prospective primary school teachers how to teach reading and writing adequately" and that "new teachers were not proficient in teaching English as a First Additional Language – given that from Grade 4 onwards English was the predominant medium of instruction in schools" (Jet Education Services, 2019b). These standards are specifically applicable to language and literacy primary teacher education and will focus on EFAL, on reading and writing in particular. They describe what language and literacy teachers need to know and be able to do by the end of the initial teacher education programme (Consolidated Literacy Working Group, 2019b:4). All ITE programmes will be required to adhere to these standards which will ensure that there is more consistency nationally in terms of what

must be achieved by the time a preservice student teacher graduates at the end of four years. These standards have been taken into consideration in the framework in the final chapter of this study (cf. Chapter 5).

As indicated above, there are numerous challenges currently facing ITE in South Africa. The focus of this study, however, is on preservice student teacher preparation, preservice student teachers' poor subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, the low literacy rates and the teaching of EFAL in the FP, all of which have been alluded to above. To address these challenges a nationwide network of Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) was "drawn together to cater for the multiple and varying needs of more and better teachers, with particular consideration to the Foundation Phase" (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2011b:15). "This is vital since "knowledgeable, strategic, adaptive, and reflective teachers make a difference in student learning" (International Reading Association (IRA), 2007:1). It is about preparing and empowering the preservice student teachers to positively influence the literacy development of their learners.

Universities, as part of the TEIs, "are responsible for ensuring that their teacher education and developmental programmes are responsive to national and provincial priorities, are accessible to teachers and meet their professional needs, and are relevant and of high quality" (DBE, 2011b:10). These priorities include EFAL in the FP from Grade 1 because "in South Africa, many children start using their additional language, English, as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in Grade 4" (DBE, 2011a:8). This implies that "they must reach a high level of competence in English by the end of Grade 3, and they need to be able to read and write well in English" and "for these reasons, their progress in literacy must be accelerated in Grades 2 and 3" (DBE, 2011a:8). Learners who are learning in English as a Home Language only amount to 8.1% of individuals (Stats SA, 2020:8). Therefore, the majority of learners, that is 90%, who do not speak this language as their mother tongue, also need to devote a great deal of time to this task. All FP teachers are consequently required to specialise in teaching EFAL to accommodate the majority of learners who must learn to speak EFAL. This demands ongoing training of the preservice student teachers at the various universities, which is especially important in relation to the comment made by Reed (2014) that "most institutions did not give sufficient attention to Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement". Even though specific reference was made to the Intermediate Phase, this also applies to the FP, as will be mentioned later in this study. According to Sykes (1982:810), "to prepare means to make ready". Preservice student teachers therefore have to be made ready to teach EFAL effectively in the FP so that the literacy rates in South

Africa country can improve. Preservice student teachers must be prepared to teach in schools that may not be the same as the ones that they experienced as learners. That is, they must be exposed to diversity, multilingualism and inclusivity during their training. This can be achieved partially by being required to visit a cross section of schools during Work Integrated Learning (WIL) when they build up their practical experience. The development of the FP preservice student teacher preparation framework in this study strives to assist in this endeavour. The World Development Report (The World Bank, 2018:24) states that "when indicators show that many teachers lack a strong command of what their students are meant to learn, this can spark efforts to improve the quality of teacher education", as is the case in this study.

In South Africa there is considerable interest sparked by the challenges mentioned above "in curricular and pedagogical reform that will support students from diverse backgrounds and prepare them for the challenges of the global economy and responsible citizenship" (CHE, 2011b:3). This can be facilitated by "incorporating situational and contextual elements that assist teachers in developing competences that enable them to deal with diversity and transformation" (DHE, 2011:7). In terms of this study, linguistic diversity, which is an intricate issue, is of particular importance. English is not the Home Language of many of our learners. Linguistic diversity refers to the fact that our learners are exposed to and gradually try to master other languages besides their Home Language. As indicated, "many children start using their additional language, English, as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in Grade 4" (DBE, 2011a:8).

Cummins (1979) distinguishes between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). It usually takes learners roughly two years of exposure to the second language (EFAL in South Africa) to acquire conversational fluency in the language. In relation to the cognitive academic language proficiency, however, it usually takes five years to attain the level of Home Language speakers and to cope academically in this language. This is an important consideration in terms of the time frame for the exposure to an additional language, especially, as in the case of EFAL, if it will be used as LoLT from Grade 4. In many instances learners may have acquired varying degrees of conversational fluency, but this is often inadequate for the higher academic challenges in the Intermediate Phase.

The purpose of this study is to contribute towards addressing some of the challenges regarding teacher preparation in terms of literacy by developing a Foundation Phase preservice student teacher preparation framework for EFAL. The particular context of this study, for teacher preparation of students at a particular university, must be born in mind as this university differs from many of the other universities in South Africa. The LoLT of the university is Afrikaans,

although translations services are available in classes to assist students who do not speak Afrikaans as their Home Language. At this particular university the majority of students speak Afrikaans as their Home Language and have probably been fortunate to have been educated in their Home Language of Afrikaans as their LoLT throughout school and university. This differs for the minority of students at this university who speak an African language as their Home Language, which in most cases is Setswana. These students would probably have been educated in this Home Language until the end of Grade 3. From Grade 4 it is likely that they would have been educated in English as their LoLT. They would also have continued their university studies in English. As already indicated in the CAPS (2011a:8), many children start using their additional language, English, as their LoLT in Grade 4.

1.2 Review of literature

Berg (2004:16) states that "concepts are important because they are the foundation of communication and thought and they provide a means for people to let others know what they are thinking and allow information to be shared". An important skill in qualitative research which will be applied in this study is the "ongoing conceptualization and re-conceptualization" (Shank, 2002:13) of thoughts in relation to the phenomenon - it is not a static or an exact process. The conceptual framework for this study is situated within the domains of Shulman's (1986) teacher knowledge base, including content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and curricular knowledge.

Shulman (1987:8) defines PCK as "the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems or issues are organised, presented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction". He notes that "the key to distinguishing the knowledge base of teaching lies at the intersection of content and pedagogy, that is, pedagogical content knowledge". Park and Oliver (2007:264) state that it is "transformation of subject matter knowledge for the purpose of teaching that is at the heart of the definition of PCK". It is the link between the content and the way that the content is presented.

The development of PCK "involves a dramatic shift in teachers' understanding from being able to comprehend subject matter for themselves, to becoming able to elucidate subject matter in new ways, reorganise and partition it, clothe it as activities and emotions, in metaphors and exercises, and in examples and demonstrations, so that they can be grasped by students" (Shulman, 1987:13). Essentially PCK includes three kinds of knowledge, that is, knowledge of content, the

learners and pedagogy. All of these are crucial for teaching to be effective. In other words, it relates to what has to be taught (i.e. the content), who has to be taught (i.e. the learners), and how to teach (i.e. the pedagogy). The way that the content is presented in relation to the learners and their context is an important consideration.

Widjaja and Stacey (2009:587) see PCK as "knowledge which blends content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge for teaching". In line with this Goodnough (2006:304) believes that it is a "vehicle to understanding, that is, a widely used concept in education as a vehicle to understand how teachers organise and conceptualise their teaching". Goodnough (2006) adds that it involves "how the subject matter of a particular discipline is transformed for communication with learners and includes a recognition of what makes specific topics difficult to learn, as well as conceptions learners bring to the learning of those concepts". It therefore relates to understanding the content and the learners so well that the teacher is empowered to present it in such a way that it will be comprehensible and meaningful to the learners.

The emotions of preservice student teachers can be linked to the affective filter hypothesis which relates to how affective factors affect the second language acquisition process or, as mentioned above, EFAL in the South African context. Krashen (2009:31) hypothesises that "attitudinal factors relate directly to the acquisition of a second language". Most of these can be placed in three categories, namely motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. The affective filter can constitute an obstacle in terms of acquiring EFAL because available input cannot be utilised. The "affect" refers to aspects such as attitudes, motives, needs and emotions which may hamper acquisition. Feelings like tension, anger or anxiety will not allow any input. Thus, "depending on the learner's state of mind or disposition, the filter limits what is attended to and what is acquired" (Lightbrown & Spada, 1993:28). Although the focus of this study is not on the attitudes of the preservice student teachers to the acquisition of EFAL it still remains an important consideration. From the researcher's experience it seems evident that many preservice student teachers have a negative attitude towards EFAL, which may impact the learners taught by what are meant to be EFAL "role models" in the schools. Goodnough (2006:302) clearly states that "graduates of teacher education programs need to have the necessary skills, attitudes and dispositions to deal with the complexities of the present-day classroom".

Research into literacy teacher preparation clearly points to the problem of lack of knowledge. This has recently been confirmed by Draper *et al.* (2017:28), who refer to the "insufficient knowledge and pedagogical skills of ITE graduates and current teachers" as part of the challenges of South

African education which “points to a vicious cycle of schooling”. It is clear that “preservice teachers do not comply with all the knowledge domains and PCK that enable a teacher to teach well” (Botha & Reddy, 2011:266). This is problematic, in that Piasta *et al.* (2009:225 & 227) emphasise that “a key element of teacher quality is the specialised knowledge teachers utilize when teaching and that maximizing learners’ reading achievement may require explicit reading instruction as implemented by highly knowledgeable teachers”. Lyon and Weiser (2009:475) add that “without this knowledge, no teacher should be expected to significantly improve reading abilities, in particular among children who are at risk for reading failure”. As pointed out by Joshi *et al.* (2009:393), it is problematic that “many schools of education may not be teaching their preservice teachers the basic knowledge required to teach literacy skills” - a non-negotiable skill for all learners. Coady *et al.* (2011:227) add that “while there is a substantial and growing body of research on the professional knowledge and skills of quality teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs), what is less well established is whether, how, and how well teacher preparation programs can help all teachers develop the specialised content knowledge and professional competencies needed to teach ELLs effectively in a variety of instructional contexts”. In South Africa the equivalent to ELLs or what are sometimes referred to as second language learners, is learners who are learning EFAL, as mentioned. Carlisle *et al.* (2009:477) confirm that “further investigations of the construct of teachers’ knowledge about reading need to be carried out and that they are convinced that linguistic knowledge and an understanding of the developmental process of learning to read are critical to teachers’ understanding of the job of teaching children to read” and it is therefore vital to find workable solutions.

It is imperative that “all teachers have sound knowledge in their respective fields, in this case language and reading, as well as effective pedagogy in teaching these subjects” (Mullis & Martin, 2015). This is crucial since our preservice student teachers must also know how to teach EFAL effectively especially because Howie *et al.* (2017:21-22) indicate that about “80% of learners change to a language that is not their Home Language in Grade 4” as their LoLT. Our FP teachers, therefore, have to be prepared to know how to equip these learners to cope with learning content subjects in English in the Intermediate Phase. The development of CALP is essential. Moats (2009a:380) stresses that “second language learners are included in high risk populations and that they are most dependent on good instruction to overcome their disadvantages”. Learning to read is a challenge for most learners, even more so when it is not your Home Language. This can be facilitated by teachers having a sound knowledge base.

Nilsson (2008:1282) argues that "the structure of teacher education may not always offer opportunities for student-teachers to transform the knowledge they acquire during course work into the type of knowledge they might need to teach in a primary school context". This implies that preservice student teachers have limited opportunities to apply their theory base in various contexts, such as WIL (i.e. teaching practice). The respondents in research conducted by Maddock and Mouran (2018:211) indicated that there was a need for a lot "more actual hours of engagement between teacher/educator and learner each week" and that merely three weeks per year at some institutions are "unanimously regarded as inadequate" because this leads to "rehearsed lessons" which ultimately give "a false impression of the teacher's ability and expertise, which are, in fact, lacking". It is only once the preservice student teachers are qualified and have to take ownership of a class of learners that they may realise their shortcomings. In addition, Nilsson (2008:1282) indicates that preservice student teachers "need to move beyond their initial needs and concerns so that they might come to recognise and understand the complexity of teaching and see value in transforming their knowledge into a form that is useable and helpful in shaping their teaching".

Goodnough (2006:309) stresses that "teacher education reform reflects a dissatisfaction with traditional methods that have limitations such as few opportunities for preservice student teachers to integrate theory and practice and infrequent field experiences". Furthermore, Nilsson (2008:1284) states that "PCK needs to be considered in relation to practice and that student-teachers' lack of classroom teaching experience must inevitably influence what their PCK might look like". Added to this, Botha and Reddy (2011:261) emphasise that "if their roles and competencies as teachers are not adequately developed, preservice student teachers will be ill-prepared to commence their roles as competent teachers". All FP teachers need to start their careers as competent teachers since they are laying the educational foundation for the numerous learners whom they will take charge of. This is not a responsibility that can be taken lightly.

The importance of this literacy knowledge base cannot be underestimated: Joshi *et al.* (2009:394) state that studies have shown that "when teachers are taught the specific linguistic knowledge required for teaching synthetic phonics, they acquire knowledge of the concepts. The reading scores of the children taught by these teachers also increase". The "fundamental ethical commitment of the teaching profession is to help every learner succeed" (Ball & Forzani, 2009:17). "Teachers are thus allocated the full responsibility of providing quality education to learners they teach" (Kimathi & Rusznyak, 2018:11) (cf. Chapter 2). Getting the preparation of

preservice student teachers right is therefore essential as they are laying the foundation for our future nation.

1.3 Research questions

The following research questions are addressed in this study:

1. What is the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers to teach EFAL in the FP?
2. What factors may have contributed to preservice student teachers' perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP?
3. What is the perceived preparedness of beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP?
4. How do Heads of Department (HODs) perceive preservice student teacher and beginner teacher preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP?

1.4 Purpose of the research

The research proposes to address the following:

1. The perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers to teach EFAL in the FP.
2. The factors that contribute to preservice student teachers' perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP.
3. The perceived preparedness of beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP.
4. How HODs perceive preservice student teacher and beginner teacher preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP.
5. Developing a Foundation Phase preservice teacher preparation framework for the teaching of English as a First Additional language, which takes into account the knowledge, skills and attitudes of beginner teachers in relation to the teaching of literacy in English as a First Additional Language.

1.5 Research methodology

Research methodology is the intended path through which researchers conduct their research to "formulate their problems and objectives and present their result from the data obtained during the study period" (Sileyew, 2019). The intended path which was followed in this study is elaborated on below. Briefly stated, qualitative research will be undertaken by means of a phenomenological research design and an interpretive research paradigm. The data collection methods, procedures and analysis are also stipulated.

1.5.1 Research paradigm and design

Oosthuizen (2009:10) specifies that "research design entails the blueprint to a particular research project". Shank (2002:103) states that it is "all about anticipation and attention to detail". Essentially, therefore, it is the plan that is envisioned which must be followed as precisely as possible when research is conducted, because it cannot be conducted in a haphazard manner without any structure. This study is based on a phenomenological research design and an interpretive research paradigm.

Interpretivism is the theoretical paradigm that is clarified and applied to this study. To interpret means to "make out or break out meaning of or explain or understand in a specified way" (Sykes, 1978:452). In other words, it is the clarification or making sense of meaning, which is the task of all types of interpretation. According to Maree (2007:58), it is "rooted in hermeneutics", which is "the study of the theory and practice of interpretation" or "the art of interpreting any text, particularly when subtle hidden meanings are the target". Interpretive inquiry means that "researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand" (Creswell, 2009:176) based on the lived experiences of participants. Texts that are interpreted in this study include questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus group sessions and documents, after the transcription process, where applicable, has taken place. Phenomenology is "one of the three broad frameworks for interpretation" (Shank, 2002:77) and is discussed next.

Phenomenology is an interpretive approach (Maree, 2007:59) to research design. It is "about an eventual awareness of the things themselves as they really are, an attempt to "get inside" the meanings and world of that person and seeing how people interpret their worlds, and how we can, in turn interpret their interpretations" (Shank, 2002:80, 85 & 91). Creswell (2012:130) states that "the qualitative researcher seeks to explore and understand one single phenomenon, and to do so requires considering all of the multiple forces that shape the phenomenon". In this study, the phenomenon in question is the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers and beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP. One of the seven principles that ground all phenomenological research in the social sciences is a "commitment to the use of qualitative methods" (Shank, 2002:81) (cf. Chapter 3).

The goal of qualitative research is defined as "describing and understanding (*Verstehen*) rather than the explanation and prediction of human behaviour" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:53). It refers to the "meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things and tends to assess the quality of things using words, images and descriptions" (Berg,

2004:3) as opposed to measurement and quantification as applied in quantitative research. Qualitative research was be undertaken to achieve the purposes of this study since it is "a systematic empirical enquiry into meaning" (Shank, 2002:11). Other reasons include the "allowance for creativity and flexibility" (Shank, 2002:105), the "greater depth of understanding we can derive from qualitative procedures" (Berg, 2004:2), the fact that "certain experiences cannot be meaningfully expressed by numbers" (Berg, 2004:3) and "exploring a problem is a characteristic of qualitative research" (Creswell, 2012:63). The suitability lies in the emerging design which allows for changes based on feedback or responses from participants (Creswell, 2012:130) as they emerge, in terms of the preparedness of preservice student teachers for the teaching of EFAL in the FP.

1.5.2 Sampling

Sampling refers to "the process used to select a portion of the population for study", which in qualitative research "usually involves smaller sample sizes and is more flexible" (Maree, 2007:79), and "participants are selected for specific reasons", that is, participants who can make a meaningful contribution to the phenomenon in question. The participants are invited to participate in the research and share their potential experience and knowledge (Karnieli-Miller *et al*., 2009:282). An important consideration is the intentional selection of suitable participants who have experienced the particular phenomenon and can contribute insightful and valuable information to the study.

Two types of sampling applied in this study were purposive and convenience sampling. The first was purposive sampling, which is "a type of non-probability sampling which is non-random, meaning that people are included in a sample partly because they are available and willing to participate in the study" (Wagner *et al*., 2012:89), and additionally "will provide the information that the researcher is looking for". It also means that "participants are selected because of some defining characteristic" (Maree, 2007:79). In this study, it relates specifically to perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers and beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP. According to Berg (2004:36), when developing a purposive sample, "researchers use their special knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent this population". In the case of this study the researcher approached the preservice student teachers and beginner teachers who were known to her because they had experience in relation to the phenomenon at hand and she invited them to participate in the study. In addition, Creswell (2012:206) clarifies "that purposeful qualitative sampling will develop a detailed understanding that might provide useful information, this might help people learn about the phenomenon and that might give voice

to silenced people". The participants who were invited to take part in this study on a voluntary basis, were given the opportunity to share their experience and not be silent in relation to this phenomenon and in so doing could express their insights regarding their perceived preparedness. This information was useful in ascertaining how prepared or unprepared they felt to teach EFAL in the FP, as well as the factors which contributed to this.

Convenience, accidental or haphazard sampling, on the other hand, is "where the researcher simply uses whoever is readily available and convenient to access" (Wagner *et al*., 2012:92). This is sensible and practical, in that the available resources are accessed and thus time and money can be optimally utilised. In the end "what is needed is an adequate number of participants and sites to answer the question/s posed at the beginning of the study" (Merriam, 2009:80). All the participants were suitable candidates in that they were all involved with the phenomenon at hand because they were in the process of or had already trained to teach EFAL in the PF. The participants were invited to participate and were under no obligation to do so. There were 108 third- and a total of 82 fourth-year preservice student teachers from a specific university. The fourth-year preservice student teachers were completing their studies, the five beginner teachers had recently completed their studies at the same university as the preservice student teachers and lastly, the three HODs were based at the same schools as three of the beginner teachers. The beginner teachers and the HODs were based in a specific district of the North-West Province (cf. Chapter 3).

1.5.3 Data collection methods

Methods relate to the data collection process and then the process of data analysis in order to reach some insights into the phenomenon in question. It can be thought of as "research action"; these are "the practical activities of research" (Carter & Little, 2007:1317- 1318) and "involve the forms of data collection, analysis and interpretation that researchers propose for their studies" (Creswell, 2009:15). It is important to note that selecting the methods and their application is always "dependent on the aims and the objectives of the study, the nature of the phenomenon being investigated and the underlying theory or expectations of the investigator" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:49). In other words, the process of data collection and the phenomenon in question must be aligned. In relation to this study, the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers and beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP is the central phenomenon in question and an in-depth understanding and broader knowledge of this phenomenon are what was required. There are various qualitative data collection methods, including "observation, interviews, focus groups, collection of extant texts (such as organisational records), elicitation of texts (such

as participant diaries) and the creation or collection of images" (Carter & Little, 2007:1318-1319). The methods of data gathering that were applied in this study included questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and documentation (cf. Chapter 3).

1.5.3.1 Questionnaires

A questionnaire "is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information" (McLeod, 2018). It is beneficial in that a large amount of information can be obtained from many participants within a short space of time. In addition, the researcher can refer back to the information as often as is required. The information is immediately available for analysis and does not need to be transcribed. Questionnaires were completed on two occasions during this research.

The first questionnaire was an open-ended questionnaire which required the third-year preservice student teachers to who were invited to participate to indicate their perception of preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP and to explain their reasoning, as well as to provide some background in relation to their attitude to teaching EFAL. Being an open-ended questionnaire it allowed the participants to supply the necessary detail and gave them the opportunity to express themselves on the phenomenon at hand. The purpose was also to get an indication of the factors contributing to their perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof.

The second questionnaire was a closed questionnaire which was completed at a later stage of this study. It consisted of a section that solicited fourth-year preservice student teachers' perceptions of preparedness to teach EFAL based on their content knowledge acquired during their studies, the focus was more specifically on various components in relation to content knowledge. The participants were invited to participate and merely had to indicate by means of a cross (x) if they felt they had adequate or inadequate content knowledge based on specific components such as reading; writing; language components; assessment; children's literature; learners and context; and pedagogics in general. There was also a section probing the participants' attitudes, motivations, self-confidence and anxiety in relation to teaching EFAL. The participants merely had to place a cross (x) on the option, either yes or no or positive, negative or neutral. They also had to respond by either yes or no to some questions related to WIL. The purpose of this closed questionnaire was to determine how they perceived their preparedness to teach EFAL by establishing their content knowledge base as well as their attitude to the teaching of EFAL. These students were in the final year of their studies so they were invited to participate because they should have been nearing their preparation to teach EFAL in the primary schools.

1.5.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

Berg (2004:75) defines an interview as “a conversation with a purpose”. A “semi-structured interview usually requires the participant to answer a set of predetermined questions and does allow for the probing and clarification of answers” (Maree, 2007:5). These interviews provided greater depth of understanding of the perceptions of the preparedness of the five fourth-year preservice student teachers, the five beginner teachers and the three HODs to teach EFAL in the FP. In terms of the preservice student teachers the researcher only invited the fourth-years to participate in these interviews because they were nearing the end of their preparation to teach EFAL. As such they should almost have been equipped to teach EFAL in the FP to a satisfactory degree to their own class of FP learners the following year. Aspects that were covered included their experience of teaching EFAL in the FP during their training, the various contexts that were applied, their attitude towards teaching EFAL and the skills that they had acquired.

The purpose of these interviews was to determine the perception of how prepared the preservice student and the beginner teachers were to teach EFAL in the FP, as well as the perception of the HODs in this regard. The factors contributing to preservice student teachers’ perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP were also identified.

1.5.3.3 Focus groups

The “informal group discussion atmosphere of the focus group interview structure is intended to encourage subjects to speak freely and completely about behaviours, attitudes, and opinions they possess and a far larger number of ideas, issues, topics and even solutions to a problem can be generated” (Berg, 2004:123 & 124). Four focus group sessions were held with the fourth-year preservice student teachers who were invited to participate. Focus group one consisted of seven group members, focus groups two and three consisted of six group members each and focus group four consisted of five group members. Thus a total of 24 FP fourth-year preservice student teachers were invited to be involved in these focus group sessions. The researcher initially invited four of these students to participate and then asked them to invite other students who they knew or had contact with to participate, not exceeding eight members per group. The rationale behind this decision was that it was probable that they would invite their friends to participate which would help them to feel more comfortable which would enable them to express themselves more openly. The same questions that were asked in the semi-structured interviews were asked in the focus groups. The larger group dynamic allowed for discussion and engagement amongst group members, which resulted in more in-depth responses and the expression of a range of opinions based on individual experiences. These focus group sessions were used to determine

perceptions of how prepared the preservice student teachers were to teach EFAL in the FP in the schools.

1.5.3.4 Documentation

The “use of documents as a data gathering technique will be to focus on all types of written communications that may shed light on the phenomenon under investigation” (Maree, 2007:82). The applicable document that was used to gather data was a relevant year book from the specified university. The data gathered covered the modules, as well as the content of the modules, that the preservice student teachers were required to complete in order to prepare them to teach EFAL in the FP.

1.5.4 Data collection procedure

Once the participants had been invited to participate, the next important consideration was the selection of the sites. The first site was on the specified university campus. Reasons for this decision included the fact that the researcher was based at this university and it was where the preservice student teachers were being trained. This makes sense in terms of the accessibility and convenience for the preservice student teachers and the available time and budget. This site was used for completing both the questionnaires, for conducting the semi-structured interviews and for the focus group sessions. The sites for the five beginner teachers were determined according to where these beginner teachers were based and on their preferences for the interviews being conducted, either at their private homes, as suggested by two of these teachers or at their schools. The researcher travelled to these sites as they were accessible from the university town. The sites for the three HODs were at the same schools as those of three of the beginner teachers, which was very convenient. Two interviews could therefore be conducted on the same day (cf. Chapter 3).

In terms of time, the following was considered. Questionnaire 1 that was completed by the third-year preservice student teachers, as well as questionnaire 2 that was completed by the fourth-year preservice student teachers, was administered at a prearranged time after one of their classes, as this was a suitable time for the participants who had accepted the invitation to participate. The five preservice student teachers from the fourth-year group who were involved in the semi-structured interviews and those who were involved in the focus group sessions decided on a time that was most convenient for each or all of them respectively. The semi-structured interviews with the five beginner teachers and with the three HODs were conducted after school hours or over a weekend, at a time that was most agreeable for each participant. The convenience

of the participants was a major consideration, since they had accepted the invitation to participate and were volunteering their limited time to share their experiences regarding this phenomenon.

The procedure that was followed for the questionnaires

The procedure followed for the two questionnaires was that 108 third-year and 53 fourth-year B.Ed. FP preservice student teachers training to teach EFAL, from the specific university campus, were invited to be voluntarily involved in completing an open-ended or closed questionnaire individually and anonymously after class one day. They were provided with the questionnaire, if they accepted the invitation to participate and were provided with adequate time to complete it. Once they had completed the questionnaire they placed it face down on a table at the front of the lecture venue and left.

The procedure that was followed for the semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with three different groups of participants. Firstly, the five fourth-year FP B.Ed. preservice student teachers from the specific university campus were interviewed individually in the researcher's office on the specific university campus at a time that was suitable for each participant. This took place in the late afternoons, once they had completed their classes for the day and it was quieter on campus, with less chance of interruptions.

Secondly, the five beginner FP teachers who were graduates of the specific university campus were interviewed individually at a time that was convenient for each participant. Two teachers were interviewed in private homes, as per invitation. The other three were interviewed in classrooms in the schools where they taught. As indicated, these interviews took place after school hours, at a time that was most suitable for these participants.

Lastly, the three HODs were interviewed individually, also after school hours, once the interviews with the beginner teachers at each school had been concluded, in an available space at the school. One interview took place in the staff room, one in a classroom and one in the school foyer.

The procedure that was followed for the focus groups

The four focus group sessions were held in a conference room on the specific university campus. This was arranged according to the availability of the venue, as well as that of the group members. One group member in each group kindly took charge of coordinating a time that was suitable for all the group members and then arranged the time with the researcher. Any member of the group

had the opportunity to answer the questions that were asked and other members of the group were free to elaborate on the answers or to provide their own point of view. This allowed for the exchange of ideas and engagement amongst the members of the group.

1.6 Methods of data analysis

Once the research has been conducted, the various sources of data must be meticulously analysed. Data analysis refers to a detailed examination of the data collected in order to find answers to the research questions so that the phenomenon in question can be better understood. It is about the in-depth essence and meaning of the phenomenon, not merely the surface meaning. In this study it is about establishing the perceived preparedness of the preservice student teachers as well as the beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP. It can be seen as the "process of making sense out of data and the process used to answer your research question(s), which involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read - it is the process of making meaning" (Merriam, 2009:175-176). Making meaning of all the data sources is the purpose and essence of research. Qualitative data analysis is "not so much an exact, measurable finding", but rather "an emerging reality that we are describing and analysing" (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c:81). That is, it is not quantified but develops and is refined during the analysis process. It tries to "establish how participants make meaning of a specific phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction of the phenomenon" (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a:99). Understanding the true meaning of the phenomenon is a complicated and time-consuming procedure but is essential in order to distil the essence of the participants' perceptions. Making sense of meaning or understanding can be referred to as interpretation, hence the practice of interpretation is applied in this study.

The categories can only be decided upon after the researcher has engaged thoroughly with all the sources in order to understand the data and to determine the patterns which will comprise the categories. Content analysis, which is a "detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of material for the purpose of identifying patterns and themes" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:84), was applied in this study to establish categories in relation to the various sources of data collected. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:236) stress that "researchers do not begin with preconceived codes but rather generate code categories directly from the data" as they emerge from the collected data. These take time to finalise as it is a constant process of revision and refining until the ultimate codes are decided upon.

1.7 Trustworthiness

Trustworthy can be defined as “deserving of trust or reliable” (Sykes, 1978:981). The researcher must ensure that the research that has been conducted is trustworthy so that it can be seen as being credible and is therefore useful. The “basic issue of trustworthiness is simple: How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to or worth taking account of?” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:276). Results are regarded as being trustworthy if they are conducted with adequate rigour. One of the ways in which this can be achieved is by engaging in multiple methods of data collection, such as those used in this study - for example questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus groups; this makes the study trustworthy.

The following strategies were also applied to establish trustworthiness in this study:

1.7.1 Rich, thick description

Essentially this ensures transparency by providing a detailed account of exactly how the research was conducted. It entails “a description of the setting and participants of the study, as well as a detailed description of the findings with, for example, adequate evidence presented in the form of quotes from the participant interviews” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:257). Thick, rich and supportive data from all the data sources enable the researcher to increase the probability of providing an accurate summary and an analysis that is valid. In addition, “it enhances the possibility of the results of a qualitative study being transferred to another setting” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:256). Detailed description in this area can be “an important provision for promoting credibility as it helps to convey the actual situations that have been investigated and, to an extent, the context that surrounds them”. In this way the reader is able to “determine the extent to which overall findings ‘ring true’” (Shenton, 2004:69) and - as mentioned above under credibility - that they “harmonise with the reality of the participants in this study”.

1.7.2 Member checks

In order to ensure the credibility of this study, member checks were carried out. Crabtree and Miller (1999:81) refer to it as “the process of recycling interpretation back to key participants”; that is, involving the participants in verifying the interpretation of the researcher. The process involved in member checks is to “take your preliminary analysis back to some of the participants and ask whether your interpretation ‘rings true’” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:246). According to them, “although you may have used different words (it is your interpretation, after all, but derived directly from their experience), participants should be able to recognise their experience in your

interpretation, and perhaps 'hear their voices' or suggest some fine - tuning to better capture their perspectives". As indicated by Krefting (1991:219), "central to the credibility of qualitative research is the ability of informants to recognise their experiences in the research findings and for the researcher to accurately translate the informants' viewpoints into meaningful and real data". This is beneficial in that the participants are involved in clearing up misconceptions, finding inaccuracies and helping to collect additional data that could be of use; it is, therefore, invaluable.

1.7.3 Peer review

A peer review is "one way of keeping the research honest" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) - the "reviewer taking on the role as a 'devil's advocate' by asking hard questions about the methods, meanings, and interpretations". In this study the review was conducted by an impartial colleague who was new to the topic and had experience with qualitative research. This was done for various reasons, including soliciting some objective feedback on whether the findings were credible and facilitating the identification of aspects that needed further attention.

1.8 Researcher's role

The qualitative researcher is seen as "the main, primary or key instrument in the data gathering process, and is the conduit through which information is gathered and filtered" (Lichtman, 2013:25). Data were personally collected and then carefully analysed by the researcher. The researcher was therefore "an instrument of data collection who gathers words, analyses them inductively, while focusing on the views, definitions, perceptions and experiences of the participants" (Davis & Klopper, 2003:74). This "went beyond mere observation and collection of data, in that the researcher strove to understand the perspective of the participants by putting herself into the shoes of the people that were being observed and studied" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:271). It was done by "connecting with them at a human level" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008:13) and "not merely by being an outsider that is looking in". In addition, according to Karnieli-Miller *et al.* (2009:280), the researcher is "the philosopher of the study, analyser of the participants' stories, writer and publisher, as well as the translator of other persons' words and actions" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008:49). In this way researchers "bring understanding, interpretation and meaning" (Lichtman, 2013:17), and "gradually seek the truth and construct reality". This is usually only made possible by developing their own means of data collection that is specific to their study. It is clear that there are a number of roles to be fulfilled and the role of the researcher is therefore indispensable. Rigour in this qualitative research was "derived from the researcher's presence and the nature of the interaction between researcher and participants" (Merriam 2009:165-166). Other advantages included "expanded understanding through nonverbal as well as verbal

communication, immediate processing of data, clarification and summarising the material, checking with participants for accuracy of interpretation, and exploring unusual or unanticipated responses" (Merriam, 2009:15).

Creswell (2009:177) "suggests that the researcher should include statements about past experiences that will provide background data and comment on connections between the researcher and the participants". In terms of past experiences, I have more than twenty years of experience as a Foundation Phase educator and lecturer. I grew up in a bilingual home, although English was the Home Language which was spoken by my father and Afrikaans, or Dutch, the First Additional Language, was spoken by my mother when I was young. I was educated in English medium schools in primary and high school. In the Foundation Phase, especially in Grade 1, I often assisted the teacher during her Afrikaans lessons because I already had a fair command of the language, unlike my peers who had had no exposure to the language. I was mostly comfortable with Afrikaans as my First Additional Language, especially when I was younger because of regular exposure to the language at that stage of my life. This is unlike many of the participants in this study who had limited exposure to their First Additional Language for various reasons, including the areas that they grew up in.

1.9 Ethical aspects of the research

The "key principle is to respect the privacy of those we study" (Babbie, 2013:411); that is, the participants who volunteer to take part in the study. Ethics are concerned with "finding a balance between benefits and risks for harm and are a major consideration before any research is undertaken". According to Boeije (2010:43 & 63), the "interviewer must balance research aims with each participant's individual interest". It is the "researcher's primary responsibility to make sure that participants are in no way harmed, including psychologically or emotionally, as a result of their participation in the research study and that there are a number of considerations in terms of the participants that must be taken into account" (Creswell, 2013:58; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:65 & 66; Karnieli-Miller *et al*., 2009:285; Lichtman, 2013:52; Wagner *et al*., 2012:65 & 70)

The application for permission for the research to be conducted was submitted to the Department of Education (DoE) within the province where the research was conducted. Permission was granted and based on this approval the school principals were asked for their consent to approach the individual educators prior to the appointments that were made with these educators.

The questionnaires were in English and both the interviews and focus group sessions were conducted in English. All the participants had taken English at school and were required to teach in English. It could be assumed that they had a reasonable level of language proficiency in this language. If the participants were unsure, questions were repeated or where necessary they were rephrased to facilitate understanding.

The participants were all required to complete an informed consent form. They were, however, informed that if at any stage they no longer wanted to participate, they were free to withdraw, despite the fact that they had already given their consent. They were not required to provide any reason for their withdrawal, and they would not be discriminated against afterwards.

All questionnaires, voice recordings and transcriptions thereof in hard copy and in electronic format will be stored safely in the office of the project leader (i.e. promotor) on the specific university campus.

The necessary ethical clearance was obtained from the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University Ethical Committee before this study commenced.

1.10 Chapter division

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the contextualisation, problem statement and the context of this study, as well as the initial review of literature. This is based on the challenges facing ITE in South Africa and the resulting inadequate quality of preparation of preservice student teachers to teach EFAL in the FP originating, in part, from poor subject matter and pedagogical content knowledge and WIL (teaching practice), resulting in low literacy rates. The focus of the second chapter is on the theoretical framework of the preparation of FP preservice student teachers and the knowledge base that they require for the quality teaching of EFAL in order to raise the low literacy rates in South Africa. The third chapter delves into the pertinent research methodology, design, paradigm and approach. It is composed of the participants who took part, the data collection methods, the data collection procedure, the data analysis, and lastly, the trustworthiness of the research. In the fourth chapter a thorough discussion of the results of this research is provided. Chapter five, the conclusion, details the recommendations that have arisen out of this study and offers a framework for the teaching of EFAL in the FP as a contribution to the quality preparation of the preservice student teachers in the future.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR THE PREPARATION OF FOUNDATION PHASE PRESERVICE STUDENT TEACHERS

2.1 Introduction

In more recent as well as older research, both nationally and internationally, it seems undisputed that the **preparation of preservice student teachers** to teach is **problematic** and must be addressed, as is supported in the statements to follow. Moats (2020:5) refers to the fact that teachers need better preparation and highlights the "chronic gap between what teachers need and what they have been given". Fuller (2014:63) posits that the conclusion of a review undertaken on university-based teacher preparation programmes was that "the vast majority of such programs were inadequately preparing the nation's teachers". Similarly, Baxen and Botha (2016:1) state that "poor literacy and numeracy levels in schools have raised questions in South Africa, as they have internationally, on the quality and appropriateness of initial teacher education for preparing teachers for the complexities faced in schools generally and for the mediation of literacy and numeracy in the early years in particular." This is significant since a report by the United Nations (2015) also links the quality of teacher preparation to the quality of education. Hence, Kiamba and Mutua (2017:8795) aptly state that "it is very clear that teacher preparedness significantly affects students' academic achievement". More specifically, as is the case in these studies, it pertains to EFAL in the Foundation Phase in South Africa and a lack of reading achievement, that is, learners who cannot read fluently and with understanding, affecting their ability to read to learn. There is a global consensus that "teacher education must be improved and resources and obstacles to developing teacher education need to be elaborated on if it is to meet the challenges of the 21st century" (Cochran-Smit & the Boston College Evidence Team, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Futrell, 2008; Hökkä & Eteläpelto, 2014; Korthagen, 2010; Murray, 2008; Neimi, 2002). Moats (2020:5 & 7) stresses the importance of bringing "continuity, consistency, quality and comprehensiveness to the many different programs" about how to teach reading, in that teacher preparation needs to be "more rigorous and better aligned with decades of reading science". It is imperative that "teachers need no less than the knowledge, skills, and supported practice that will enable their teaching to succeed" (Moats, 2020:5).

A growing body of research confirms that one of the major challenges in relation to the conundrum of preservice student teacher preparation is the issue of a solid **knowledge base**. For example, Taylor (2016:3) refers to the third tipping point in schooling as inadequate content and pedagogical content knowledge among teachers. And, that certain universities may not be doing

enough to equip their beginner teachers with the knowledge and skills to support struggling readers on the one hand or to extend excellent readers on the other (Taylor, 2014b:11). In terms of this study, it is the knowledge base which EFAL FP preservice teachers require to effectively teach reading. This is vital because of the fundamental importance of reading both in education and as a skill in relation to the development of language which empowers learners with skills and habits necessary for lifelong achievement and success (Yusuf, 2015:104). According to Faez (2011:31- 32), there has been little focus on second language teacher knowledge. Moats (2002:7) refers to it as "the knowledge that undergirds successful instruction". This includes, but is not limited to, the following aspects of knowledge (briefly introduced here and then further elaborated on - cf. 2.2 and 2.3.1.3). Deacon (2016b:3) stipulates that the development of "subject content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, is central to improving the quality of teaching". That is, the preservice student teachers' knowledge base must be extended and be of a higher quality, so that the learners can fully understand and ultimately successfully apply that which they have been taught. In so doing they will eventually be empowered to read with understanding and to make meaning of what they read. The International Dyslexia Association (2018:3) found that a sound knowledge base is essential for teachers, stating that "effective classroom instruction delivered by a knowledgeable teacher, especially in the early grades, can prevent or at least effectively address and limit the severity of reading and writing problems" in time, improving literacy rates and therefore benefitting learners. Harlen (1999) argues that when teachers' knowledge of their subject is weak the result is that "confidence levels to teach that subject are low, leading to restricted classroom practices" which could have a number of other implications, such as the possible development of a negative attitude towards EFAL and a likely impact on the teaching of reading in this language. Vaughan (1977) suggests that it is the attitude of the teacher which is part of the solution for struggling readers. Shulman (1987:9) mentions that special demands are placed on the depth of the teacher's understanding of the structures of the subject matter; equally important are "teachers' attitudes toward and enthusiasms for what is being taught and learned". The barriers which teachers face regarding their attitude are therefore pivotal to the success of programmes which focus on the teaching of reading. All of these studies emphasise the importance of teacher subject knowledge as well as pedagogical knowledge. Taylor (2014b:11) suggests that the professional knowledge base for teachers must therefore be attended to.

The ability to read is non-negotiable. Such is its importance that it is regarded as a fundamental language skill; Yusuf (2015:104) suggests it is "one of the most important skills which should be taught separately as a subject in primary schools". It is a "highly valued skill in most countries

throughout the world", yet many learners struggle to learn to read, hence "increased attention has been placed on the importance of having knowledgeable and skilled teachers in order to influence reading achievement" (Clark *et al.,* 2017:219). These authors include statistics of reading failure in sub-Saharan countries in Africa, in Australia and in the United States. According to the National Center for Education Statistics in the United States (2015), only 36% of their learners are proficient in reading by Grade 4. Reading failure is therefore not only limited to third world countries - it is also evident in first world countries. "An effective, well-trained, and knowledgeable teacher is essential in preventing or diminishing the possibility of reading failure" (Mathes *et al.,* 2005; Vellutino *et al.,* 1996). ITE programmes "are expected to prepare teachers who have the capacity to develop conceptually strong, responsive and inclusive teaching practices", yet their success has been questionable, "both internationally (Lancaster & Auhl, 2013) and within the South African context (Council on Higher Education (CHE), 2010)" (Rusznyak *et al.,* 2016:1).
In light of this introduction, this chapter focuses, in part, on clarifying the required knowledge base for EFAL preservice student teachers, with particular reference to reading literacy, by means of a theoretical framework, as a foundation for the chapter. Pertinent issues relating to criticism of Initial Teacher Education are elaborated on to identify the relevant problem areas which require intervention. The reading knowledge which follows specifies what it is that teachers need to know and be able to do to equip them to teach EFAL effectively in the FP.

2.2 Theoretical framework

As a basis for this chapter this section seeks to establish some clarification in terms of the research which has been conducted on a foundation for a knowledge base, resting primarily on the work of Shulman. Although Shulman's knowledge base has been expanded on in recent years, it remains influential work which is important to the advancement of a knowledge base for teachers. It is "a useful tool to analyse teacher knowledge" (Herold, 2019:490) and therefore it is applicable for use in this study.

2.2.1 A knowledge base for teachers

In the 21st century **knowledge** has become the highest valued commodity worldwide (Yüksel, 2014:1) and a vital consideration in terms of effective preservice student teacher preparation. Laszlo and Laszlo (2002:400) aptly state that knowledge is power. Simply stated, it could be seen to mean that with knowledge it is possible to do great work, if this knowledge is well used. Equipping preservice student teachers with a solid knowledge base as a foundation to start teaching will empower them to do great work. This view is supported by Griffith and Lacina (2017:393), who stress that "a knowledgeable teacher is an empowered one". Moats (2020: 23)

highlights that if teachers are well equipped to make sure that most of their learners' experience reading success, the result will be that they will feel a lot more empowered. As a starting point it is important to consider what constitutes knowledge and to acknowledge that there are various perspectives on knowledge. The word knowledge originates from the verb "to know". It is comprised of "a complex network of concepts" (Dichos, 2015) and can be described as "to be aware of, to be acquainted with and to have understanding of" (Sykes, 1978:477). In general, knowledge can be defined as "knowing, familiarity gained by experience, a person's range of information, theoretical or practical understanding and the sum of what is known" (Sykes, 1978:477). It includes "know how or teaching based on past experiences, empirical data, and well-reasoned arguments and predictions" (Hiebert & Morris, 2009:476). In addition, it is considered the capacity (potential or action) to take effective action in varied and uncertain situations (Bennet & Bennet, 2004). It is therefore not merely to know but - more importantly - to fully understand that which we have gradually come to know in various ways. The depth of understanding should be such that the application thereof is facilitated, that is, knowing how to correctly apply what is known by means of some form of action. This resonates with the in-depth understanding of content knowledge to the extent that it enables teachers to transform this knowledge into pedagogically powerful forms which are understandable to learners (cf. section 2.2.2). The depth of understanding of knowledge which must be developed takes time, as Dichos (2015) correctly states: "knowledge is not learned quickly because it would only result to memorisation or superficial learning making it a simple and compartmentalised knowledge". As can be seen it is not a simple, straightforward definition. In the context of this study, it relates specifically to the teaching of reading in EFAL, that is, the large sum of applicable knowledge that the preservice student teachers must acquire and fully understand over the course of their studies, as well as the practical knowledge or know-how and insight to apply it by teaching it correctly and effectively.

It must be remembered that "teaching is a complicated practice that requires an interweaving of many kinds of **specialized knowledge**" (Koehler *et al.*, 2013:13). To specialise means to become an expert in a particular area of study (Hornsby, 2006:1415). Specialised knowledge can be described therefore as advanced, in-depth knowledge that is needed for a particular purpose or field. In the context of this study it relates specifically to particular knowledge that is required for the teaching of reading. More specific specialised content knowledge is discussed later (cf. 2.2.2.2) To Piasta *et al*. (2009:224), it is evident that it is this specialised knowledge, specifically in terms of literacy concepts, which is key to teacher quality. They identify the link between effective teaching and the specialised knowledge required to teach the relevant concepts (Piasta

et al., 2009:227). The link between concepts and knowledge has already been mentioned (Dichos, 2015). The teaching of reading specifically is referred to by Moats (2020) as being **rocket science**, an indication of its associated complexity. This may account for the fact that "the nature of professional knowledge, and the knowledge required of teachers in particular, has long been the subject of debate and a number of reviews over many years" (Gamble, 2010) in that there is little agreement as to what knowledge is essential for preservice student teachers - more specifically, in line with this study, in terms of EFAL and reading in the FP.

Taylor (2014b:8) warns that "poor subject **competence** among teachers" plays a role in the demands of newly qualified teachers when they start teaching" because it will result in their not being fully prepared to teach, with detrimental consequences for learners, as is evident in the low literacy rates. Botha and Reddy (2011:261) clarify that competency is defined by "the levels of integration of knowledge, skills and attitudes, which further define a good teacher." Such is the importance thereof in the United Kingdom that "teachers must *demonstrate* that they have the knowledge, skills and values necessary to be effective classroom teachers and a *secure* subject knowledge in English is required for the award of Qualified Teacher Status" (Medwell *et al.*, 2012:1-2). By implication, without the ability to demonstrate the applicable knowledge, skills and values they will not qualify as teachers. These authors emphasise the need for teachers to have the required knowledge of the subject to teach confidently and efficiently, to inspire, challenge and expand their expertise, understanding and experience. Similarly, in the United States preservice teachers are required to demonstrate knowledge of reading in their licensure exams (Rowland, 2015). This supports the fact that a sound knowledge base is essential and non-negotiable for all teachers as a strong foundation to start teaching. It will enable them to have a better understanding of that which they need to teach and how to get this knowledge across effectively in order to reach a level of expertise, with the necessary experience, in line with striving for excellence in teaching for the benefit of all learners.

This **focus on knowledge** is warranted: Goodwin *et al.* (2014:284) point out that "the absence of a codified knowledge base for teacher educator preparation is glaring, particularly one that is responsive to shifting local and global contexts and emphasises research in/on practice and that unquestionably, teacher educators cannot teach what they do not know". This view is supported by Superfine and Wenjuan (2014:303), who highlight the fact that despite such attention to what teachers have to know, "the field of teacher education lacks an evidence based understanding of the knowledge mathematics teacher educators (MTEs) need to carry out their work and that currently there is no coherent synthesis of what MTEs need to know and do to support preservice teachers in developing mathematical knowledge in ways needed for teaching". They state that

"having in place such a knowledge base is critical; without it, the field's ability to develop a common language for and about teacher educators is limited". Although the focus of their study is the domain of mathematics, the same applies to the importance of a knowledge base for the teaching of EFAL and reading. As part of their recommendations for developing excellence in reading instruction, Santa *et al.* (2000) states that "teacher educators must provide both a solid knowledge base and extensive supervised practice to prepare excellent beginning reading teachers". Shulman's proposed knowledge base will now be explored to identify that which the preservice student teachers must know and be able to apply in terms of teaching EFAL and reading. This is justified by Cunningham *et al.* (2004:141), who state that "while we may be able to improve our models of professional development in reading and writing, it can be argued that this endeavour must begin with a definition of the knowledge and skills necessary for effective practice and a demonstration of how practicing teachers acquire this knowledge".

2.2.2 Shulman's knowledge base

As mentioned in the first chapter (cf. 1.2), the **theoretical framework** for this study is situated in Shulman's knowledge base. According to Shulman (1986) there are seven interrelated domains of teacher knowledge which must be understood in order to teach effectively, these are: content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge; curriculum knowledge; pedagogical content knowledge (PCK); knowledge of learners and their characteristics; knowledge of educational contexts and knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values and their philosophical and historical grounds. Each of these domains is briefly described as seen by Shulman (1986 and 1987).

Content knowledge is the in-depth understanding which teachers must have of specific subject matter knowledge of the different subject matter areas, making them experts on their subject matter, in line with what a subject major students must know about their major. **General pedagogical knowledge** refers to the broad principles and strategies of teaching and learning in relation to classroom management which seem to go beyond subject matter. **Curriculum knowledge** relate to the materials and programmes which are seen to be the tools of teaching for teachers. **Pedagogical content knowledge** is unique to teaching. Content of what is to be taught and pedagogy, of how it is to be taught, is integrated or blended in such a way that the subject is made more understandable to others. This is only possible if the teacher has an in-depth understanding of the content to be taught. **Knowledge of learners and their characteristics** includes all the aspects of development of learners, as well as their interests and needs. **Knowledge of educational contexts** includes knowledge of teaching contexts, from the narrow contexts within the classroom to the wider contexts within the school and the community.

Knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values and their philosophical and historical grounds focuses on what is to be achieved, that is, the purposes of school, learners' needs and the value of what they learn.

Each of these domains of teacher knowledge are of importance and are interrelated, however, in line with what is to be achieved in this study more emphasis is placed on content knowledge, PCK and curriculum knowledge. The purpose of this study is to develop a teacher preparation framework for EFAL to empower preservice teachers to teach EFAL effectively. For the purposes of this study, the required content knowledge is what specific subject matter knowledge in relation to EFAL they must know, or master and which must still be identified. Also, how this content should be taught in a way that will be comprehensible to the learners, that is PCK. The curriculum knowledge must also be identified because these students must teach according to specific tools and parameters, such as programmes, which are provided by the schools.

These three domains are explained later (cf. 2.2.2.1, 2.2.2.2 and 2.2.2.3). However, PCK, as one of the domains of teacher knowledge is seen by Shulman (1986:9) as going beyond knowledge of subject matter per se to the dimension of subject matter knowledge for teaching. The importance is such that Widjaja and Stacey (2009:587) refer to it as the accepted **common currency** in teacher education, which "bridges content knowledge and the practice of teaching" (Ball *et al*., 2008:389). It acknowledges the importance of transforming subject matter per se into subject matter knowledge for teaching (Park & Oliver, 2008:262). It involves a major shift in teachers' understanding, from merely being able to grasp subject matter for themselves to an in-depth understanding, in order to present it in various new ways, such that the learners will be able to understand it with ease. What **distinguishes novice** from **expert teachers** is then the **possession of such knowledge**, "the capacity of a teacher to **transform** the content knowledge he or she possesses into **forms that are pedagogically powerful** and yet **adaptive** to the **variations** in **ability and background** presented by students (Shulman, 1887:15), thus taking the context of the learner into consideration. In his view the key to distinguishing the knowledge base of teaching rested in the **intersection** of content and pedagogy (Solis, 2009), hence the focus on content knowledge and PCK in this study, to identify what content knowledge teachers need to transform in the classroom in relation to EFAL and the knowledge of how this should take place in a pedagogically powerful way, within the parameters of the allocated curriculum.This is why the focus in this study is also on curriculum knowledge. Shulman is an advocate for **quality** teaching, which seems to require intervention in South Africa (cf. 1.2). Shulman and Sherin (2004:136) state that "one of the most significant factors influencing the effectiveness of teaching is the teacher's own subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge". This view is

not unique to Shulman; it is supported by Medwell *et al.* (2012), as has already been suggested in this study (cf. 2.2.1). The lack of focus on subject matter for the study of teaching is regarded as the "**missing paradigm** problem which is seen as a **blind spot** with respect to content" (Shulman, 1986:3 & 5). A blind spot indicates that there is an obstruction, that is, the limited preservice student teachers' knowledge base stands in the way of quality teaching or the striving for teaching excellence. The result of this realisation was the ''Knowledge Growth in Teaching" research which set out to answer the numerous questions related to the apparent lack of teacher knowledge. The "central question concerns the **transition from expert student to novice teacher**" (Shulman, 1986:5), which is the level on which all preservice student teachers should be when they graduate. In Shulman's research, equal attention was paid to the content aspects of teaching, namely what is to be taught and the elements of the teaching process, that is, how the content will be taught effectively to the learners. It was, however, not the intention of Shulman or his colleagues to assemble a list of what teachers should know, but rather to establish a conceptual basis as a means to focus on the nature and types of knowledge required to teach a subject (Ball *et al*., 2008:392).

Although Shulman's blind spot in terms of a lack of content knowledge for teaching was identified many years ago, it seems that there is still concern regarding this matter, it has not been completely resolved. This is evident in research which was conducted, including some of the following examples. Bold *et al.* (2017:3) for The World Bank found that "only about one in ten fourth-grade teachers master their students' language curriculum." Rice and Kitchel (2016:96) indicated that teachers discussed feeling deficient in various aspects of content. Bietenbeck *et al.* (2017) also reported that teachers have remarkably little knowledge of their subject. Robertson's (2017:11) study led to the identification of specific gaps in teacher's science content knowledge at a specified school.

It must be stated at this point, however, that the knowledge base that is discussed in this study should not be regarded as final; the purpose is rather to provide some direction in terms of a required knowledge base for teaching. This is because knowledge should be constantly evolving (Dichos, 2015) and developing in line with more recent research and in accordance with what the current need is. The content-specific dimensions of teachers' knowledge base discussed next can be seen as a departure point and a basis to work from.

2.2.2.1 Content knowledge

Content knowledge, as defined by Shulman (1986:9), refers to "the amount and organization of knowledge per se in the mind of the teacher". The content structure of knowledge is dependent

on the subject matter area; it differs according to the focus. It relates specifically to what must be taught in accordance with subject areas, for example, EFAL, as is the case in this study. It is important for teachers to **understand** this content and then **convey** this content to the learners in a **comprehensible manner.** Cunningham *et al*. (2004:141) refers to content knowledge as disciplinary knowledge, it can be equated to knowledge informing, which is "knowing that" and the content part of knowledge (Bennet & Bennet, 2014). Shulman (1986:9) describes content knowledge as "the amount of organisation of knowledge in the mind of the teacher", so he quantifies it and posits that it "goes beyond knowledge of the facts or concepts of a domain" and requires "understanding the structures of the subject matter" as well as the organising principles. This indicates that teachers must be on the level where they have an in-depth grasp of the way that the content is arranged, as well as all the related components. He adds that "teachers must not only be capable of defining for students the accepted truths in a domain but must be able to explain why a particular proposition is deemed warranted, why it is worth knowing, and how it relates to other propositions, both in theory and practice" (Shulman, 1986:9). It is therefore not enough for the teacher to have a superficial understanding and to merely accept that something is the way it is; rather, the teacher must go beyond that and understand the exact reason/s why and also the relevance of the particular topic in relation to the specific subject area.

Essentially, therefore, teachers must know their subject matter thoroughly, that is, an in-depth understanding is required. Steinke (2019:44) stresses that it is this in-depth understanding of subject matter on which a solid foundation for pedagogy must be built. Shulman (1987:9) emphasises that "the teacher has special responsibilities in relation to content knowledge, serving as the primary source of student understanding of subject matter". The way that this understanding is conveyed to the learners gives them an indication of what is of primary importance and what is less important so that the learners know where the focus should be. In addition, the teacher must know his/her learners well enough to cater for their diversity and to explain the content in different ways. This will ensure that it is understandable to the learners based on their different perspectives, contexts and points of view. This is only possible if the teacher has in-depth knowledge of the content to be taught and an understanding of the learners within their various contexts. In-depth teacher knowledge will have an impact on, and contribute to, improved learner achievement. It is interesting to note that in developed countries the **assumption** is often made that teachers have adequate subject matter knowledge (Rollnick *et al*., 2008). In essence, the importance thereof is that it is a fundamental requirement for effective teaching (Darling–Hammond, 2008) and therefore warrants careful consideration in the

preparation of preservice student teachers to teach EFAL, which currently does not seem to be applicable to the extent that is required.

In relation to this study therefore, the challenge lies in identifying what content knowledge FP literacy teachers require to teach EFAL reading and writing effectively. Lui (2013:128) refers to this content knowledge of literacy teachers as a "rarely-studied area" and indicates that little research on teacher knowledge and teacher education, specifically in the area of English Second Language (ESL) has been conducted. ESL is used internationally and is roughly equivalent to EFAL, as used in South Africa. In this country, programmes such as the Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy, Primary School Reading Improvements and Early Grade Reading Study aim to fulfil the DBEs vision and mission to improve teachers' content knowledge (De Clercq & Salem, 2015), a clear indication that it is not up to standard. Charter (2016) reported on a study, which was conducted in the Eastern Cape, among Grade 4 learners in relation to poor illiteracy rates and the inability to read for meaning. One of the causes of these problems that were identified was that many foundation phase teachers in South Africa do not have the content knowledge base and pedagogical skills to teach children to read.

2.2.2.2 Pedagogical content knowledge

Secondly, p**edagogical content knowledge** (PCK), which Rollnick *et al*. (2008) refer to as the cornerstone of teacher knowledge, is the **intersection** between content knowledge and **pedagogical knowledge** (PK). In order to fully understand PCK, pedagogical knowledge is first clarified. PK "goes beyond knowledge of subject matter per se to the dimension of subject matter knowledge *for* teaching, it embodies the aspects of content most germane to its teachability" (Shulman, 1986:9). This general pedagogical knowledge has "special reference to those broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organisation that appear to transcend subject matter" (Shulman, 1987:8). This implies that it goes beyond subject matter and relates more specifically to how the content is taught to the learners. Although these more general pedagogical skills are a vital element of teacher preparation, it was not seen as being sufficient. The key to Shulman, in terms of a knowledge base for teachers, was the intersection or amalgam of content and pedagogy (Shulman, 1986). The definition which Shulman (1987:8) provides for PCK is that "it represents the blending of content and pedagogy, into an understanding of how popular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners and represented for instruction". After research, Park and Oliver (2008:264) believe that a comprehensive working definition of PCK could be that "PCK is teachers' understanding and enactment of how to help a group of students understand specific

subject matter using multiple instructional strategies, representations, and assessments while working within the contextual, cultural, and social limitations in the learning environment". Solis (2009) states that it is also known as craft knowledge in that it consists of an integration of knowledge of teaching practice, pedagogy, students, subject matter and the curriculum, which is based on their accumulated wisdom. It is summed up by OECD (2014:2) as "the specialised knowledge of teachers for creating effective teaching and learning environments for all students". Knowledge proceeding could be equated to this in that it relates to the process and action part of knowledge (Bennet & Bennet, 2014). These authors argue that we should "note that the process our minds use to find, create and semantically mix information needed to take effective action is often unconscious and difficult to communicate with somebody else; therefore, by definition tacit" (Bennet & Bennet, 2014). This indicates that it is implied and not stated, which highlights the importance of it in teacher preparation programmes and that it should be explicitly taught.

Although a definition of PCK has been provided, Ball *et al.* (2008:389) raise the concern that after many years of work the "bridge between knowledge and practice was still inadequately understood," that "it lacked definition and empirical foundation, limiting its usefulness" and that it therefore remains "thinly developed". They add that researchers have used PCK to refer to "a wide range of aspects of subject matter knowledge and the teaching of subject matter and, indeed have used it differently across - and even within - subject areas" (Ball *et al.,* 2008:389). These differences include "the breadth of what the term includes" and "how the term is used to relate content knowledge to practice of teaching" (Ball *et al.,* 2008:389). Hence, additional research was conducted; for example, their research in maths education has, in Worden's (2015:105-106) opinion provided some clarification on the nature of content knowledge. They identified two different categories of content knowledge. These are, firstly, common content knowledge, which is used on a regular basis in our daily lives, including settings which are not necessarily related to teaching. This includes the ability to determine if a learner's answer is correct or not and why, which is useful for a literacy teacher. Secondly, specialised content knowledge, which is more detailed and only used in teaching settings, not in other professions, although there is no direct relation to the knowledge that teachers have of students or of instructional practices, as in PCK. It is described as an "unpacked" or "decompressed" form of knowledge (Ball *et al.,* 2008:400). The differences which are mentioned could have arisen because individuals "are likely to interpret the nature of PCK differently thus engendering a variety of meanings" (Park & Oliver, 2008:262). Prior to this Grossman (1990) classified the PCK components into four components. These are the conception of teaching purposes or the discipline specific subject matter; knowledge of conceptions and difficulties of student understanding; curricular knowledge; and knowledge of

instructional strategies. This illustrates that “there is no universally accepted definition or conceptualization of PCK” (Nilsson, 2008:1283). It has, however, been “expanded and promoted” (Solis, 2009) to make it “more operational in various content areas” (Widjaja & Stacey, 2009:587).

PCK is unique to teaching. In summary, the key elements of Shulman’s (1987) PCK for teachers encompass an in-depth knowledge of content, an understanding of how learners will conceive the content and the associated implications for teaching and their general pedagogical knowledge, which includes their teaching strategies. Other elements contained in this knowledge base for teaching are curriculum knowledge, knowledge of educational context and knowledge of the purposes of education (Solis, 2009).

Lastly, the importance of PCK lies in the value that it has to inform teacher preparation, as a means to direct improvement of their training. In no specific order of importance, it includes some of the following. Developing knowledge for teaching aids in the transformation of content knowledge into PCK, as well as the unpacking of this content knowledge to make it available for such transformation (Worden, 2015:106). In line with this, “PCK attends to lead teachers in solving learners’ misconceptions about the subject they learn” (Kultsum, 2017:55). It also serves to “refocus education attention on the important role of subject matter in educational practice and away from a more generic approach in teacher education” (Solis, 2009). “Student-teachers need to see the value in transforming their knowledge into a form that is usable and helpful in shaping their classroom teaching of science” (Nilsson, 2008:1282) and equally in EFAL - that is, to assist the preservice student teachers to gain a deeper insight into the content to be taught and to anticipate the challenges which may arise so that it can be conveyed to the learners in a manner which takes cognisance of their context and needs. This is especially important for the diversity in South Africa. PCK is a “major determinant of teaching practice and is central to teachers’ curriculum decision-making at the classroom level” (Jones & Moreland, 2015:65); it thus “encompasses both teachers’ understanding and their enactment” (Park & Oliver, 2008:262). Steinke (2019:38) argues that “it is the PCK of the teacher (in all its facets) which drives the acquisition of the skilled reading process”, hence the importance thereof. This study strives to enhance the impact of PCK on the quality of teaching EFAL since there is little research which has been conducted in this specific field (Evens & Depaepe, 2016).

2.2.2.3 Curriculum knowledge

Lastly, **curriculum knowledge** is regarded by Shulman (1987:8) as the “tools of the trade” for teachers. This is based on “the full range of programs designed for the teaching of particular subjects and topics at a given level, the variety of instructional materials available in relation to

those programs, and the set characteristics that serve as both the indications and contraindications for the use of particular curriculum or program materials in particular circumstances" as well as the "curricular alternatives available for instruction" (Shulman, 1986:10). A curriculum framework provides the basis for curriculum knowledge. The definition of the South African Consolidated Literacy Working Group (2020a) further elaborates on this, and is in line with Shulman's definition:

A curriculum framework is a set of guidelines defining and explaining what a curriculum is required to be like or to contain - in other words, it is a guide for the construction of actual curricula. It sets the scope, directions, standards and limits or boundaries of possible curricula. A curriculum framework is not a curriculum - but it specifies how such a curriculum might be structured and regulated. It provides a framework, the underlying principles and standards, within which actual curriculum content is to be developed. The framework is not simply a set of rules - variation is possible in implementing the curriculum framework.

Teachers must use this as their framework for teaching and assessment of all the subjects that are set out by the DoE, in each grade and phase, as well as the Learning and Teaching Support Materials which are required to facilitate learning. CAPS for Grades 1-3 is the curriculum for all government schools. In the FP it consists of three subjects. These are Literacy which includes a Home Language and an Additional Language, which for the majority of learners is English (EFAL); Mathematics; and Life Skills. As part of their preparation the preservice student teachers must not only be exposed to CAPS regularly to familiarise themselves with these documents but they must know what CAPS requires and understand the principles which inform it. They should be prepared to break down CAPS into the allocated time frame, which is per term, and to plan in accordance so that the learners are taught the necessary skills and are enabled to apply the various skills in relation to their development.

Shulman (1986:10) highlights two other essential dimensions of curriculum knowledge which are vital for teaching. These are lateral curriculum knowledge and vertical curriculum knowledge. Lateral knowledge relates to knowledge of the curriculum in other subject areas. This is essential for FP teachers who teach all the subjects to their learners and therefore need an in-depth knowledge of the curriculum. During their preparation the preservice student teachers thus need to use the CAPS documents as the basis for planning their lessons and developing a holistic picture of all the subjects which they will teach.

Vertical knowledge includes familiarity with the topics and issues that have been and will be taught in the same subject area during the preceding and subsequent years in school, as well as the

materials that embody them (Shulman, 1986:10). This implies that the preservice teachers must acquaint themselves with the curriculum of each grade in the FP, which is from Grades R-4 so that they have realistic expectations of each learner in each grade to prepare the learners according to the standard which is required for the next grade. In terms of EFAL this includes helping the learners to reach high levels of competence in English by the end of Grade 3 to enable the learners to cope in English as their LoLT from Grade 4, which is in the next phase where the focus is more on reading to learn in the content areas.

Although preservice student teachers must be prepared to teach CAPS, it is imperative that they have specialist knowledge of the teaching of reading and writing. This is essential if the curriculum is changed, which is not improbable considering the amount of curriculum changes which have taken place in South Africa. As Gumede and Biyase (2016:70) indicate, this includes the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) in 2002, Curriculum 2005 Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2011. Moats (2020:23) argues that although teachers are not in a position to make decisions regarding curricula, if they "understand the foundations of their discipline (they) will be better prepared to argue against the wholesale district adoption of irresponsible fads and market driven changes in teacher philosophy".

Shulman (1986:10) also specifies other domains of knowledge which he deems important. These include, for example, the "individual differences among learners". This is an aspect which makes teaching challenging because there is no tailor-made, one-size-fits-all approach that can be applied to all learners in all schools. This is the reason why practical exposure to the different grades and to diverse schools in the FP is imperative. The preservice student teachers must become acquainted with a variety of school contexts to ensure that they can adapt if placed in a different type of context to the ones they might have been placed in during their teaching practicum. There may be some more generic methods of classroom organisation and management which can be applied and then adapted. Generic relates to a group of similar things, so these are the general methods of classroom organisation and management that the preservice student teachers must familiarise themselves with and be able to apply once they start teaching.

In conclusion, it must be borne in mind that the three domains of Shulmans (1986) teacher knowledge, namely, content knowledge, PCK and curricular knowledge, which have been discussed, are interrelated and integrated and that none of them exist in isolation. Although only three of the seven domains have been discussed for the purposes of this study, the other four are not less important and are still interrelated and integrated and therefore also feature in this study. Shulman (1987:12) clearly states that "a knowledge base for teaching is not fixed and final and

that much, if not most, of the proposed knowledge base remains to be discovered, invented, and refined", which is the purpose of research. Although this was written by Shulman many years ago, and although there has been a lot of progress in this regard, it is still applicable since the process is ongoing. This is partly what this study aims to contribute towards. The key to distinguishing the knowledge base of teaching lies at the intersection of content and pedagogy, in the capacity of a teacher to transform the content knowledge he or she possesses into forms that are pedagogically powerful and yet adaptive to the variations in ability and background presented by the students (Shulman, 1987:15). In line with this, Deng (2007:281) maintains that "the problem of classroom teaching, therefore, is ultimately one of transformation: How can classroom teachers transform their subject matter of an academic discipline into the subject matter of a school subject - the kind of subject matter appropriate for teaching and learning in classrooms?" Deng (2007:279) stresses that "transforming the subject matter of an academic discipline into that of a school subject is, first and foremost, a complex curricular task", which is why so much consideration needs to be given to getting it right during the preparation of preservice student teachers. Shulman (1987) warns, however, that "the knowledge-based approach does not produce an overly technical image of teaching, a scientific enterprise that has lost its soul". The knowledge base discussed above has implications for teacher preparation - it should be used as a guide for the lecturers and to empower preservice teachers to become master teachers once they have gained the necessary experience. Now that the foundation for the knowledge base has been laid the emphasis can shift specifically to ITE and then the reading knowledge base for preservice teachers.

2.3 Initial teacher education

According to the Queensland College of Teachers (2020) in Australia, its "initial teacher education programs are accredited nationally to ensure that all teachers are prepared to a high standard, and gain the knowledge, skills and experiences to make a positive impact on student learning". It should be noted that it emphasises the importance of achieving a high standard as well as that of knowledge and skills and experiences. This would probably include what Rusznyak *et al.* (2016:1) term "the capacity to develop conceptually strong, responsive and inclusive practices". They (Rusznyak & Bertram, 2015:1) also refer to "the imperative to strengthen ITE programmes", advocating for the improvement of ITE. Unfortunately, both international (Lancaster & Auhl, 2013) and local (CHE, 2010) research questioned the success achieved in this endeavour. As a point of departure, the context of ITE in South Africa is conceptualised as a means of establishing the depth of ITE by referring to the applicable policy and the current research findings.

In South Africa, the primary purpose of an ITE qualification is to "certify that the holder has specialised knowledge as a beginner teacher in a specific phase" (Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), 2015:18). In the MRTEQ (DHET, 2015:9) the complexity of teaching is recognised. The policy stipulates, for example, that the requirements for the development of learning programmes is specific, that institutional flexibility and discretion (cf. section 2.3.1.4) is allowed and that all ITE must address the lack of content and conceptual knowledge in South African education (DHET, 2015:8). However, later in the policy the focus of these qualifications is more on "the well-rounded application of theory to professional practice, so as to provide the degree of specialization required" and **not on in-depth research** (DHET, 2015:19). The FP preservice student teachers are merely required to draw "from a broad range of general knowledge", although "extensive and specialized knowledge of early childhood learning to teach reading and writing" is required, as well as the development of "key initial concepts and skills" as the foundation for learning in future phases and practical skills and workplace experience (DHET, 2015: 20, 22 & 29). Reference is also made to the laying of a solid foundation; as a competency, to sound subject knowledge (DHET, 2015:62); and as a specialist in a phase to having "a well-developed understanding of the knowledge appropriate to the specialisation" (DHET, 2015:60). Although these are essential aspects to consider, Moats (2020:12), after decades of research, emphasises that it is the responsibility of these programmes "to teach a defined body of knowledge, skills, and abilities that are based on the best research in the field", that is, science-based reading instruction.

Simkins (2015:1) found that "a qualified teacher is not necessarily a good teacher and the quality of most Initial Teacher Education (ITE) leaves a lot to be desired", resulting in many beginner teachers being inadequately prepared. Thaba and Kanjere (2014:537) state that "the failure of higher education to offer on delivery of good initial teacher training leads to the high failure in public schools in South Africa". This sentiment is echoed by Taylor (2014a:6), who states that "the cause of poor performance, by and large, lies not with teachers but with the teacher education system that produced them". Maddock and Maroun (2018:193) maintain that many of the interviewees in their study also point to "inadequate and inexpert teacher training". ITE in South Africa is clearly a problem which needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency because it has far-reaching implications if it is not up to standard, including the impact on our learners.

2.3.1 Criticism of Initial Teacher Education programmes

In the Initial Teacher Education Research Project (ITERP) summary report Taylor (2014a) asks questions such as, "to what extent is the current system of initial teacher education (ITE) meeting

the demands of South African schools?" and "are we preparing teachers adequately to tackle the challenges of schooling?" This is in light of the consistent criticism which is levelled at ITE programmes. The various forms of criticism in terms of teacher preparation that are discussed below may give some indication of the specific problems which exist and of the task which lies ahead to effectively address this criticism in the future. These are not in any specific order of importance or urgency.

2.3.1.1 Teacher preparedness

"The importance of preparing teachers to teach effectively has long been recognized" (Superfine & Wenjuan, 2014:303) and was a key aspect of Shulman's work, as has been highlighted (cf. section 2.2.2). Essentially, teacher preparation should be about equipping preservice student teachers to be ready to teach and inspire the learners whom they are responsible for, preferably to the extent they feel confident and motivated to do so. In relation to this study, this means to be ready to teach EFAL in the FP with confidence, with a specific focus on developing in the learners a love for reading. Preparedness is "the result of a process of becoming better prepared for practice" (Rebmann, 2006:625), that is, the practice of quality teaching. In many professions, such as a doctor in the medical profession, thorough preparation is crucial, as only partial preparation can have dire consequences for the patients in his or her care. In the teacher profession partial preparation, although not life threatening, can have dire consequences for learners, and even for teachers. For example, when a preservice student teacher is not thoroughly prepared to teach reading this can have dire consequences for many learners, in that they may fail to learn to read which could hinder their academic achievement. According to Moats (2020:4), "reading affects all other academic achievement and is associated with social, emotional, economic and physical health". The teacher may experience a lack of motivation and a loss of confidence, possibly develop a negative attitude and ultimately even decide to pursue another profession. Strauss (2017) in a newspaper article entitled *Where are all the teachers?* States that on average underprepared teachers are not only less effective but also "2 to 3 times more likely to leave teaching than fully prepared teachers".

The work of Seekoe (2014), although based on the preparation of nursing students, offers some valuable insights into the issue of preparedness. In the context of their study, as stipulated, Seekoe (2014:1937) maintain that the final-year nursing student should be "competent and prepared to practice as an independent registered nurse who is capable of rendering good quality nursing care". This could be applied to teacher preparedness by stating that the fourth-year preservice student teachers should be both competent and prepared to practise as registered

teachers who are capable of rendering good quality teaching to all learners. According to Duchscher (2001:428), also in the context of nursing, this is the time when "a new staff member undergoes a process of learning and adjustment to acquire the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values required to become an effective member of the health team". When applied to teaching this is a time when a new teaching staff member undergoes a process of learning and adjustment to acquire the necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes and values required to become an effective member of a teaching team and to benefit the learners whom he or she is responsible for educating.

2.3.1.1.1 International research on a lack of teacher preparedness

The criticism that is levelled against teacher preparation is both a national and an international phenomenon. Internationally, in **Australia**, for example, many beginner teachers have indicated that they are not satisfied with the preparation that they received, "attributing their early career frustrations to a disconnection between their tertiary experiences and the classroom reality" (Barret Kutcy & Schultz, 2006; Mansfield *et al.,* 2012; Nahal, 2010). The difference between preservice teacher preparation and the actuality of being a beginner teacher is expressed as a "reality shock" because of the "disparity between the tertiary experiences and the classroom realities, contributing to high early career attrition rate" (Le Maistre & Paré, 2010; Nahal, 2010; Rots *et al.*, 2012). A lack of "investigations into the elements of teacher preparation programs that effectively prepare graduate teachers for the realities of the teaching profession" was identified (Beck *et al*., 2007; Helfrich & Bean, 2011; Kleickmann & Anders, 2013). In **Poland** a point of criticism, as highlighted by Fazlagić and Erkol (2015:543), is that training is offered by a "large number of independent in-service training centers which often compete for clients by means of tuition reductions which weakens the quality of training". Wilkomirska (2005) is concerned about the missing practical skills of Polish teachers. In the **United States** there is a call for teacher preparation that includes adequate attention to ELLs as a number of teachers "have limited understanding of the second language acquisition or cultural diversity issues that affect the ELLs in their classrooms" (Giambo *et al*., 2005:107). The fact that teachers need better preparation and that a gap exists between what teachers need and what they have been given, is highlighted by Moats (2020:5). Darling-Hammond (2017) cites that many teachers leave the profession because of a lack of adequate preparation. According to Gorard (2017:4), in **England** there are diverse routes which can be followed into teaching, which could have an impact on teacher preparation. Aspects which teachers felt they were less prepared for included planning, administrative aspects of the job, assessment practices and handling parents (Griffiths *et al*., 2002). Other areas were issues of equal opportunities in the classroom, support for pupils with behavioural and emotional

difficulties and handling bullying/harassment (Owen *et al*., 2009). This is not an exhaustive list; the purpose is to highlight that there are many issues in terms of criticism against teacher preparation internationally and to provide an indication of what this criticism is. Much of the criticism voiced internationally resonates with opinions expressed locally.

2.3.1.1.2 South African research on a lack of teacher preparedness

Inadequate teacher preparation in South Africa is problematic, as indicated in *italics* in this section. The criticism and concerns are such that is the second priority of The Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) (2017:4), focusing on aspects such as the *curricula of initial teacher education programmes*. As a way of improving learning outcomes, other areas of focus are *explicit teaching* of preservice student teachers, both in theory and in practice and *the most effective forms of reading instruction* which universities have not paid enough attention to (CDE, 2017:4). In this way *a reliable knowledge base* for teaching can be established. Statements such as "most teachers are ill-prepared for teaching" and "ill-equipped teachers" (Draper *et al.,* 2017:1 & 5), as well as "*inadequate and inexpert teacher training*" (Maddock & Maroun, 2018:193) highlight the fact that our preservice student teachers are poorly prepared to teach. The PrimTEd document entitled *Towards competency standards for language and literacy teachers* (Aitchison *et al.*, 2019:1) states that one of the key findings in The ITERP research was that "students are offered *curricula* which *vary* greatly in their adequacy and appropriateness as preparation for teaching languages and literacy in South African classrooms" and that "the need for *policies and strategies to strengthen teacher preparation*" is vital. Draper *et al.* (2017:1) stress that concentrating on teacher preparation is a priority for government action as it will help to get the country out of the "*vicious schooling cycle*" towards "fostering a virtuous cycle" because "*better trained and committed teachers* would certainly improve the situation". In research conducted by Deacon (2016b:15 and 16) many participants felt that their teacher education programmes "had *not prepared* them *well enough* for the work they were expected to do", more specifically for "the *scale of their learners' academic and other needs*". Of the programmes which had been reviewed in this research "*fewer than half* were *immediately worthy of full accreditation*" (Deacon, 2016b:17). This equates to half the programmes in South Africa *not being up to the required standard* for the thorough preparation of preservice student teachers. While it is true that the universities cannot make sure that beginner teachers will know everything about the content that they must teach or even how to teach everything correctly, it is vital that they must "ensure that they are *more adequately prepared*" than the respondents who were involved in this research seemed to be (Deacon, 2016b:20). It is clear from the ITERP findings that there is "*room for*

improvement at every step in the process of initial teacher education: from the manner in which prospective teachers are selected or admitted into an ITE programme to attrition and retention, once employed as teachers" (Deacon, 2016b:26). He adds that the findings indicate that if some of the basics were done, such as preservice student teachers being *formally observed during WIL,* then "a measurable improvement in the system is likely" (Deacon, 2016b:26). Reference here is made to the basics merely being done, not even in relation to a specified standard. The next area of criticism relates to the lack of quality in teacher preparation programmes.

2.3.1.2 Quality deficits in teacher preparation

Newspaper headlines with reports such as "Most of our new teachers can't" (Nkosi, 2015), "SA's shocking literacy stats" (Jansen, 2013), "Our education needs an extreme makeover" (Balfour, 2014:18), "Education quality 'needs to be improved'" (Jones, 2014), "Tackling crisis in SA education" (Roodt, 2018) and "Understanding the teaching crisis facing South Africa, what will it take to improve teacher quality and professionalism in the country?" (Robinson, 2019) highlight the current lack of quality education in South Africa. Quality is a pertinent issue that relates to many aspects of education in South Africa, specifically in the context of this study based on preservice student teacher preparation. The MRTEQ document (DHET, 2015:6) states that the "specification of a set of minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications is aimed at ensuring that the higher education system produces teachers of high quality" in line with the needs of the country.

Quality can be defined as a "degree of excellence" (Sykes, 1978:727). In relation to this, Ellis (2019:3) posits that "quality itself is a somewhat ambiguous term since it has connotations of excellence". While quality is difficult to define in terms of teacher preparation programmes, in relation to the given definition it does imply endeavouring to achieve a degree of excellence when training preservice student teachers and not just developing mediocre programmes or frameworks that settle for the average achievement of the learners in South African schools. The striving for excellence in education involves the quality preparation of teachers since "no education system can move beyond the quality of its teachers" (Spaull, 2019:8). According to the IRA (2007:2), "only when programs are intentionally striving for excellence will they produce teachers who can meet the demands of today's classroom environments". Quality preparation will deliver preservice student teachers who are more empowered and perhaps even more confident and motivated to improve the low rates of literacy in the country. Quality preparation would equate to better quality teaching and, as Ellis (2019:4) highlights, the connotations of excellence. This is in line with the definition provided and that which the IRA provides. Wills stresses in an article by

Trialogue (2019) that “you cannot win the war if you don’t train your army” in that “teachers are the key agents for change needed to deliver quality education to South Africa’s children”. In addition, he believes that “we have to start remodelling what teacher excellence looks like”. “Education research the world over is in increasing agreement that one of the most important determinants of education quality is the competence of teachers” (Deacon, 2016b:3), hence the importance of their preparation and the focus of this study.

It is evident that there are links between quality and the different aspects of education. Deacon (2012, 43) maintains that there are “close correlations between teacher quality and learner achievement, and between the quality of initial teacher education and teacher quality”. In essence, quality preservice teacher preparation will result in high teacher quality and ultimately in quality education and therefore quality learning for the learners. In relation to quality education and schooling, McArdle (2010:60) suggests that “programs for improving teacher quality are seen as the lynchpin for education reforms”. In line with this, Tabot and Mottanya (2012:247) argue that “teacher training is regarded as the backbone of the success of any education system”. The reference to the backbone indicates how essential it is. According to Taylor (2014a:6), there is “a growing realisation that the greatest opportunity for improving the quality of schooling lies in strengthening initial teacher education”, hence the focus and importance of this study. Senne-Dibbe *et al.* (2013:230) maintain that “research and policy acknowledge the fact that the way teachers are educated contributes towards teacher quality”. This is crucial because effective teacher preparation can change the profession and improve the quality of teaching. Lastly, quality teacher preparation will also have an impact on learners, as mentioned in the World Development Report (The World Bank, 2018:132). Improved teacher preparation programmes or frameworks will cause a ripple effect in that they will affect teacher quality which will result in an improvement in the achievement of learners, specifically in terms of literacy, which is the focus of this study. This highlights the importance of excellent teacher preparation programmes to bring about the changes that are necessary in education.

A number of suggestions have been offered in terms of ways in which teacher preparation programmes can be improved, such as a sound knowledge base (cf. 2.2). This is supported by Ball *et al*. (2008:301), who maintain that instruction of a high quality is based on a sophisticated, professional knowledge foundation. A relationship between PCK and teacher practice has also been identified (Abell, 2008), while Draper *et al.* (2017:17) emphasise “the context of instruction: the curriculum, the match between teachers’ qualifications and what they are actually teaching and the teaching conditions”. A balance between, and meaningful connection of, theory and practice are also crucial (Beck *et al*., 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Nahal, 2010). This study

has been conducted in order to contribute to the preparation of preservice student teachers specifically in relation to EFAL in the FP. The criticism related to an inadequate knowledge base is discussed next.

2.3.1.3 Inadequate knowledge base

It stands to reason that a thorough knowledge base attained during quality preparation will empower preservice student teachers to strive for quality teaching. Balfour (2015:3), however, posits that "there are many evident gaps in teachers' current knowledge". Statistics indicate that "the majority of teachers (80%) lack the content and pedagogical skill to teach the subjects they are currently teaching" (Spaull, 2019:3), while Deacon (2016a:15) mentions the "rather mediocre English subject and pedagogical knowledge" of some new Intermediate Phase teachers who only "averaged 66% on the ITERP test". Although reference was made here to Intermediate Phase teachers this could apply equally to FP teachers. These statistics point to the magnitude of this problem which affects most South African teachers and therefore learners. The ITERP was launched in response to growing evidence that low learner quality in South African schools was largely due to the lack of comprehension and inability of many teachers to adequately convey the knowledge of the subjects they teach. Deacon (2016a:10) agrees that "the quantity and quality of the knowledge and skills that some ITE programmes are providing student-teachers leave much to be desired". This is caused in part by inadequate time scheduled during training to build a proper knowledge base. It is further compounded by "a lack of consensus on a formal body of knowledge for framing teacher education" (Draper *at al.,* 2017:2).

The lack of academic depth and rigour in university-based coursework was the focus of research conducted by Rusznyak *et al.* (2016) and as a result a symposium entitled *Academic depth and rigour in initial teacher education* was held to gain an understanding of how academic breadth and depth are applied to achieve the "development of conceptually informed practice". According to Schwab (1978), academic depth can be attained both by the ways in which subject matter is thought about within a discipline, known as *substantive knowledge,* and how the new knowledge is acquired and validated, known as *syntactic knowledge.* To clarify, this is about how the knowledge in particular disciplines is created and validated. In terms of rigour, Geiser (2009) posits that engagement with coursework with the aim of knowledge reproduction merely to meet the requirements for assessment will compromise rigour. In contrast, intellectually challenging coursework with high quality teaching and assessment is more rigorous (Rusznyak *et al*., 2016:3) and therefore more beneficial. Teachers should strive to adopt a "deep approach" by means of increased opportunities to engage with the content to be learned (Trigwell *et al*., 1999). Clearly

there is a correlation between the improvement of teacher knowledge and enhancing the quality of teaching and therefore of learning.

A lack of language and reading knowledge (pertinent to this study) that has been identified by researchers entails some of the following. In terms of knowledge of language, Moats identifies (2020:11) gaps in understanding of the ability to identify speech sounds, spelling patterns, word structures and sentence structure. This is significant because reading is "primarily a language-based learning activity" (Moats, 2020:11) and therefore it is "vital that reading teachers be trained with the underlying linguistic system of English language" (Harmer, 2012). In addition, Mahmoodi-Shahrebabak and Oslund (2017:3) stipulate that knowledge of the spelling system is a basic requirement in terms of content knowledge for teachers. Other areas of deficient knowledge which have been identified include, for example, ways to correct and analyse the phonological and morphological errors made by novice readers (Mahmoodi-Shahrebabak & Oslund, 2017:4) and equally problematic, as studies by Mahmoodi-Shahrebabak and Oslund (2017:5) have found, that teachers have a tendency to overestimate the knowledge that they have in terms of phonological and phonemic awareness as major skills. Although the gaps in knowledge which were identified here were from international studies, research has also been conducted in this country (Fleisch *et al. 2017;* O'Carroll & Hickman, 2021; Rossouw*,* 2016) which indicates that these findings can also generalised to South African teachers.

2.3.1.4 Variation between ITE institutions in South Africa

The policy in terms of the MRTEQ (DHET, 2015:8) specifies that it:

> *Allows for institutional flexibility and discretion in allocation of credits within learning programs, and encourages teacher education educators to become engaged in curriculum design, policy implementation and research.*

The Consolidated Literacy Working Group (2020a) provides further information regarding what is permissible in terms of the Curriculum Framework for literacy teaching in ITE. A few of the relevant parts of the document are mentioned to highlight the high degree of flexibility and discretion allowed, which may give rise to the large variation between ITE institutions. This document states that there is a *fair* degree of guidance in relation to the *possible* components of a curriculum for literacy teachers. The set of content descriptors provided *might* be considered when a comprehensive and coherent literacy teacher curriculum is designed. In relation to *their requirements*, the higher education institutions (HEIs) may decide how to put these components together into modules or courses. The descriptors which are provided are *not mandatory* in any

sense and the actual *content is the responsibility of the particular university.* The list of *components should not be seen as prescribed* and therefore various configurations, blends or sequences could be designed.

Research indicates that there is substantial variation between the ITE institutions in South Africa which may result in a lack of a specific standard and quality of education. The vast variation is evident in the comment made by Bowie and Reed (2016:105) that "variation across universities is striking". Other sources indicate that firstly, one of the main findings of the ITERP (Taylor, 2014a:10), in terms of the broad overview of the ITE curricula is that "the content of modules and hence of programmes varies widely among institutions". Secondly, Balfour (2014) refers to "the degree of diversity in the higher education sector itself where universities' undergraduate curricula are determined by the areas of specialization offered by academics, or by virtue of the specialisation of the relevant Department". Kwenda and Robinson (2010:106) are of the opinion that "no national curriculum for teacher education exists and universities are free to design their own curricula within a broad set of policy guidelines". This is supported by Deacon (2016b:19), who also points out that "there is no common or core national ITE curriculum"; although there are many modules which are compulsory, "universities and especially individual lecturers have a great deal of autonomy in choosing and deciding how to teach the precise content of these modules". Lastly Zimmerman *et al.* (2008:45 & 58) state that there is "wide variation - both in the programme goals espoused, and the design of the programmes at the different institutions. Their one concern is the discrepancy apparent between different institutions in relation to time allocation, reflected in numbers of modules and semesters for the preparation of student teachers to teach reading literacy". The concern is that preservice student teachers have had diverse exposure to and experience in the teaching of reading. This has a direct impact on the learners in the schools since preservice student teachers will not all be equally well equipped and prepared to teach reading, a vital skill that must be mastered by all learners. Bowie and Reed (2016) also point to variation in terms of time allocation and add the issue of variation in "depth" that is also problematic. It is of little use for the preservice student teachers to have surface knowledge about the teaching of reading because it will lead to mediocrity and not the excellence in teaching that should be pursued. Another issue is that "in some programmes, content knowledge exists as one of the main points on a checklist, whereas in others, high levels of content knowledge constitutes a non-negotiable requirement on the basis of which competence in teaching depends" (Rusznyak & Bertram, 2015). This indicates that there is no standard which must be adhered to. Furthermore, while "regulatory bodies such as the DHET provide a framework of formal criteria to be addressed by providers of initial teacher education (ITE) these criteria can be interpreted in many different

ways" (Bowie & Reed, 2016). Other variations include "standards and criteria" and a "formal body of knowledge for framing teacher education and on what constitutes good teaching practice" (Draper *et al.,* 2017:10); "the depth and breadth of instruction and learning in subject and pedagogical knowledge varied widely" (Deacon, 2016b:18); and a "lack of a self-regulating teacher education (and teaching) profession able to clearly delineate a common, agreed set of ITE knowledge and practice standards and curricula to which all universities should conform" (Deacon, 2016:25). Reviewed research highlights the need for clarity regarding all these issues so that guidance is provided as is required.

2.3.1.5 Teaching practice

The opportunities that are provided for preservice student teachers to practise how to teach are crucial since teaching is a complicated task. The link between practice and PCK has been highlighted (cf. 2.2.2). Refining the required knowledge and skills for teachers is a process which only comes with the necessary practice over a length of time. Walkington (2004:1) describes practicum, or the South African equivalent, teaching practice/ WIL / practical learning, as "an opportunity for preservice teachers to engage in a developmental process of observing and experimenting with teaching practice, and learning about the skills and knowledge, philosophies and attitudes of the professional teacher".

As a starting point it is important to identify what the policy guidelines for WIL are in terms of the MRTEQ (DHET, 2015:10-25). In terms of practical learning, a distinction is made between learning from and in practice. From practice means that resources of different practices across various contexts can be analysed as a basis for learning in practice as time in the schools and in classrooms is unfortunately limited. Learning in practice is actual teaching in schools and involves preparing for lessons, reflection and assessment. It could also include a component of service learning which takes place in community settings. The opportunities for students to go into schools must be formally arranged and be in line with the qualification requirements. Developing mutually beneficial partnerships with schools is implied. This component of WIL has to be structured, supervised, integrated into the learning programme and spread across the learning programme, and formal assessment must take place. The appropriate structure and full integration into the learning programme must be considered and structured supervision, mentoring and assessment included. An authentic context for preservice student teachers to experience and demonstrate the integration of competencies they have developed during the learning programme must be provided. Exposure to concrete experiences in diverse and contrasting contexts in functional South African schools is mandatory. This should entail a minimum of 20 weeks and maximum of

32 weeks of WIL formally supervised over the four-year period of the degree or a maximum of 12 weeks per year, of which three must be consecutive.

There are numerous aspects in relation to WIL which are problematic and have been criticised. Firstly, the duration of WIL is seen as inadequate to thoroughly prepare the preservice student teachers for teaching. Deacon (2013) posits that this may be because "there may be no common standard as to the length of teaching practice". For example, three weeks per year - which was mentioned in many of the sources - "in no way prepares education students for the realities of the classroom or lecture room because interaction is lacking and working according to a checklist of lesson plans and files is useless when actually engaging during contact time" (Maddock & Maroun, 2018:209). This is a situation which is seen as "leading to rehearsed lessons which give the false impression of the teacher's ability and expertise which are, in fact, lacking" (Maddock & Maroun, 2018:211) and as a result many of the preservice student teachers are not exposed to the reality of a full day of teaching, which is very complex and usually involves a large number of learners, all with different needs and abilities. Deacon (2016:12) considers not only the duration but also indicates that "the quality of this time" during WIL is "questionable" in that there is " insufficient variation in school placements; in some cases students may simply not be getting enough practice, or no quality practice, or may not be fully exposed to the everyday requirements of being a teacher" (Deacon, 2016b:12). This is supported by some preservice student teachers who mentioned that in their final year they were teaching for less than an hour a day and that they "spent very little time (less than an hour a day on average and possibly no time at all in some cases) observing and learning from how experienced teachers teach" (Deacon, 2016b:12). This raises concerns about how the preservice student teachers are mentored during WIL and the support they receive. The aspect of variation between universities was also mentioned in terms of WIL in relation to "duration, organisation, the quality and content of learning experiences and the form and nature of assessment" (Deacon, 2016b:11). Assessment appears to be cause for concern with statements such as "sometimes the complete lack of supervision due to the literal absence of a supervisor" and "some received no supervision at all – not from a teacher, not from an HOD or principal and not even from a university supervisor" (Deacon, 2016b:12 & 13). This implies that in many instances preservice student teachers received no feedback regarding their teaching which is, firstly a vital opportunity for growth and improvement, and secondly, proof of what the preservice student teachers have achieved or where the problem areas are that need to be improved upon. The placement of preservice student teachers at schools is another area of concern in that "a diversity of possible experiences is thus neither obligatory nor purposefully structured, but partly dependent on student predilections" (Deacon, 2016b:12). By implication

wide exposure to different types of schools and within both urban and rural areas is limited. Many of the preservice student teachers also return to the same schools, which limits their exposure to different types of schools in different areas. If the Home Language of the student is Afrikaans or Setswana they are meant to go to an Afrikaans or Setswana primary school for WIL so that they can present language lessons in their Home Language and EFAL.

Another major challenge is the urgent need to enhance teacher professionalism, as professional ethics and professional attitudes and values are key elements of all teacher education programmes and therefore of high priority. Taylor (2015:1) clarifies that "professional expertise consists of a combination of conceptual understanding and fit-for-purpose action". The promotion of "teacher professionalism is regarded as a strategy to address the disparate quality of learning in South African classrooms" (Rusznyak, 2018:1). This could be achieved partly through the development of teacher professional knowledge and competencies (Revised Policy on the MRTEQ, DHET, 2015:11 & 50). PrimTEd is vital in terms of the professionalism project. Draper *et al.* (2017:30) stipulate that "its purpose is to formulate knowledge and practice standards, curriculum frameworks and course outlines in literacy and mathematics for prospective primary school teachers, based on both the research literature and experience of effective educators".

2.3.1.5.1 Theory and practice

Linked to teaching practice is the disconnect which many teachers are experiencing between the theory that is taught and the practical application which should take place; this is another criticism against ITE. Hudson and Hudson (2011) aptly state that the connection between theory and practice remains a "linchpin" in preservice teachers' understanding of effective teaching. This indicates the crucial link between theory, or the "what" of teaching and practice, and the "how" of teaching. It is well summed up by Gravett and Ramsaroop (2015:136-139) by means of the following statements based on their research: their participants were of the view that there was a "gap between what universities offer to students and the real practice of what is happening in the schools"; the notion that "teacher education is often too theoretical" was mentioned by all participant groups; "a gap between the education of student-teachers at universities and the demands of teaching" was prominent in the data; and there was fierce criticism that "teacher education is not sufficiently relevant to practice". Mecoli (2013) mentions that students in their study felt that there was "a gap between what they had learned and what they were trying to teach" and that "this gap largely corresponded to the amount of confidence the teachers had in teaching the subject matter". A reason for this can be "offering little or no practical engagement in classrooms or lecture rooms" (Maddock & Maroun, 2018:193). The participants in the research

conducted by Deacon (2016b:20) suggested a "need for better (and especially more evidence-based and contextually applicable) theory, as well as better (and more purposively structured, subject-specialised, supported and supervised) practice" which can be achieved, in part, by better cooperation between the schools where preservice student teachers do WIL and the universities. It is essential that the theory which is taught at the universities should be applied in a practical way by the preservice student teachers so that it will be useful in the classroom, to provide teaching that is effective and therefore beneficial to the learners.

2.3.1.5.2 Mentorship

Mentorship can be defined as "assisting student teachers to learn how to teach in a school based setting" (Tomlinson, 1995:7). Preservice student teachers have diverse experiences in relation to WIL; this includes the schools at which they are placed, as well as the mentor that the school assigns to them. Assumptions that are made in terms of mentorship include "that mentoring would assist in resolving the variance in experiences that preservice teachers encounter during their professional placements"; however, "teachers who volunteer as mentors may not inherently know how to mentor another" (Ambrosetti, 2012). Secondly, it is often assumed that an effective teacher will naturally be an effective mentor, that he or she will "naturally be able to pass on the skills to another through the act of mentoring" (Ambrosetti, 2012).

Criticism of mentorship includes the fact that the preparation of mentors to carry out this task has not been regarded as a priority and as a result mentors are not adequately trained for it, which generates much uncertainty. Preparation courses available for those volunteering to mentor a preservice teacher are often more programme specific and do not address the nature and the role of mentoring (Hall *et al*., 2008). In addition, mentor teachers experience "increased workload, added responsibility and stress, uncertainty about how to mentor and having to make a judgment about or provide a grade regarding the progress of the preservice teacher" (Walkington, 2005). This is compounded when schools have not been well informed by the universities. Mentor-mentee mismatches including differences in values, personalities and work styles were also reported as being problematic by Mukeredzi and Ndamba (2005). Other problems that were noted by Marias and Meier (2004) include mentors not devoting adequate time and attention to student teachers, for example making student teachers cover for them while they are away; displaying unethical behaviour such as viewing student teachers as relief teachers; and lacking the competence to enhance student teachers' learning experiences.

Nilsson's (2008:1282) criticism of ITE is related to the issue of the transformation of knowledge, the importance of which has already been highlighted (cf. section 2.2.2). The lack of opportunities for preservice student teachers to transform the knowledge that they have been taught into the type of knowledge that is needed for teaching must be considered. The concern is that subject matter and pedagogy, as different knowledge bases taught separately, result in the preservice student teachers having to find ways, on their own, of transforming their various "knowledges" into usable and meaningful forms in the context of teaching (Nilsson, 2008:1282). Reflection will help preservice student teachers build on different knowledge bases, that is, knowledge of pedagogy, subject and context, in a transformative process to help them to amalgamate these into PCK (Nilsson, 2008:1282). Hudson (2013:112) suggests that "schools can provide a vehicle for connecting theory and practice, and mentor teachers are considered pivotal to pre-service teacher development". The link between theory and practice should be strengthened by providing multiple opportunities for preservice student teachers to learn from practice as well as in practice.

2.4 English First Additional Language (EFAL)

In this section, the South African policies related to EFAL will be discussed to establish what the requirements are both for the training of preservice teachers and for the teaching of EFAL in schools. The knowledge and practice standards which have been developed as a guide to what teachers need to know and be able to do to fulfil their tasks effectively will be highlighted next.

2.4.1 Policy

The MRTEQ (DHET, 2015:20) specify that FP teachers must be capable of teaching EFAL as one of the four required subjects from Grade 1-3. It is for this reason that they require "*extensive* and *specialised* knowledge of early childhood learning to teach *reading*, writing, and numeracy and to develop the key initial concepts and skills that lay the foundation for learning in future phases" (DHET, 2015:24). The importance of EFAL is that it should promote *multilingualism*, that is, the use of more than one language and the effective use of *language across the curriculum*, that is, the emphasis on language across all the subjects; learners may use this as their *medium of learning*, as will be discussed below, and the four basic and interrelated skills should be taught. As has been established, reading is a fundamental skill (cf. 2.1) which must be developed and improved upon. In terms of the development of the key concepts and skills which lay the foundation for learning in future phases, that is, in the Intermediate Phase (IP), limited guidance has been provided as to how this can be achieved.

As indicated throughout this chapter, the lack of a substantial knowledge base is problematic, that is, FP teachers lack the necessary knowledge to teach EFAL effectively. This has a direct impact on various aspects of quality, such as quality teaching and learning. Establishing an extensive and specialised knowledge base for teaching reading and writing systematically in order to establish a solid language foundation, in line with the ITE curriculum which explicitly states what knowledge base preservice teachers must acquire, is an even greater challenge. Another area of concern is the limited ability of "teachers to understand what is involved in emergent literacy and in learning to read" (Reed, 2015:14). For learners to learn to read in EFAL is particularly challenging, as it is not their Home Language. Many learners only start learning to speak English when they go to school. There are numerous distinct sounds that they must first listen to and get accustomed to before they start speaking the language. Once they have achieved a measure of confidence and start speaking the language, they can master the different sound combinations and rules which apply. Many of these learners have limited exposure to English and do not have the necessary support at home to assist them to learn and practise speaking English (Samson & Collins, 2012:7), let alone read the language. FP preservice student teachers must be well prepared to assist the learners with all these challenges. Also, "teacher preparation programs may not be able to ensure that teacher graduates can meet the complex learning needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) in their classrooms" (Coady *et al.,* 2011:234). Findings suggest that teacher graduates need additional preparation to be able to teach English effectively to ELLs (Harper *et al.*, 2008). As mentioned, (cf. 1.2) the South African equivalent to ELLs is EFAL. There are many similarities in terms of the approach to teaching. This is an approach which is used to help non-Home Language speakers of English to transition to learning in English. A further challenge is that teacher preparation programs must respond to the urgent need to prepare mainstream teachers to work effectively in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms (Harper *et al.*, 2008) by creating the required appropriate learning opportunities for the diverse learners (DHET, 2015:10), as well as their assessment. An additional challenge is the preparation of preservice student teachers to "teach multiple home languages in a single classroom" (Deacon, 2016b:9), given the fact that there are eleven official languages in South Africa and learners from a multitude of other countries in the schools. Reed (2015:13) refers to this as "linguistic complexity of classrooms" - a reality in South African schools.

CAPS for English First Additional Language Foundation Phase Grades 1-3 (DBE, 2011a:6) is the second policy which focuses on EFAL, CAPS stipulates both the minimum and maximum time that must be allocated to EFAL from Grades 1-3. The previous policy was the Revised National Curriculum Statement of the Department of Education, dated 2003. The MRTEQ (DHET, 2015:24)

specifies that “all Foundation Phase students must specialise in Home Language teaching in one of the official languages, together with English First Additional Language teaching”. Even students who speak English as a Home Language are expected to be taught the methodology of how to teach EFAL because it relates to so many learners. The teaching of EFAL in the FP for all preservice student teachers is therefore not negotiable. These students should all focus on and strive, for the duration of their studies, to become excellent language role models for their learners as it is not their Home Language. In order to prepare non-mother tongue speakers to use English as their LoLT from Grade 4, these learners must have the necessary CALP (cf. Chapter 1) foundation. It therefore goes beyond merely developing the learners’ basic communication skills and eventual proficiency. Reaching a high level of competence in English by the end of Grade 3 is imperative. These learners must have mastered reading and writing in English to a large extent to enable them to cope with the demands from Grade 4 onwards, when reading for meaning becomes the focus and the learners are taught a number of content subjects. “For these reasons, their progress in literacy must be accelerated in Grades 2 and 3” (DBE, 2011a:8) and the emphasis on EFAL is critical. Draper *et al.* (2017:29) state that “an area of curriculum requiring close attention is EFAL studied by 80 percent of the country’s learners”. This indicates that EFAL is studied by the majority of learners and by implication preparing the FP preservice student teachers to teach this properly is critical. In addition, the PrimTEd Consolidated Literacy Working Group (DHET, 2020b:1) specifies in its proposed standards for South African language and literacy graduate teachers that one of the key areas is “EFAL with a special focus on reading and writing”. Based on all this evidence, clearly EFAL must take precedence during teacher preparation. Although CAPS is the current policy which is used to train preservice student teachers in South Africa, only preparing the students to teach according to this policy could leave them unprepared in future, should the policy change, to teach in-depth the core components of reading which should be applicable to any policy (cf. 2.4.3).

Although these are policies for the teaching of EFAL, little mention is made of the complexities of teaching EFAL and the background knowledge that these preservice student teachers must be provided with to equip them to carry out this task with confidence and success. Samson and Collins (2012:16) specify that it is “essential for all teachers to be prepared to meet the unique needs of these students”.

2.4.2 Knowledge and practice standards

In 2015 The Centre for Development and Enterprise invited Professor Darling-Hammond of Stanford University, an internationally recognised expert on many aspects of teacher policy and

development, to South Africa to speak to a wide range of audiences. During her visit she highlighted the importance of what she referred to as Teacher Professional Standards (TPS), describing them as a “North Star” that could guide teacher preparation, professional development and evaluation, hence the importance of the focus on standards.

Research based on specific aspects of criticism (cf. 2.3.1) levelled against ITE programmes resulted in the development of standards for literacy teachers, as a way of addressing these issues and making the necessary adjustments. It must be noted, however, that these standards provide guidelines for initial teacher training and do not specify the actual content that is to be taught. The standards were formulated to halt the reading failure of learners by improving the competency of teachers, which is, preparing them more thoroughly. Only the most relevant standards for the South African context in relation to this study are highlighted.

The DHET (2017:3) define standards as follows:

> *Teacher knowledge and practice standards are statements that describe what a teacher needs to know and be able to do to carry out their core function professionally and effectively. The statements are specific to a subject area and school phase or to a specific extended role. The statements were not tied to a particular school curriculum statement. They relate more to the academic and practical knowledge required to teach a particular subject or discipline well and, if met by teachers will allow them to deliver the curriculum that is in place at a specific time, and to adapt effectively when the curriculum changes.*

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) (2020:4-11) provides a set of national standards which are aimed specifically at the promotion of professional teaching practices. In addition, they aim to embed a strong professional teaching culture in South Africa which must be achieved by all teachers, regardless of the phase and subject/s they are responsible for teaching. They describe in “broad terms what an educator must know and be able to do to provide quality teaching and learning opportunities for all learners they teach in the diverse context of South African schools” (SACE, 2020:4-5). These standards have been mentioned because there are some which relate specifically to language, which is the focus of this study. Of the ten SACE standards, standard number seven is specifically pertinent to language. It highlights the need for teachers to understand the vital role that language plays in teaching and learning and how teachers can draw on language to facilitate meaningful learning.

Table 2-1: Professional teaching standards which relate directly to EFAL

Professional teaching standards
7. Teachers understand that language plays an important role in teaching and learning.
7.1 Teachers create opportunities for learners to develop their vocabulary, their command of the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) and develop their reading and writing skills in the lessons they teach.
7.2 Teachers draw on other languages, when necessary, to enhance learners understanding of the important concepts of their lessons.
7.3 Teachers enable learners to understand and use the specialist terminology and language of their subjects.
7.4 Teachers provide learners with ongoing opportunities to read, interpret and respond to different kinds of writing, graphical and visual text.
7.5 Teachers recognize that all learners need to acquire and learn foundational skills in language and numeracy, and that there is a strong interrelationship between language and numeracy.

SACE (2020:9-11)

The PrimTEd Literacy Working Group formulated the knowledge and practice standards for language and literacy graduates, which are vital in relation to this study. Of the four sets of standards, one specifically addresses EFAL with a special focus on reading and writing. According to this document, "graduate teachers demonstrate that they understand the knowledge, skills and processes required to teach EFAL as a subject and as the general medium of instruction" (Consolidated Literacy Working Group, 2019b:3). These standards are summarised in Table 2.2. It is important to point out, however, that no mention is made of preparing these preservice student teachers for the diverse language and learning needs of EFAL learners. This is a vital consideration in that the preservice student teachers are all required to teach EFAL in the FP. It cannot be assumed that these teachers will understand the context of the learners, their needs and how to cater for them in their classrooms.

Table 2-2: The standards for graduate teachers of EFAL

Standards for graduate teachers of FAL
1. **Demonstrate knowledge of home language acquisition and additional language learning theories and research findings.**
2. **Recognise the reciprocal relationships between home and additional languages as resources for learning and development.**
3. **Demonstrate sound knowledge of, and ability to use, the FAL.**
4. **Demonstrate knowledge of how the sounds, vocabulary and grammar of the FAL are taught.**
5. **Demonstrate knowledge of and ability to use a range of instructional strategies and methods to support the development of orality and literary in FAL.**
6. **Can source, design, display and manage FAL resources.**

(Consolidated Literacy Working Group, 2020:12)

In summary, some of the applicable “North Stars” which can be used as guides for the identification of the core components which should be included in EFAL preservice student teacher preparation have been mentioned. These core components should be aligned with the standards. The details in terms of the core components which should be included in the preparation of preservice teachers to teach EFAL in the FP are presented next.

2.4.3 Reading instruction

Based on research which has been reported in this chapter, it is evident that there are gaps in the preparation of preservice student teachers to successfully teach EFAL in the FP. The International Dyslexia Association (2018:5) recognises that “the competence and expertise of regular classroom teachers is the most important factor in determining who will learn to read, write and use language well enough to succeed academically”; teachers can therefore be regarded as agents of change. The purpose of this section and Table 2.3 below, is to identify the core components of the teaching of EFAL in the FP, which includes reading instruction. This encompasses all the essential aspects which form the basis of what teachers need to know and how this should be correctly applied, which is aligned with decades of reading science to develop the required sound knowledge base with the required depth and rigour, as well as instructional practices.

Reference has been made in this chapter to the science of reading (cf. 2.1). The importance of science-based reading instruction is stressed by Moats (2020:3), who refers to the "expert-level of knowledge of language" that is contained in her report and based on years of research, which, if embraced by teachers, will provide them with the expertise to teach reading. The International Dyslexia Association (2018:3) also refers to "research-based, effective practices" which is what their standards are based on. These core components therefore derive from the following research, some of which will be specifically highlighted:

- *The knowledge and practice standards for teachers of reading* by the International Dyslexia Association (2018)
- *The knowledge and practice standards and a curriculum framework for graduate language and literacy teachers* from the Consolidated Literacy Working Group (2019)
- *Teaching reading is rocket science, 2020 - What expert teachers of reading should know and be able to do* by Moats (2020)
- *Preparing all teachers to meet the needs of English language learners - Applying research to policy and practice for teacher effectiveness* by Samson and Collins (2012)
- *Educator training initiatives brief: Structured literacy - An introductory guide* by the International Dyslexia Association (2019)

Table 2-3: The suggested core components for EFAL for the training of Foundation Phase preservice student teachers

Core components for English First Additional preservice student teachers' coursework
Foundational knowledge Such as: Additional language theories Distinguishing between Home Language acquisition and additional language learning The stages of language acquisition Bilingualism, multilingualism and translanguaging
The English First Additional Language learner Such as: Creating context by means of case studies Linguistic diversity Socio-economic factors

Cultural sensitivity Oral language development (speaking and listening)
Academic language Such as: Pragmatics (rules for the social use of language) Exposure to the use of English Instructions Interactions Developing proficiency
Language structure of English Such as: Phonology and English phonetics (focus on the awareness and development of English sounds) Orthography (spelling patterns and rules) Semantics (word meanings) Morphology (meaningful parts which make up words) Syntax (word order and sentence structures) **Linked to five essential components of reading** *Phonemic awareness (focus on individual sounds)* Phonological and phonemic awareness Progression of phonological awareness – whole words, compound word deletion, syllables, syllable segmentation, rhyming Progression of phonemic awareness – phoneme isolation, differentiating, phoneme identity and partial segmentation, blending, full segmentation, sound deletion and sound substitution Alphabetic principle *Phonics and word recognition* Decoding and encoding Developing word recognition Letter-sound correspondence Progression in learning phonics Word families, pattern and analogy Syllable types

Sight words ***Fluency*** The role of word recognition and comprehension The role of automaticity The role of prosody Factors which affect reading fluency Methods to improve fluency ***Vocabulary*** Types and development Link to comprehension Breadth, depth and levels of word knowledge Strategies to learn vocabulary Considerations for word selection ***Comprehension*** Factors affecting comprehension Strategies Structured Literacy Instruction The Simple View of Reading and the Reading Rope models for reading development **Writing** Written expression and spelling
Assessment and intervention Such as: Baseline assessment Screening Diagnostic assessment Monitoring progress Formative and summative assessment

The knowledge and practice standards (cf. 2.4.2) for South African graduate teachers of EFAL focus on developing and integrating many aspects of EFAL, such as additional learning theories

and the relationships between home and additional languages as resources for learning and development. The component of **foundational knowledge** is therefore included in the suggested coursework for the preservice student teachers, although some additional features have been added.

Various important facets, however, are not accounted for within these standards, such as a specific focus on the needs of **the EFAL learner**. This is imperative since the teaching of EFAL in the FP is not negotiable (cf. 2.4.1) and the majority of preservice student teachers will therefore teach EFAL. They should be prepared to meet the needs of these learners, such as those who struggle with English. Since many of these learners will be learning in English as their LoLT from Grade 4 onwards (cf. 2.2.2.3 and 2.4.1), teachers must prepare the learners to reach high levels of competence in English by the end of Grade 3 to enable them to cope with the challenges of learning in English which is not their Home Language. This is in line with Samson and Collins (2012:1) who maintain that many teachers do not have the necessary expertise to support ELLs. Their research indicated that these teachers need *specific knowledge and skills to help ELLs access the curricula* (Samson & Collins, 2012:2). In line with literature of what these learners should know they identify *foundational knowledge* about ELLs. They include "the importance of attending to *oral language development*, ***supporting academic language***, and *encouraging teachers' cultural sensitivity* to the backgrounds of their students" (Samson & Collins, 2012:2); these are areas of knowledge which should be integrated into the preparation of preservice teachers. They state that "given the importance of language development for academic success, all classroom teachers with ELLs must understand the principles and best practices of supporting their unique needs" (Samson & Collins, 2012:4). The International Dyslexia Association (2019) supports this finding by pointing out that English language learners may have weaknesses in English academic language as well as vocabulary knowledge, due to a lack of exposure

to the language. The preservice student teachers have to be trained to accommodate these differences. They have therefore been included in the suggested core components for preservice student teachers of EFAL in the FP.

The International Literacy Association is a professional membership organisation which aims to promote high levels of literacy by improving the quality of reading instruction. In its educator training initiatives brief (International Dyslexia Association, 2019:1) mention is made that although teaching knowledge and skills is important - as has been highlighted in this study - appropriate approaches to instruction and intervention based on scientific evidence are also important to consider. As discussed, Shulman (cf. 2.2.2) emphasises the importance of teachers grasping the

subject matter in a way that leads to an in-depth understanding so that they are able to convey content in a comprehensible manner for the learners, that is, to teach effectively. Structured Literacy Instruction, as proposed by this association, has proven to be effective for the teaching of reading for all students. It is an approach to reading instruction where "teachers carefully structure important literacy skills, concepts, and the sequence of instruction, to facilitate children's literacy learning and progress as much as possible" (International Dyslexia Association, 2019:6). The value of this approach is that it provides both systematic and explicit instruction.

Another benefit of this approach is that it integrates the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. The emphasis is on "**the structure of language** across the speech sound system (phonology), the writing system (orthography), the structure of sentences (syntax), the meaningful parts of words (morphology), the relationship among words (semantics) and the organization of spoken and written discourse" (International Dyslexia Association, 2019:6). The link between reading and language has been identified in this chapter (cf. 2.1 and 2.3.1.3). Moats (2020:11) stresses that reading is "primarily a language-based learning activity", which implies it is "vital that reading teachers be trained with the underlying linguistic system of English language". Language is therefore integrated into core, such as the focus on speech sounds in phonology.

The **five essential components of reading** are research-based components which should be included in the teaching of reading as these will assist in the prevention of reading difficulties (Moats, 2020:9). These should be applied in reading instruction and should therefore be taught to the preservice student teachers of EFAL as an essential part of their knowledge base. Standard 4 of the knowledge and practice standards of teachers of reading (2018) for structured literacy teaching includes guidance regarding the nature of effective instruction of each major skill domain, as well as expectations of teachers.

The inclusion of **assessment and intervention** is crucial in that assessment should never be regarded as a separate entity, rather, it is imperative that it should inform teaching because typically teachers receive inadequate preparation in selecting and using formative assessment, which informs their practice (Moats, 2020:21). The focus should be on using measures and observation tools which have been thoroughly vetted through research. (Moats, 2020:21). Assessment is also specified as the third standard of the knowledge and practice standards of teachers of reading, as proposed by the International Dyslexia Association (2018).

These are all included in the proposals for the core components of EFAL preservice student teachers' coursework.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion: it has been established that the preparation of preservice student teachers, both nationally and internationally, has not been up to standard, and this has contributed to the lack of quality education. The conceptual framework for this chapter is situated in the domains of Shulman's (1986) teacher knowledge base. This was used as a means to provide clarification and to identify the required domains of a teachers' knowledge base. Three of which were emphasised, namely, content knowledge, PCK and curriculum knowledge, although the other domains are interrelated and integrated and therefore still feature in this study. For example, how content is effectively taught to learners in a way that is understandable to them entails knowledge of both learners and their specific context; was also highlighted. A great deal of criticism has been levelled against ITE in that it is evident that there is a gap between what these teachers need to know and the actual training or preparation that has been provided. This is significant because "effective classroom instruction delivered by a knowledgeable teacher, especially in the early grades, can prevent or at least effectively address and limit the severity of reading and writing problems" (International Dyslexia Association, 2018:3). The importance of a knowledgeable, well-prepared teacher is therefore emphasised. Reading is a complex task and thus the preparation of teachers to teach EFAL must include the correct depth of the necessary knowledge and skills, as well as support to do so. Moats (2020:5) argues that "most reading failure is unnecessary" and that "classroom teaching itself, when it includes a range of research-based components and practices can prevent and mitigate reading difficulty". Based on scientific research the core components for the EFAL preservice student teachers' coursework that were identified in this chapter can be used to contribute to a framework for improving the quality of teacher preparation in this area. The research design and methodology used to conduct the research in this study are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Research can be thought of as a "systematic process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting information, that is data, in order to increase our understanding of a phenomenon about which we are interested or concerned" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:2). In its broadest sense, research is a "systematic process by which we know more about something than we did before engaging in the process" (Merriam, 2009:1-2). Merriam adds that "although there are many definitions of research, what they all have in common is the notion of inquiring into or investigating something in a systematic manner". It can therefore be thought of as a plan of action to be followed. Newby (2014:34) posits that "research is a very creative process, stating that you have to bring together the ideas about how to proceed, resolve questions about what you want to achieve, select the research tool you want to use, identify the issues you want to study and even the context in which you would like to study them". According to Walliman (2011:7), research "involves finding out about things that no-one else knew either, it is about advancing the frontiers of knowledge". The knowledge frontier to be advanced in this study is the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers, as well as beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP.

The research tools, as mentioned in the paragraph above and specifically in relation to methodology, can be compared to a toolkit. A toolkit is a specialised set of tools tailored to achieve a specified objective. This "kit is concerned with the assembly of research tools and at its simplest, for the practical researcher, how the toolkit of research methods is brought together to crack an individual and specific research problem" (Newby, 2014:53). According to Baxter *et al*. (2010:59), it has "a more philosophical meaning, and usually refers to the approach or paradigm that underpins the research". "Methodologies provide both the strategies and grounding for the conduct of a study" (O'Leary, 2014:10); these are important considerations for thorough research.

The aim of this chapter is to clarify and elaborate on the various aspects related to research design and methodology used to conduct this research. That encompasses, as indicated above, both the plan or the route that has been followed and the toolkit that has been used; both are detailed by means of a concise research process in order to arrive at some suggestions for resolving the specified problem for this study.

3.2 Research methodology

Research methodology is a science to study how research will be conducted by means of a carefully planned path so that researchers can "formulate their problems and objectives and present their result from the data obtained during the study period" (Sileyew, 2019). According to Silverman (2013:118), "methodologies define how one will go about studying any phenomenon." A methodology is a crucial map or route to be followed for a study. As such it provides the direction to be followed in order to arrive at the destination, that is, to achieve the outcome of the study by answering the specified questions. It is "a plan for how research will proceed, that is combining methods, theory and ethics" (Leavy, 2015:4). These can be examples of some of the tools of the toolkit, such as sampling and data collection. Methodology provides "the justification for the methods of a research project, these produce knowledge so they have epistemic content and can be thought of as research action" (Carter & Little, 2007:1317 & 1320). This action is based on "the practical activities that must be carried out, such as, sampling and data collection so that the essence of the meaning of the phenomenon can be established". The "selection of methods, and their application, are always dependent on the aims and objectives of the study, the nature of the phenomenon being investigated and the underlying theory or expectations of the investigator" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:49) and as such must be appropriate to and aligned with the study. With this in mind, the aspects relevant to this study are clarified and elaborated on next.

Kumar (2014:34) maintains that there are "practical steps through which you must pass on your research journey in order to find answers to your research questions", the "sequence of which is not fixed or static". This indicates that there are specific steps or a procedure to be followed, to ensure that the problem is solved in a systematic way, although there is room for flexibility, as the need may arise, depending on the way that the research develops. It is important to note that although the steps are not fixed or static, it must still be a well thought-out process which is carefully planned, according to a route and with a specific toolkit in mind. It is never a haphazard or laissez-faire undertaking that simply randomly falls into place. Leedy and Ormrod (2016:2-7) specify that there is a research cycle which, in general research, involves seven distinct steps (cf. Figure 3.1). For the purpose of this study these steps have been modified in line with the study and will only include the ones that are the most applicable, that is, six steps. Step four of the research cycle will be omitted because according to this cycle "the researcher identifies hypotheses and assumptions that underlie the research effort" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:3); this part of the cycle will not be applied in this study. They mention that this process is "iterative, meaning that the researcher sometimes needs to move back and forth between two or more steps along the way" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:6). Each of the steps is therefore not seen as being

separate and isolated; rather, the steps are connected and may occur simultaneously. In addition, they stress that the process is cyclical, which "means that the so-called final step, where the data is interpreted, is not really the final step at all and that, in actual fact, there is no obvious end point". They say instead, as mentioned above, that research typically involves a cycle, and that one study may result in additional, follow-up studies, as is often the case. Brink *et al.* (2012:52) support this by stating that "research stimulates further research and it cannot be seen as a once-off, linear, static act".

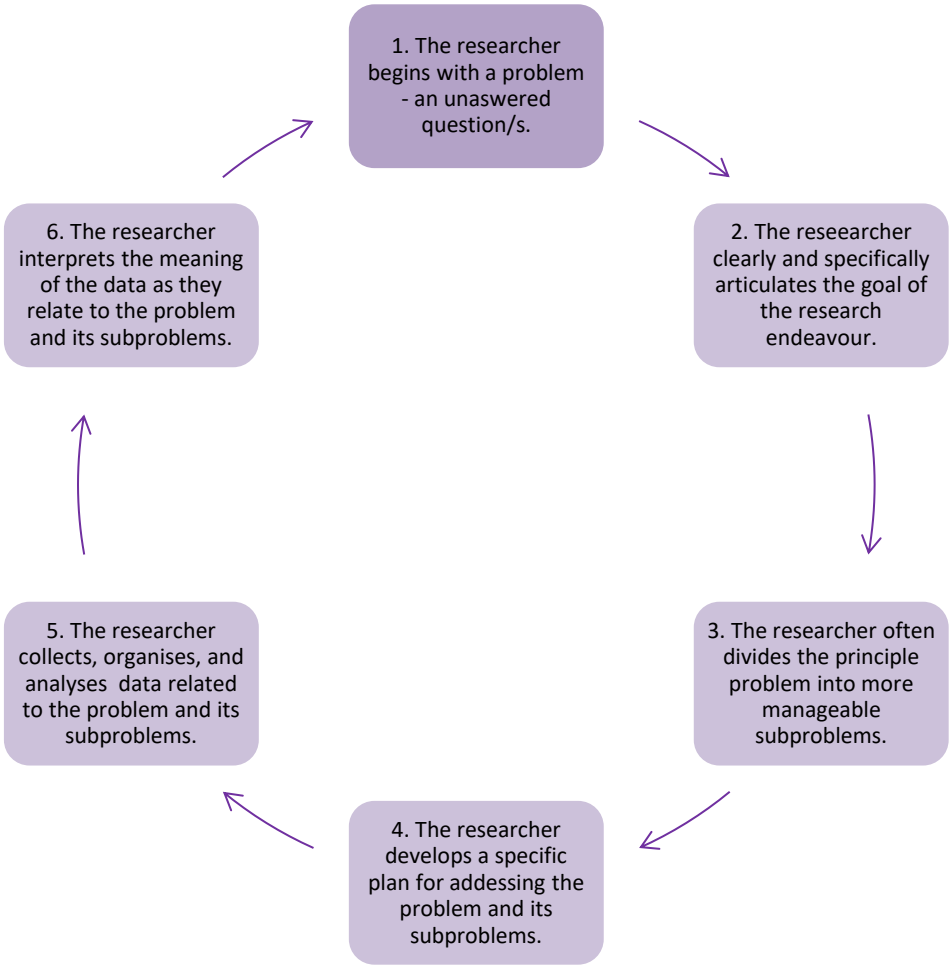


Figure 3-1: The research cycle

Adapted from Leedy and Ormrod (2016:3)

"*The researcher begins with a problem - an unanswered question/s*."

In the case of this study the problem is to determine the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers and beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP.

> "*The researcher clearly and specifically articulates the goal of the research endeavour, in brief, a clear, unambiguous statement of the problem that is to be solved*."

The goal of this research endeavour is to identify the factors which may contribute to the preservice student teachers' and beginner teachers' perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP.

> "*The researcher often divides the principal problem into more manageable subproblems*" in order for the main problem to be broken down into more attainable parts.

The subproblems as specified in Chapter 1 (cf. Chapter 1 section 1.4), are to determine:

- the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers to teach EFAL in the FP;
- the factors that contribute to preservice student teachers' perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP;
- the perceived preparedness of beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP;
- how HODs perceive preservice student teacher and beginner teacher preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP.

> "*The researcher develops a specific plan for addressing the problem and its subproblems*."

That is, "a carefully planned yet flexible itinerary of the intended route to reach the final destination - the research goal". The intention of this chapter is to elaborate and to provide more detail and clarification in this regard.

> "*The researcher collects, organises, and analyses data related to the problem and its subproblems*."

Once the "problem has been isolated, divided into appropriate subproblems and a suitable design and methodology selected, the next step is to collect relevant data and to organise and analyse them in meaningful ways". The design and methodology to be applied in this study will be precisely stipulated in this chapter while the analysis of the collected data, once the data have been collected and organised, is the focus of Chapter 4.

"*The researcher interprets the meaning of the data as they relate to the problem and its subproblems*."

The "significance of the data depends on how the researcher extracts meaning from them", hence the importance of thorough data interpretation. On completion of the analysis process in Chapter 4, the findings of the research are formulated and the necessary conclusions drawn in Chapter 5.

The literature overview is a vital component of the research process, as the focus and the crux of the study are clearly articulated.

3.2.1 Literature overview

The literature overview relates to "all the written sources relevant to the topic of interest and involves finding, reading and understanding and forming conclusions about the published research and theory as well as presenting it in an organised manner" (Brink *et al.,* 2012:71). According to Creswell (2014b:29), "in phenomenological studies, such as this one, literature is less often used to set the stage for the study", although it is still important. Brink *et al.* (2012:72) shed more light on this matter by suggesting that "the purpose and timing of a literature review in qualitative research vary according to the design or type of study that is conducted". They indicate that "in phenomenological studies the literature should be reviewed after data collection and analysis, to prevent the researcher's openness from being influenced". Their view is that "information from the literature is then compared with the findings of the present study to determine current knowledge of a phenomenon".

The literature overview for this study can be summarised as follows:

One of the undisputed major challenges in the ongoing crisis in education is that of preservice student teacher preparation (cf. section 2.1), with a lack of knowledge being one of the core issues. Research confirms that there is criticism of ITE programmes which prepare the student teachers. These are said to be inadequate, and their quality and appropriateness are questionable. Intervention is required so that these programmes are improved and revised to ensure that a solid knowledge base is provided for the students, since a sound subject content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge have been proven to enhance the quality of teaching. This will in turn affect the learners in that EFAL and more specifically their reading achievement, which is the focus in these studies, will improve.

The conceptual framework for this study is situated in the domains of Shulman's (1986) teacher knowledge base. This was used for clarification and to identify the required domains of a teacher

knowledge base, namely, content knowledge, PCK and curricular knowledge, although the other domains are interrelated and integrated. How content is effectively taught to learners in a way that is understandable to them entails knowledge of both the learners and their particular context. The South African knowledge and practice standards for EFAL, with a specific focus on reading, provided direction in terms of what the preservice student teachers must be able to demonstrate once they qualify. The five essential components of literacy instruction (cf. table 2.3) and the emphasis within each provided guidance on what should be included in their coursework so that they are thoroughly prepared to teach EFAL in the FP.

3.2.2 Empirical investigation

In a study of this nature the term empirical "entails gathered data based on experience or observations" and knowledge that is "developed from factual experience as opposed to theoretical assumptions" (Njoku. 2017). An empirical investigation will therefore focus on all the components related to this data gathering process. These components include the research paradigm, approach, design, methods and analysis, all of which are discussed in detail below.

3.2.2.1 Research paradigm

A paradigm can simply be defined as "a perspective" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008:89) or a "basic set of beliefs that guide action" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:91). Nieuwenhuis (2007b:47) posits that a paradigm "gives rise to a particular world-view - it addresses fundamental assumptions taken on faith, such as beliefs about the nature of reality (ontology), the relationship between knower and known (epistemology) and assumptions about methodologies". Leavy (2015:3) explains that "I think of paradigms as sunglasses with different colour lenses. When you put it on, it influences everything you see". In essence, therefore, it is "like a lens through which we look; it is a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which gives rise to a particular worldview" (Wagner *et al.*, 2012:126). Paradigms are therefore "the lens by which reality is interpreted" (Nieuwenhuis, 2007b:48) in relation to a specified worldview and set of beliefs in accordance with the study at hand.

As such, clarifying what the research paradigm is for this study is an important point of departure because it describes the specific lens that will provide the basis and the direction for the study. The worldview or paradigm that is most applicable to this study is **constructivist-interpretive** - meaning is "formed through interaction with others" (Creswell, 2007:8). It is therefore not singular or individual meaning but "multiple realities" (Creswell, 2013:20) that are based on diverse

sources. These sources are the whole who were invited on a voluntary basis to participate in the study (cf. Chapter 1 section 1.5.2).

Constructivism is a "theory, or proposed explanation of a phenomenon, that says that knowledge is constructed by the researcher and is affected by his or her context, he or she makes sense of, or constructs, a view of the world" (Lichtman, 2013:13-14). In line with this, Merriam (2009:9) states that "researchers do not find knowledge, they construct it and … constructivism is a term often used interchangeably with interpretivism". This paradigm "focuses on the social construction of people's ideas and concepts" (Maree, 2007:54); that is, "reality is socially constructed" (Wagner *et al*., 2012:127). This means that "there is no single, observable reality but rather that there are multiple realities, or interpretations, of a single event" (Merriam, 2009:8), in that no two researchers will ever interpret data in the same way because their lenses for interpretation differ based on aspects such as their experiences and worldview.

Interpretive enquiry means that "researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand" (Creswell, 2009:176) in terms of the various sources of information, that is the data relevant to this study. To **interpret** is to "make out or break out meaning of or explain or understand in a specified way" (Sykes, 1978:452); that is, the clarification or making sense of the meaning/s of the collected data, which is the objective of any and every type of interpretation. Interpretive work is primarily about the identification of the essence of meaning and it "seeks to understand social members' definitions and understanding of situations" (Henning *et al.*, 2013:21), which is a complex and time-consuming task. Neuman (2000:71) stresses that "true meaning is rarely simple or obvious on the surface; one reaches it only through a detailed study of the text, contemplating its many messages and seeking the connections among its parts"; it therefore involves "reading between the lines" and contemplating that which is not clearly stated. The "ultimate aim of interpretivist research is to offer a perspective of a situation and to analyse the situation under study to provide insight into the way in which a particular group of people make sense of their situation" (Maree, 2007:60). It can therefore be regarded as a "communal process" (Henning *et al.*, 2013:20) in that there are many perspectives about thoughts, shared messages and contributions from the participants which are interpreted to ascertain their perspectives on a particular phenomenon. Researchers in this paradigm can be seen as "translators of other persons' words and actions" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008:49), although it is "not exact science" which can be easily quantified. In effect, each view or knowledge construct will be unique to each researcher because of researchers' individual backgrounds and experiences, and, as mentioned, their lenses in their sunglasses which colour their view accordingly.

According to Garrick (1999:149), there are “certain fundamental assumptions of the interpretive paradigm that are important considerations”. For example, the recognition of the extreme difficulty of achieving total objectivity, particularly in observing human subjects who confuse or make sense of events based on their individual meaning system. Also, the view that the world consists of multifaceted realities that are best studied in their entirety, acknowledging the significance of the context in which experience takes place.

According to Maree (2007:58), this paradigm is “rooted in or has its origin in **hermeneutics**”, which is “the study of the theory and practice of interpretation” or “the art of interpreting any text, particularly when subtle hidden meanings are the target” (Shank, 2002:80); as indicated above, it is about “reading between the lines” rather than only focusing on the literal meaning of the information. Gall *et al.* (2007:520) posit that “the hermeneutic tradition in philosophy provides much of the theoretical basis for the interpretive perspective that underlies most qualitative research”. Hermeneutics moves beyond the description or core concepts of the experience and seeks meanings that are embedded in everyday occurrences (Lopez & Willis, 2004). This is why the lived or human experiences of all the participants is important. Heidegger (1962) and Gadamer (1986) refer to a “hermeneutic circle”, meaning that “in understanding and interpretation, part and whole are related in a circular way”.

3.2.2.2 Research approach

Qualitative research is undertaken to achieve the purposes of this study since it is “a systematic empirical enquiry into meaning” (Shank, 2002:105). It is about interpreting and identifying the essence of the meaning of the collected data. The aim of this research is not to quantify in terms of numbers, as is applicable to quantitative research. Researchers describe qualitative research in various ways and there is no clear-cut or basic description. Lichtman (2013:5), however, indicates that it is “an umbrella term that encompasses many different ways of studying humans”, usually within their natural settings in which they feel most comfortable. Babbie and Mouton (2001:53) refer to it as “that generic approach in social research according to which research takes its departure point as the insider perspective on social action”.

Qualitative research is “best suited to address a research problem in which you do not know the variables and need to explore” (Creswell, 2012:16). Other reasons why qualitative research is relevant to this study include: “the allowance for creativity and flexibility” (Shank, 2002:105) in accordance with the way that the study develops; the “greater depth of understanding we can derive from qualitative procedures” (Berg, 2004:2) which is based on the various forms of data

which are collected; it "relies heavily on the voices of humans" (Lichtman, 2013:6) which are heard, for example, during the semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions; "several nuances of attitude and behaviour may be recognized" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:309); and "exploring a problem is a characteristic of qualitative research" (Creswell, 2012:63). The suitability also lies in the "emerging design which allows for changes based on feedback or responses from participants" (Creswell, 2012:130) in relation to the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers and beginner teachers for teaching EFAL in the FP.

Qualitative research is primarily concerned with "why and the main purpose is to provide an in-depth description and understanding of the human experience" (Lichtman, 2013:7 & 17; Maree, 2007:51) in relation to the phenomenon in question. Qualitative researchers are interested in "understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam, 2009:5). The **goal** of qualitative research, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001:53), is defined as "describing and understanding (Verstehen) rather than the explanation and prediction of human behaviour" and according to Shank (2002:11), the "goals are insight, enlightenment and illumination" of the words used in the data. The "**intent** of qualitative research is to establish the detailed meaning of information rather than to generalize the results and standardize the responses from all participants in research" (Creswell, 2012:131). The emphasis is on "individuals' perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, feelings and behaviour as well as the meanings and interpretations that they attach to certain situations" (Davis & Klopper, 2003:72).

It is important to identify the **major characteristics** of qualitative research; even though the emphasis may differ depending on the researcher, the similarities are evident. Merriam (2009:14) "stipulates that the following four characteristics are identified by most as key to understanding the nature of qualitative research: the focus is on process, understanding, and meaning; the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis; the process is inductive; and the product is highly descriptive", that is, words are used to describe the researcher's interpretation. Each of these is briefly elaborated on, as articulated by Merriam (2009:14-16). Firstly, there is a "focus on meaning and understanding whereby the key concern is understanding the phenomenon of interest from the participants' perspective, and not that of the researcher/s". This is sometimes "referred to as the emic or insider's perspective, versus the etic or outsider's view". At this point "the researcher should take various factors into consideration, these include, for example, language and culture". Secondly, the researcher, "as a human is an ideal primary instrument because immediate response and adaptation as well as the possibility of expanding

on his or her understanding and the immediate processing and clarification of data, to name a few, are possible". This characteristic, as well as the next two, are elaborated on later in this chapter (cf. section 3.5).

3.2.2.3 Research design

Synonyms for the word design include “plan, blueprint, outline, and map” (Oxford Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms, 2007:117). Simply stated, the research design is the plan or route that is followed to gather the necessary data and then to analyse the collected data in order to interpret the phenomenon in question. According to Oosthuizen (2009:10), the “research design entails the blueprint to a particular research project”, thus emphasising the importance thereof and the considerations that should be borne in mind in the process. Shank (2002:103) states that “it is all about anticipation and attention to detail” in terms of the design that will be implemented. Essentially, therefore, it is the anticipated, yet flexible and developing, plan that must be carefully followed when research is conducted, since it cannot take place in a haphazard manner. Even though mention has previously been made of an emerging design and flexibility in terms of how it is conducted, this plan provides the researcher with certain direction in relation to data collection and the analysis thereof. This study is based on a **phenomenological** research design. By means of this design “an operational plan is conceptualised to undertake the various procedures and tasks required to complete this study and ensure that these procedures are adequate to obtain valid, objective and accurate answers to the research questions” (Kumar, 2014:123) (cf. Chapter 1).

Although there are seven different types of phenomenology which are each rooted in different ways of conceiving the *what* and the *how* of human experience, each is rooted in a different school of philosophy (Neubauer, 2019:91). Two of these are discussed, although only one is implemented in this study. As can be ascertained, the paradigm for this study is rooted in hermeneutics (cf. 3.2.2.1). Therefore, it is the hermeneutic (interpretive) phenomenology of Heidegger and Gadamer, as opposed to transcendental (descriptive) phenomenology of Husserl, which is the focus. It is important to compare these to understand how they differ and to establish more clearly what the emphasis will be for this study. This is based on the comparison which Neubauer *et al.* (2019) highlighted. Husserl’s ontological (the nature of being) assumption is that reality is internal to the knower, this is what appears in their consciousness. While Heidegger’s is based on the lived experience which is an interpretive process and situated in an individual's life world. Husserl’s epistemological (the theory of knowledge) assumption is that the researcher must separate themselves from the world, including their own physical being, to enable them to reach

a state of transcendental or bias free understanding of the phenomena by means of description. Heidegger, on the other hand sees the researcher as part of the world, not as being islolated from it, or as being bias free. The researcher strives to understand the particular phenomena by interpreting it. In that this study is *constructivist* interpretive, the interpretation will be formed by interacting with others. These others are the participants of the study with whom the researcher interacted, so multiple realities of their lived experiences in relation to the phenomenon in this study istaken into account and interpreted. Although the role of the researcher is elaborated on further (cf. 3.5), Husserl sees the researcher's role in data collection as having to bracket subjectivity during the collection and analysis of data. As explained, researchers are required to separate themselves from the world and their own physical being in order to reach a bias free understanding of the phenomenon. Whereas Heidegger requires the researcher to reflect on the essential themes which emerge from the experiences of the participants with the phenomena in question, while simultaneously reflecting on their own experience.As has been explained, phenomenology is an interpretive approach (Maree, 2007:59) to research design which must be is aligned with the specified research paradigm of the study, which is constructive-interpretive, as stipulated (cf. section 3.2.2.1). The aim is to "gain a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday lives" (Saldaña, 2013:176), specifically that of the lived experiences of participants in the study in relation to the phenomenon. It is "about an eventual awareness of the things themselves as they really are, an attempt to get inside the meanings and world of that person and seeing how people interpret their worlds, and how we can, in turn interpret their interpretations" (Shank, 2002:80, 85 & 91). In the same vein Denscombe (2010:93) stresses that "the emphasis here is on subjectivity as opposed to objectivity and on interpretation rather than measurement". Moustakas (1994:26) posits that "phenomena are the building blocks of human science and the basis of all knowledge", while Maree (2007:57) maintains that "they are observable, they can be empirically studied and they are reducible to essential aspects". It is important to take note at the outset of Lichtman's (2013:87) view, which is that "no one thing is considered phenomenology because many things, many ways, and many approaches take on a phenomenology label"as has been clarified in the comparison between hermeneutic (interpretive) phenomenology and transcendental (descriptive) phenomenology. Creswell (2012:130) states that "the qualitative researcher seeks to explore and understand one single phenomenon, and to do so requires considering all of the multiple forces that shape the phenomenon". In this study, the phenomenon in question is the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers and beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP. One of the seven principles that ground all phenomenological research in the social sciences is a "commitment to the use of qualitative methods" (Shank, 2002:81), hence the suitability for this study.

According to various authors, there are many **commonalities** that relate to phenomenology, even though there are numerous things, ways and approaches which could be applicable. It is "a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence (or telos) of lived human experiences about a central phenomenon as described by participants, that is, according to their view" (Berg, 2004:266; Creswell, 2007:78; Creswell, 2009:13; Creswell, 2012:16; Creswell, 2013:76, Lichtman, 2013:88; Wagner *et al*., 2012:132). It delves into the everyday lived experiences of the participants in order to understand the phenomenon by means of interpretation thereof. "A phenomenological study is a study that attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and understanding of a particular situation" (de Vos *et al*., 2002:268) in relation to the specific phenomenon. According to Moustakas (1994:52), "perception is regarded as the primary source of knowledge. Regarding this study, which is based on the *perceived* preparedness of preservice student teachers, as well as beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP, by interpreting the lived experiences of these participants a lot of understanding can be gained in relation to this phenomenon. In addition, Creswell (2012:130) states that "the qualitative researcher seeks to explore and understand one single phenomenon, and to do so requires consideration of all the multiple forces that shape the phenomenon" or the "multiple perspectives" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:153) which are applicable. These are the perspectives or perceptions of the participants who took part in this study.

There are a number of **strategies** that are unique to phenomenological studies, as proposed by Merriam (2009:26). These include "phenomenological reduction" which is a method of constantly returning to the core of the experience in order to extract in and of itself the internal structure or purpose to facilitate the understanding thereof. In this study this is applied by repeatedly reading the transcriptions in order to develop an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. Secondly, "horizontalization" which is a method of laying out all the data to be analysed and treating the data as having equal weight; that is, at the initial stage of data analysis, all pieces of data have equal value. In this study, the various forms of data are initially seen as being equally important, although gradually various ideas stand out more than others which is when the data can be grouped. Lastly, "imaginative variation" which involves looking at the data from the different perspectives, that is, from the various participants, to see the various issues from their different points of view. In this study, the points of view or perspectives of the participants are of paramount importance.

According to Brink *et al.* (2012:122), "there are certain basic **actions** that researchers use during the enquiry process", some of which have already been alluded to but one that should be

specifically mentioned is “bracketing, or Epoche, a Greek word meaning to stay away from or abstain, in that we set aside our prejudgements, biases, and preconceived ideas about things” (Moustakas, 1994:85). The researcher must “abstain from making suppositions” and must focus on a phenomenon “freshly and naively” (Moustakas, 1994:47), based only on the perceptions of the participants. This is the process whereby the researcher strives to stand apart and to set aside any prior beliefs and opinions on the phenomenon under investigation that she might have. Therefore, the researcher blocks out any preconceived ideas so that she can objectively focus on the perspectives and perceptions of the participants. In this way the data are viewed from their various perspectives, as mentioned above, and not from the “researcher’s perspective”, as this is not of importance in this process. Creswell (2007:59-60; 2013:80) refers to this as “taking on a fresh perspective”; it is seeing things from a different angle. This allows for greater insight and understanding of the phenomenon. Researchers who undertake phenomenological research should be aware of this at the start of the study and aim to achieve this from the outset. However, this applies specifically to transcendental (descriptive) phenomenology as proposed by Moustakas, as briefly mentioned already. It is more focused on describing the lived experience of the participants in research, as opposed to the interpretation thereof, as is applied in this study.

As indicated, the focus of this study is on hermeneutic (interpretive) phenomenology. Based on his interest on interpreting and describing human experience, Heidegger believed that bracketing was not warranted because hermeneutics presumed prior understanding (Dahlberg *et al.*, 2008). In his opinion it is not possible to set aside our experiences that relate to the phenomenon that is being studied, his belief was that personal awareness was intrinsic to the normal logical research (Dahlberg *et al.*, 2008), Interpretive phenomenology does not apply bracketing, impartiality is seen as being impossible because research has become enmeshed with the experience (Reiners, 2012:3). It must also be considered that “truth is not an objective phenomenon that exists independently of the researcher” (Maree, 2007:54). The basic action of bracketing does not apply to interpretive phenomenology and as such it isl not fully applied in this study.

3.2.2.4 Participants

A sample is a part or a piece of something. Sampling thus refers to the appropriate part of the population which is identified and invited to participate in the study for a variety of reasons. This is unlike quantitative research where the focus is on making generalisations from a larger portion of the population. The selection of participants is a major consideration and must be in line with the research questions and with what the researcher wishes to achieve. The value that the participants can add to the study in relation to the phenomenon in question must be carefully

weighed up. Each participant must have first-hand experience of the phenomenon in order to provide informative and valuable information. Participants who do not have experience with the phenomenon or the necessary knowledge cannot make a meaningful contribution and are of no value, hence the selection process is of utmost importance and must be carefully contemplated.

Although there are numerous types of sampling which can be applied, the two types of sampling which are best suited to this study are purposive and convenience sampling. Purposive sampling means that the participants are invited with a particular purpose in mind, in relation to what is to be achieved in the study. This is "a type of non-probability sampling which is non-random, meaning that people are included in a sample partly because they are available and willing to participate in the study" (Wagner *et al*., 2012:89) and "will provide the information that the researcher is looking for". It also means that "participants are selected because of some defining characteristic" (Maree, 2007:79). Purposive sampling was used to select the participants, all of whom (except for the HODs) were or had been students at the university and had volunteered to participate after they had been invited to do so. They had knowledge and insight about this phenomenon since EFAL is one of the compulsory modules for their studies and a subject that they would teach when going out for WIL and be compelled to teach when they were qualified teachers. This study relates specifically to the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers and beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP. According to Berg (2004:36), when developing a purposive sample "researchers use their special knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent this population". In addition, Creswell (2012:206) clarifies "that purposeful qualitative sampling will develop a detailed understanding that might provide 'useful' information, this might help people 'learn' about the phenomenon and that might give voice to 'silenced' people". Although the participants in this study cannot necessarily be regarded as silenced people, voluntary participation in this study will offer them the opportunity to voice their opinions and share their experiences, should they wish to do so. Merriam (2009:94) indicates that "the selected participants should preferably be strangers to one another". Although some of these participants were in the same class, with a few exceptions they did not know one another very well because they formed part of such a large group of students.

Convenience, accidental or haphazard sampling, on the other hand, as implied, is based on selecting participants in relation to their accessibility. This is "where the researcher simply uses whoever is readily available and convenient to access" (Wagner *et al*., 2012:92). This is sensible and practical, in that the available resources are utilised which means that time and money can be optimally used, as these are always major factors to take into consideration. In the end "what

is needed is an adequate number of participants and sites to answer the question/s posed at the beginning of the study" (Merriam, 2009:80). In this study all the participants were female, possibly because the study deals with Foundation Phase teaching. They were all suitable candidates in that they were all involved with the phenomenon at hand and could therefore provide the necessary information. All the participants could share their perception of the preparedness of preservice student teachers and beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP and could provide information regarding the factors which might contribute to these perceptions. A summary of all the participants who were involved in this study is presented in Table 3.1. In the end what is essential is "an adequate number of participants and sites to answer the questions posed at the beginning of the study" (Merriam, 2009:80) (cf. Chapter 1 section 1.5.2).

The means of participant selection varied. For the questionnaires, the third- and- fourth year preservice student teachers were invited to volunteer to complete the questionnaire anonymously after one of their classes. I made sure the class ended in good time to be sure that there was enough time for the students to complete the questionnaire without having to rush to the next class. I wanted the students to have adequate time to think about their answers and to complete the questionnaire properly. There was a 5- minute break after the class to give the students who did not want to participate time to leave the class. I left class for a few minutes to allow students who did not want to participate to leave the class without feeling awkward about not wanting to complete the questionnaire. For the semi- structured interviews with the fourth- year preservice teachers, I randomly invited a few students to participate on a voluntary basis. I informed them that they did not need to give me an immediate answer, I gave them time to think about participating and to get back to me should they want to accept my invitation. The same applied to the focus groups. Once four of the students had accepted my invitation, I asked them to identify students in their class and to ask them to participate in the focus group discussions. They therefore took ownership of identifying other students. The beginner teachers were contacted in the same way for the semi- structured interviews, although I first asked them where their school was located. For the three interviews which took place at schools I asked these teachers to approach their HODs to invite them to participate in the interviews.

3.2.2.5 Data collection method

Methods can be thought of as "research action" in that these are "the practical activities of research" (Carter & Little, 2007:1317-1318) and "involve the forms of data collection, analysis and interpretation that researchers propose for their studies" (Creswell, 2009:15). It is important to note that selecting the methods, and their application, is always "dependent on the aims and the

objectives of the study, the nature of the phenomenon being investigated and the underlying theory or expectations of the investigator" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:49). The application of these methods should supply the required data for the study. The methods of data collection for this study comprised questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and documentation and a summary, in table form is provided below (cf. Table 3.2). In addition, a table with the biographical information of the participants in terms of their Home Language and LoLT is provided (cf. Table 3.1). As mentioned, (cf.3.2.2.1) each of these methods of data collection are important, they must be clearly understood in order to make sense of the whole, that is, to understand this phenomenon in its entirety. The methods will allow for understanding to be gained through the interaction with others, as this study is based on a constructivists-interpretive paradigm. The researcher interacted with the participants. This allowed for multiple realities of the lived experiences of the participants.

3.2.2.5.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are regarded as a type of survey. A questionnaire is a data collection instrument which is completed by the participants who have volunteered to participate in the study, after they have been invited to do so. These can consist of **close-ended questions**, **open-ended questions** or a **mixture** of both open and close-ended questions. Creswell (2012:220) states that the "closed-ended questions can get useful information to support theories and concepts in the literature", while the "open-ended responses, permit you to explore reasons for the closed-ended responses and identify any comments people might have that are beyond the responses to the closed-ended questions". Both close-ended and open-ended questionnaires were used in this study. Questionnaire 1 (cf. Appendix 1) consisted of open-ended questions based on how prepared the third-year preservice teachers felt to teach EFAL, as well as various aspects which may have had an impact on their preparedness. This gave these student teachers the opportunity to convey their perceptions of preparedness. The open-ended questions allowed for more expression by means of explanation and elaboration on these perceptions, as well as the provision of some background in terms of their attitude to teaching EFAL and what might have given rise to their attitude. The purpose of this questionnaire was to get an indication of the factors which might have contributed to their perceptions of preparedness or lack, as well as their attitude to teaching EFAL. It gave an indication of the lived experience of these participants in terms of this phenomenon.

This questionnaire was completed at the outset of this study to determine the feasibility of the study. Also, whether the researcher had the correct intuition in relation to a perceived lack of

preparedness to the teaching of EFAL in the FP. Her experience while lecturing EFAL and exposure to these preservice student teachers during WIL had alluded to this. As indicated the rationale behind the use of this questionnaire was to get an idea of their perception of preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP and to explain their reasoning, as well as to provide some background in relation to their attitude to teaching EFAL

Questionnaire 2 (cf. Appendix 2) which was completed at a later stage of the study, consisted primarily of close-ended responses, although there were two instances in which the fourth-year preservice teachers were required to specify if their answer was other than the options which were provided. The first section was based on language, that is, their Home Language, their exposure to EFAL and their fluency and confidence when speaking English. These student teachers had to indicate with a cross (x) what their choice of answer was, in one instance selecting either little, average or a lot and in two instances merely selecting yes or no. They firstly had to select and then indicate what their Home Language was by means of a cross (x); unless it was different to the two options provided, in which case they had to specify and fill in their one-word answer, no elaboration was required. In the second section, the participants merely had to indicate by means of a cross (x) if they felt they had an adequate or inadequate content knowledge base, knowledge of learners and their context, and pedagogical content knowledge based on specific components. These included; reading; writing; language components; assessment; children's literature; knowledge of learners and context; and pedagogical content knowledge. The next section, that is section 3, focused on attitude, motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. Three questions merely required the selection of either yes or no by means of a cross (x) and two questions required the selection of either positive, negative or neutral, also by means of a cross (x). The last part of this section was to select their choice or choices of six options in response to the question or to provide a brief response if their choice was different to the options given. The fourth and last section focused on WIL and the integration of practice and theory. Either a yes or a no response by means of a cross (x) was all that was required. The purpose of this closed questionnaire was to determine how the respondents perceived their preparedness to teach EFAL by establishing their knowledge base as well as their attitude to the teaching of EFAL and their perception of aspects in relation to WIL.These students were in the final year of their studies so they were invited to participate because they should have been nearing the end of their preparation to teach EFAL in the primary schools. Questionnaire one and two were not the same in that the purpose for each questionnaire was different, as has been specified already.

These were both **group-administered questionnaires:** they were completed by large groups of students at the same time. This is cost effective, time saving and convenient - a high response rate is ensured as a large number of students complete the questionnaire at the same time and then submit the questionnaire.

There are numerous **advantages** to using questionnaires, for instance information based on the phenomenon in question can be obtained from many participants, in some cases at the same time and in a short space of time, thus making it a very cost-effective way of collecting data. In addition, responses from groups of students provide a wealth of valuable data. A possible **disadvantage** is the difficulty that some of the preservice student teachers may have had in expressing themselves in English, which is not their Home Language. One is also never sure how much time and effort is put into completing a questionnaire honestly and accurately if, for example, the preservice student teachers are in a hurry or if they are distracted by other pressing matters at that time, particularly if it is a close-ended questionnaire where it is only necessary to select the best option.

3.2.2.5.2 Semi-structured interviews

The next method of data collection utilised in this study was interviews (cf. Appendix 3). In qualitative research “some, and occasionally all of the data are collected through interviews” (Merriam, 2009:87), thus making it “a primary source of data collection” which was also applied in this study. An interview can be defined as “a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participants questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant” (Maree, 2007:87). The purpose of an interview is “one person obtaining information from another during a structured conversation based on a prearranged set of questions” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:249), the goal is “to see a slice of the social world from the informant’s perspective” (Boeije, 2010:63) and the aim (Maree, 2007:87) is “always to help you understand the participant’s construction of knowledge and social reality”. The emphasis is therefore on gaining insight into the phenomenon from the angle of the participants. It is vital for the researcher to be “attentive to the responses of your participant so that you can identify new emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the phenomenon being studied, and explore and probe these further” (Maree, 2007:87). The intention of the researcher was to read between the lines in terms of what the participants said and not just focus on the stated or literal meaning of their responses.

Semi-structured interviews are face-to-face interviews; a face-to-face interview “usually requires the participant to answer a set of predetermined questions and does allow for the probing and

clarification of answers" (Maree, 2007:5). Although there was a structure that was followed by means of the questions that were asked, in these interviews provision was also made for a degree of flexibility in that allowance was made for the participants to provide additional information or to discuss different perspectives in relation to the phenomenon which is so important in terms of gaining understanding of their lived experiences. This was encouraged on condition that the discussion remained relevant and added to the understanding of the phenomenon. These interviews allowed for greater insight and depth of understanding in terms of the perceived preparation of the preservice student teachers and beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP. That is, their lived experience in relation to this phenomenon. In addition, the identification of the factors that might have contributed to preservice student teachers' perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP was facilitated.

The semi-structured interviews involved the use of various predetermined questions based on topics related to this study. This included aspects such as the perceptions of the knowledge base preparing participants to teach EFAL in the FP. These questions "are typically asked of each interviewee in a systematic and consistent order, but the interviewers are allowed freedom to digress; that is, the interviewers are permitted (in fact, expected) to probe far beyond the answers to their prepared standardized questions" (Berg, 2004:81). Probing can come "in the form of asking for more details, for clarification, for examples and involves making adjustments in interviewing as you go along" (Merriam, 2009:101) and in accordance with the responses given by each participant.

Different types of questions were asked during the semi-structured interviews to maximise the responses from the participants. These included "specific or concrete example questions which gave the participants an opportunity to be concrete and specific and provide relevant information" Lichtman (2013:198) in relation to this phenomenon. New elements or subject questions were added when participants repeated information or were stuck on a specific question so that areas not addressed in previous questions were covered. In addition, a number of open-ended questions were asked so that the "participants could best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher and they allowed participants to create the options for responding" (Creswell, 2012:218). The aim was to formulate the questions as carefully as possible to prevent misunderstandings. Before the interviews began a brief conversation was held with the participants as developing rapport with the participants was important since it enabled them to relax and settle down so that they felt at ease to share their lived experiences more openly. Although these are my students, their classes are very big and we seldom have to opportunity to

converse in a one to one situation. So, although these students “know” me and I “know” them, we do not really know each other that well.

Specific strategies, as recommended by Lichtman (2013:200), were applied “to get the participants to talk or reveal what they think or believe about something”. Firstly, “elaboration” offered the participants the opportunity to say more, explain and clarify their answers and provide additional input. This assisted the researcher to immerse herself more deeply in the meaning. Secondly, “probing” permitted clarification when answers were irrelevant, vague or incomplete or when additional information was needed. Next, the researcher “aimed at remaining neutral at all times”, avoiding nonverbal or verbal signals that might lead the participant in a specific direction. It was important that the researcher’s reaction should not have an influence on what the participant said. Participants may be inclined to say what they think they want the researcher to hear, which is untrue. Only one question was asked at a time and then adequate time was given for the participant to think carefully and respond at leisure. Lastly, participants were encouraged to respond in their own words. The researcher was aware of when to cut participants off should they not answer the question or provide irrelevant information.

As advised by Berg (2004:90), prior to the first interview being conducted “the schedule was pretested”. This was done by asking people familiar with the teaching of literacy to critically examine the schedule and make recommendations on ways that it could be improved and refined.

There are numerous **benefits** to interviewing. They include a high response rate in that the participants answer questions that have been asked and do not have to submit their responses in writing. In addition, the interviewer was present, which “decreases the number of ‘don’t knows’ and ‘no answers’, probing for answers and participant observation” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:250) and interviews “provide useful information when you cannot directly observe participants, which permit participants to describe detailed personal information and the interviewer also has better control over the types of information received, because the interviewer can ask specific questions to elicit this information” (Creswell 2012:218). Participants may be inclined not to think about the answers to certain questions or not to put much effort into their responses, but the interviewer could encourage the participants to think carefully about their responses and to provide further information as required. The interviewer could also steer the questions in a particular direction. The **disadvantages,** however, must also be considered. The participants may provide information based on the perspective that they assume the interviewer may favour. The mere presence of the researcher may have an impact on the responses of the participants. In addition,

"interviewee responses may not be articulate, perceptive or clear, and, lastly, it is time consuming and costly" (Creswell, 2012:218).

3.2.2.5.3 Focus groups

Focus groups are also face-to-face interviews although they can be used "to collect shared understanding from several individuals as well as to get views from specific people" (Creswell, 2012:218). A focus group "provides opportunities for members of a group to interact with each other and stimulate each other's thinking although it is not desirable or necessary for the group to reach consensus in their discussion" (Lichtman, 2013:189). The focus group strategy is "based on the assumption that group interaction will be productive in widening the range of responses, activating forgotten details of experience and releasing inhibitions that may otherwise discourage participants from disclosing information" (Maree, 2007:90). The "informal group discussion atmosphere of the focus group interview structure is intended to encourage subjects to speak freely and completely about behaviours, attitudes, and opinions they possess and a far larger number of ideas, issues, topics and even solutions to a problem can be generated" (Berg, 2004:123 & 124). "Phenomenological focus groups rely on collecting data based on everyday knowledge" (McLafferty, 2004:188).

The researcher attempted to "elicit responses from all individuals in the group" (Creswell, 2012:218) although the participants were encouraged rather than forced into responding. As suggested by Babbie and Mouton (2001:291), "the researcher used the group, to find information the researcher would not otherwise be able to access". Such focus groups are beneficial as they encourage people to come together and to build meaning amongst themselves, rather than individually. It is therefore "a more communal process or collective brainstorming" (Berg, 2004:124) "to facilitate the construction of knowledge". In this way perceptions are gradually shaped and reshaped. Group engagement facilitates the development of new data based on the variety of perspectives within the group. Berg (2004:123 & 124) adds that "the informal group discussion atmosphere of the focus group interview structure is intended to encourage subjects to speak freely and completely about behaviours, attitudes, and opinions they possess and that a far larger number of ideas, issues, topics, even solutions to a problem can be generated through group discussion than through individual conversations". In the case of this study this relates specifically to the preservice student teachers' perceived preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP.

Although there was a plan (cf. Appendix 3), that is, specific questions for the participants to answer, it was flexible and was used as a basic guide that was adjusted according to the direction

of the conversations. Nieuwenhuis (2020:111) suggests that there should be between five to twelve people for a focus group session. In this study the number of volunteers who accepted the invitation to take part was taken into account when determining the number of focus group sessions. There were four focus group sessions, with between five and seven participants per group.These participants were not the same as those who were interviewed as it was important to get different lived experiences.

As with the semi- structure interviews, before the interviews began a brief conversation was held with the participants in each group as developing rapport with the participants was important since it enabled them to relax and settle down so that they felt at ease to share their lived experiences more openly. The group dynamic of each group was totally different. I tried to engage with each student to encourage them all to share. Again, although these are my students, their classes are very big and we seldom have to opportunity to converse in a one to one situation. So, although these students “know” me and I “know” them, we do not really know each other that well.

Focus groups are **beneficial** in that many more participants get the opportunity to share their lived experiences in relation to the phenomenon. The participants also hear other perceptions in relation to the lived experiences of others in their group. This encouraged dialogue between the participants and motivated them to compare their experiences which revealed other insights. The **challenging** part was to get all the group members to share equally. As always there are participants who tend to dominate the conversation.

3.2.2.5.4 Documentation

The final form of data collection was the use of a relevant document which could shed more light on this phenomenon. Documents are “a ready-made source of data easily accessible to the imaginative and resourceful investigator” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:162) and are thus seen as an unobtrusive information source. Use was made of a relevant and already existing document which was a beneficial source of information. Merriam and Tisdell (2016:176) warn that “once documents have been located, their authenticity must be assessed”. The document that was used for this study was authentic in that it was complete, recent, objective and written by the specified university as a reference and guide for the staff and the students in line with the revised MRTEQ. Trochim and Donnelly (2008:146) state that “usually, written documents are analysed with some form of content analysis”. The applicable public document that served as primary source of information to gather data for this study was a yearbook (cf. 4.2.2 Table 4.1 and 4.2.3.1 Table 4.3) of the specified university. It was used to ascertain what modules the preservice student

teachers were required to complete by the end of their four years of training in order to prepare them to teach EFAL in the primary schools. In this way it was possible to get an indication of the content that was included in their training and how thoroughly they were prepared to teach EFAL in the FP, specifically in terms of a sound knowledge base and as opportunities to develop their proficiency in English. The WIL modules were also analysed to determine the extent of the opportunities to practise and apply what had been taught.

Table 3-1: Participants biographical information: Home Language and LoLT

Type of method	Afrikaans Home Language and LoLT	Setswana Home Language and LoLT
Questionnaire 1	108 /108 (13 had one English parent or step parent)	0
Questionnaire 2	53/53	0
Semi-structured interviews		
Preservice student teachers	4/5	1/5
Beginner teachers	5/5	0
HOD	3/3	0
Focus groups		
Group 1	7/7	0
Group2	0	6/6
Group 3	6/6	0
Group 4	5/5	0

The majority of the participants who took part in this study spoke Afrikaans as their Home Language. These participants had the same Home Language and LoLT which was used for the duration of their schooling and studies. The minority of students spoke Setswana as their Home Language. Their LoLT was English and therefore not the same as their Home Language. From Grade 4 they were required to continue their education in English.

Table 3-2: Summary of the data collection methods

Data collection methods	Participants	Site
Questionnaire 1	108 third-year FP Baccalaureus Educationis (B.Ed.) preservice student teachers from the specific university campus	After class, in a lecture venue, on the specific university campus
Questionnaire 2	53 fourth-year FP B.Ed. preservice student teachers from the specific university campus	After class, in a lecture venue, on the specific university campus
Semi-structured interviews (cf. Appendix 3)	Five fourth-year FP B.Ed. preservice student teachers from the specific university campus	Researcher's office on the specific university campus
Focus group sessions (cf. Appendix 3)	Four groups of fourth-year FP B.Ed. preservice student teachers from the specific university campus Group 1 – seven members Group 2 - six members Group 3 - six members Group 4 - five members	Conference room on the specific university campus
Semi-structured interviews (cf. Appendix 4)	Five beginner FP teachers, graduates of the specific university	Two teachers' private homes, as per invitation Three classrooms in the schools
Semi-structured interviews (cf. Appendix 5)	Three FP HODs	Two staff rooms in the schools One classroom in the school

3.2.2.6 Data collection sites

The environment or site/s where the data are collected is a vital consideration. Karnieli-Miller *et al.* (2009:280) stipulate that "during the personal collection of data, the interviewer aims at creating a welcoming, non-threatening environment in which the interviewees are willing to share personal experiences and beliefs (i.e. their stories)". They add that "the feeling of intimacy is fuelled by the

unstructured, informal, anti-authoritative, and non-hierarchical atmosphere in which the qualitative researcher and participants establish their relations in an atmosphere of power equality". The environment should be quiet so that distractions and interruptions are avoided, which will improve the quality of the recordings and allow the participants to concentrate on the formulation of their answers.

The first site was the specified university campus (cf. Table 3.1). This is where questionnaires 1 and 2, for the third- and fourth-year students respectively, were administered and where the semi-structured interviews and the focus group sessions with the fourth-year preservice student teachers took place. Most data were collected at this site. Questionnaires 1 and 2 were administered after class one day, in a lecture venue on the specific university campus. This lecture venue was one of the large lecture venues with seating capacity for roughly 150 students, so that each participant had her own seat and a desk. It is an air-conditioned venue so the participants felt comfortable.

The semi-structured interviews for the fourth-year preservice student teachers were conducted in a suitable venue which was available on the university campus. Reasons for this decision included the fact that the researcher was based at this university and that it was where the preservice student teachers were being trained. This makes sense in terms of the accessibility and convenience of the preservice student teachers and the available time and budget.

The focus group sessions were held in a conference room on the university campus in order to comfortably accommodate a larger group of participants. Sessions were scheduled based on the availability of the conference room. Each participant had a comfortable chair to sit on. The size of the conference room allowed the participants to see and hear one another with ease so that the flow of the conversation was facilitated.

The sites for the five beginner teachers was determined by where these beginner teachers were situated. These sites were decided on bearing in mind the convenience of these participants, either at their private homes (based on their invitation to conduct their interview there) or at their schools. The private homes were ideal because the participants ensured that there were no disruptions. The classrooms were also well-suited as sites because the participants felt comfortable in their classrooms. Since the interviews took place after school hours there were no distractions and it was quiet. The researcher travelled to these sites as they were accessible from the university town.

The sites for the three HODs were at their schools in the specified district and within the specified province that they taught in. It was convenient in that three of the beginner teachers and the HODs were at the same schools. Two interviews could therefore be scheduled on the same day. This was organised taking into account the convenience of the participants since they were volunteering their limited time to share their experiences regarding this phenomenon. These interviews took place in two staff rooms and one classroom at the schools, as arranged by and convenient for the participants. It was not always ideal - this is a "public" space with movement of the members of staff which was distracting at times. It was a situation that the researcher did not have control over and had to make the most of to utilise the available time with the participants effectively. When necessary the interview was paused momentarily and continued as soon as possible.

In terms of time, the following was considered: Questionnaires 1 and 2 were administered at a prearranged time after one of the participants' classes as this was a suitable time for them as a group. The availability of an appropriate venue on campus was also taken into account. The semi-structured interviews for the fourth-year preservice teachers took place after hours when it was quieter on campus and the classes for the day were finished. The focus group sessions were scheduled for a time that was most convenient for all of the participants, taking into account the availability of the conference room. The semi-structured interviews with the five beginner teachers and with the three HODs were conducted after school hours or over a weekend, at a time that was most convenient for each participant.

3.2.2.7 Data collection procedure

The necessary data for this study were collected primarily in three ways from participants who were seen as "good data sources" in that they had knowledge and a varying amount of experience in the teaching of EFAL in the FP, either as preservice student teachers, beginner or experienced FP teachers. A summary of how, when and where the data were collected is presented in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3-3: Summary of the data collection procedure

Form of data collection	Participants	Summary of the procedure
Questionnaire 1	108 third-year FP B.Ed. preservice student teachers from the specific university campus	After class, in a lecture venue on the university campus, each participant was given her own questionnaire to complete anonymously in her own time. Participants were not required to write their name or student number. Once the participants had completed the questionnaire, they could hand it in and leave.
Questionnaire 2	53 fourth-year FP B.Ed. preservice student teachers from the specific university campus	After class, in a lecture venue on the university campus, each participant was given her own questionnaire to complete in her own time. Participants were not required to write their name or student number. Once the participants had completed the questionnaire, they could hand it in and leave.
Semi-structured interviews with the *preservice student teachers*	Five fourth-year FP B.Ed. preservice student teachers from the specific university campus	In a suitable venue which was available on the university campus, the preservice student teachers were welcomed and thanked for their willingness to participate in the research. Before the interviews began a brief conversation was held with the participants as developing rapport with the participants was important since it enabled them to relax and settle down so that they felt at ease to share their lived experiences more openly. The researcher explained the research study so that the participants understood the background to the study. The confidentiality of the interview responses and that of the participants was mentioned.

		Permission was obtained from the participants to make a voice recording. The participants were informed about the possible duration of the interview. The participants were asked to complete a form containing information about their contact details and sign it to grant informed consent for the interview to take place. The participants were asked to focus on the most important aspects which related specifically to the FP. The interview proceeded by using the interview schedule to guide the interview once a brief conversation had taken place to break the ice. Participants were given adequate time to answer each question.
Focus group sessions	Four groups of fourth-year FP B.Ed. preservice student teachers from the specific university campus Group 1 - 7 members Group 2 - 6 members Group 3 - 6 members Group 4 - 5 members	In a conference room on the specific university campus the preservice student teachers were welcomed and thanked for their willingness to participate in the research. Before the interviews began a brief conversation was held with the participants as developing rapport with the participants was important since it enabled them to relax and settle down so that they felt at ease to share their lived experiences more openly. The researcher explained the research study so that the participants understood the background to the study. The confidentiality of the participants of the focus group session was stressed. Permission was obtained from the participants to make a voice recording.

		The participants were informed about the possible duration of the focus group session. The participants were asked to complete a form containing information about their contact details and signed it to grant informed consent for the focus group session to take place. The participants were asked to focus on the most important aspects relating specifically to the FP. The focus group session proceeded by using the same schedule as the interviews to guide the focus group session once a brief conversation had taken place to break the ice. Participants were given adequate time to answer each question.
Semi-structured interviews with the *beginner teachers*	5 beginner FP teachers, graduates of the specific university	In the two private homes and the three classrooms in the schools. The beginner teachers were welcomed and thanked for their willingness to participate in the research. The same procedure as for the semi-structured interviews with the *preservice student teachers* was followed. The only difference was that these beginner teachers were asked one additional question.
Semi-structured interviews with *HODs*	3 FP HODs	In the two staff rooms and one classroom in the schools the HODs were welcomed and thanked for their willingness to participate in the research. The same procedure as for the semi-structured interviews with the *preservice student teachers* was followed. The questions which were used for the fourth-year preservice teacher semi-structured interviews, the focus groups and the

		beginner teachers were slightly modified and an additional question was asked.
Documents	Not applicable	The relevant document was thoroughly analysed.

3.3 Data analysis

On completion of the empirical research, the various forms of data must be concisely analysed and interpreted in order to ascertain the in-depth essence and meaning of the phenomenon in order to answer the questions posed for this study. These are based on the perceived preparedness of the preservice and beginner FP teachers to teach EFAL. Henning *et al.* (2004:127) clarify that to analyse "literally means to take apart words, sentences and paragraphs". Merriam (2009:175-176) states that data analysis is "the process of making sense out of data and the process used to answer your research question(s), which involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read - it is the process of making meaning" (Merriam, 2009:175-176). Creswell (2013:182) refers to a data analysis spiral in which the steps are "interrelated and often go on simultaneously." Although this data analysis spiral was not strictly applied in this study, it was born in mind as the analysis process proceeded. In qualitative research data analysis "is an ongoing, emerging and iterative or non-linear process" (Henning *et al.*, 2004:127). The aim and essence of research is to make sense of all data sources, that is, to interpret and identify the true meaning or essence thereof. This is done to get a deeper understanding, description and interpretation of the phenomenon based on the lived experiences and perspective or point of view of the participants.

As indicated (cf. 3.2.2.2) this study focuses on hermeneutic (interpretive) phenomenology in which bracketing is not warranted because hermeneutics presumed prior understanding (Dahlberg *et al.*, 2008). In his opinion it is not possible to set aside our experiences that relate to the phenomenon that is being studied. I therefore opted not to bracket out my lived experiences as the researcher but to take time to reflect on my lived experiences in relation to this phenomenon to assist me to come to a better understanding of the lived experiences of the participants in this study. In a sense I may almost be seen as a participant in this study in that I have also lived this experience, although it was long ago and not in the same context.

My lived experience of my Fist Additional Language which is Afrikaans.

My dad's Home Language is English and my mom's Home Language is Dutch. When my parents got married my mom could not speak English. When I was very young my mom spoke Afrikaans to me and we lived in an Afrikaans community. I attended an Afrikaans preschool but my primary school education and my high school education was in English. The first primary school that I attended was in an English neighborhood where no Afrikaans was spoken so most of my friends could not speak any Afrikaans. As my mom learned to speak English over the years, we essentially became an English- speaking family. Attending English primary and high schools and living in an English community meant that I had less exposure to Afrikaaans over the years. Although I always did well academically in Afrikaans I seemed to lose my confidence in speaking the language because I did not speak it very often. Speaking to individual people was not a problem but I remember that I did not enjoy speaking Afrikaans in front of a crowd of people.

I trained to be a teacher in English and had to teach Afrikaans as an additional language. The lecturer we had at the time was terribly boring and it frustrated me to attend her classes because I felt like I was not learning very much. I had no problem teaching Afrikaans lessons to the children, My pronunciation was good and I enjoyed teaching these lessons to the children.

My husband’s parents were in the Royal Marines in England. His mom is British and his dad was also from an English background. They only spoke English in their home. He prefers not to speak Afrikaans. Our children were raised in an English-speaking home. Our daughter has a good command of Afrikaans, probably because her best friend in preschool was Afrikaans speaking. She has been able to maintain her Afrikaans over the years because she has always had Afrikaans speaking friends. Our son, probably much like his dad, also prefers not to speak Afrikaans. Although he also had Afrikaans speaking friends, he managed to get them to speak to him in English.

When we moved to this town and I started working at this university I found it difficult to adjust to working in an Afrikaans speaking environment. I remember that, at the start I used to think in English and translate into Afrikaans. At a stage I had to present a module in Afrikaans and although I enjoyed the content of the module, I did not enjoy teaching in Afrikaans to such a big group of students. I found it difficult to express myself because I did not know the terminology that well in Afrikaans.

Although I have a good command of Afrikaans as my additional language, I like to think that I can relate in many ways to what my students are experiencing in training to teach in English as their First Additional Language. I understand that it is difficult to express yourself fully in the language

that is not your Home Language. This is probably because of the difficulties my son experienced with Afrikaans because he was never that receptive to the language..

3.3.1 Content analysis

Content analysis is a “detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of material for the purpose of identifying patterns and themes” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:84) which was applied in this study to establish categories in relation to some of the sources of data collected which was collected and did not focus on the lived experience of the participants but helped identify aspects of the required content knowledge. Maree (2007:101) maintains that it is an appropriate approach to “look at data from different angles with a view to identify keys in the text that will help us understand and interpret raw data”. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:236) stress that “researchers do not begin with preconceived codes but rather generate code categories directly from the data”. They start with the data and are led by the data to find the gist and draw conclusions in relation to the phenomenon. This is a gradual process which takes time and constant refinement.

3.3.2 Data organisation

As indicated (cf. section 3.3), data organisation falls within the first step of data analysis whereby the researcher commences by organising the data so that it is ready and accessible for the process of analysis. The data organisation process could only start once the data had been transcribed verbatim into a hard copy, as is the requirement for qualitive research analysis. Merriam and Tisdell (2016:200) stress the importance of “creating an inventory of our entire data set” so that you know exactly what data you have and where it is. The hard copies of questionnaires 1 and 2 were kept together and filed separately. The informed consent forms that were completed by each participant who was involved in the semi-structured and focus group sessions were also filed. On completion of the transcriptions these were printed and filed with the informed consent forms for each participant.

3.3.3 The data coding procedure and process

The analysis of the data was carried out by means of hand coding. The “process used for qualitative data analysis is the same for hand coding or using a computer: the inquirer identifies a text segment or image segment, assigns a code label, searches through the database for all text segments that have the same code label, and develops a printout of these text segments for

the code" (Creswell, 2013:201). Even though hand coding is a "laborious and time-consuming process" (Creswell, 2014b:195), it was applied to all the data. It enabled the researcher to be engaged with the data continuously to constantly refine the coding process until the final codes had been decided upon.

Although the steps given below had been suggested and were followed, there are no exact steps that can be pursued that will ensure success. Instead, it is "more of a sequential and continuous procedure" (Walliman, 2011:132) or cycle that is repeated and involves continuous refinement. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2016:292), "it is an iterative process in which a researcher goes back and forth among data collection, analysis and interpretation" with "the practical goal of finding answers to your research question(s)" (Merriam, 2009:176) and as such it is not a clear-cut or straightforward exercise. A major consideration is the phenomenon at hand and the types of data that have been obtained. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:463-464) emphasise that "there is no one 'right' way [to analyse data].... data can be analysed in more than one way". Continuous engagement with the data took place to facilitate reflection, interpretation and to gain a deeper understanding

The data coding process and procedure which is suggested by Pietkiewitz and Smith (2012) specifically for Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis was applied. It is their belief that these IPA guidelines are flexible and can therefore be adapted in line with individual researchers in accordance with their research objectives.

They recommend that researchers should undertake the process in total immersion, that is, they should try to place themselves completely into the shoes of the participants. Although it must be remembered (cf. 3.2.2.3) that the researcher's background and experience cannot be separated from the process, the lens through which they conduct their interpretation will be coloured accordingly.

- Multiple reading and making notes (Pietkiewitz and Smith (2012)

  The researcher starts by reading the transcription multiple times, or by listening to the voice recording. In this way the researcher is immersed in the data and this will provide insights into the data each time it is read or listened to. The researcher can make notes about any thoughts that come to mind, these could relate to the content of what was discussed or could even be initial interpretive comments. Any particular aspects of interest could be highlighted.

- Transforming notes into emergent themes (Pietkiewitz and Smith (2012)

  The notes which the researcher has made are used to identify emergent themes. These concise phrases are still based on what the participant has said. At this stage the researcher has already worked through the whole transcript. This relates to the "hermeneutic cycle" (cf. 3.2.2.1) where the part and the whole are related in a circular way in working to understand and interpret the data. By implication the whole is interpreted in relation to the part and vice versa.

- Seeking relationships and clustering themes (Pietkiewitz and Smith (2012)

  It is at this point that the researcher tries to identify the connections between the emerging themes and to group these together in relation to their conceptual similarities. These clusters are labeled descriptively. Themes for the whole transcript must first be compiled before the connections and clusters are identified. Themes which do not relate well to the emerging structure can be discarded at this point. The researcher will now have identified the major themes as well as the sub themes, also relevant short extracts from the transcript. It is important to keep record of where these extracts have been found in the transcripts, especially if this process is conducted by hand.

The "properties of the categories were determined so that it was clear by which indicators a category could be reorganized in the data" (Boeije, 2010:109). Ultimately the "categories were described and distinctions were made between main categories and subcategories and the definition and properties of each category (axis) were clear and no further adjustments were needed" (Boeije, 2010:114). According to Maree (2007:107), "coding is a fluid process that takes time to finalise".

3.3.3.1 Categories or themes

The data are gradually organised and reorganised into categories, which can be seen as the answers to the posed questions. These categorisation or themes are "the crux of qualitative data analysis, in that they provide the answers to the stipulated research questions" (Merriam, 2009:176). Once the coding process had been completed the identification of themes or categories was undertaken. These are large knowledge units consisting of multiple aggregated codes to shape a common idea. Creswell (2013:186) advises "viewing these themes as a 'family' of themes with children, subthemes, and even grandchildren represented by segments of data". Saldaña (2013:12) explains that "some categories may contain clusters of coded data that merit further refinement into subcategories". In addition, "when the major categories are compared with

each other and consolidated in various ways, you begin to transcend the 'reality' of your data and progress toward the thematic, conceptual, and theoretical". That is, the answers to the research questions are provided and the major findings of the study are clearly established. It is important that these "should display multiple perspectives from individuals and be supported by diverse quotations and specific evidence" (Creswell, 2014b:200). It should be borne in mind that "devising categories is largely an intuitive process, but it is also systematic and informed by the study's purpose, the investigator's orientation and knowledge, and the meaning made explicit by the participants themselves" (Merriam, 2009:183-184). In terms of the number of categories to consider, she reminds us that "it depends on the data and the focus of the research but… it should be manageable". She states that "the fewer the categories, the greater the level of abstraction, and the greater ease with which you can communicate your findings to others" (Merriam, 2009:187).

3.3.4 Interpretation

The final step in data analysis is interpretation, which is the whole purpose of conducting research. Under 3.2.2.1 it was stated that to interpret means to "make out or break out meaning of or explain or understand in a specified way" (Sykes, 1978:452). That is, the clarification or making sense of meaning, which is the task of any and every type of interpretation. The categories, as mentioned above, are the start of interpreting the data. The "challenge now is to move away from the level of analysis to an analytic understanding that begins to explain why things are as you have found them" (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b:120). Interpretation in qualitative research "involves abstracting out beyond the themes to the larger meaning of the data" (Creswell, 2013:187) to get to the core meaning. It could be "the researcher's personal interpretation, couched in the understanding that the inquirer brings to the study from a personal cultural, history, and experiences or meaning derived from a comparison of the findings with information gleaned from the literature or theories" (Creswell, 2014b:200). No two researchers will therefore interpret the same data in the same way as the interpretation of each researcher will be coloured according to their own lens based on their experiences. It is a gradual process from emerging themes onwards to more in-depth interpretation to eventually bring out the rich meaning of the data and develop the essence of the meaning. The "analysed data is now brought into context with existing theory to reveal how it corroborates existing knowledge or brings new understanding to the body of knowledge as a unique contribution to the development of knowledge" (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b:120). This is specifically in relation to the perceived preparation of preservice student teachers and beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP.

3.4 Trustworthiness

The researcher must ensure that the research that has been conducted is trustworthy; in other words, can the findings of this study be trusted? In order to confirm trustworthiness in a qualitative study, Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest paying attention to the following four dimensions, namely: *credibility, transferability, dependability* and *confirmability*. Each of these is clarified next and was applied in this study.

Credibility deals with the question "How congruent are the findings with reality?" (Merriam, 1998), in other words, "do they harmonise with the reality of the participants in this study?" This requires that "the participants in the study, who provided the data, believe that the interpretation is credible from their own perspective" (Newby, 2014:129). This implies, as suggested by Sandelowski (1986), that the researcher should "strive for accurate descriptions or interpretations of the data that reveal the multiple realities of the participants and that the eventual findings should be tested and confirmed." That is, the perceptions and the voice of the participants should be the focus. Credibility can also be established by means of triangulation and member checks (cf. section 3.4.2). Triangulation is applied by asking different participants the same questions and by collecting data from different sources, both of which have been applied in this study.

Transferability refers to the degree to which it is possible to transfer the findings of qualitative research to other contexts or settings. This is the criterion against which applicability of qualitative research is assessed. Research "meets the criterion of transferability when the findings fit into contexts outside the study situation that are determined by the degree of similarity or goodness of fit between the two contexts" (Guba, 1981). The "investigator needs to provide 'sufficient descriptive data' to make transferability possible" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:298). This is done by means of the application of "thick description" (cf. section 3.4.1), which implies that adequate information must be provided.

Dependability indicates that the research is reliable; it establishes a measure of repeatability and consistency. The study is "considered dependable if the findings of a study are consistent with the data presented" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:252). The "only real test of dependability is whether the researcher explains the context for the research sufficiently for the audience to agree with the conclusions, which appears to be just another route to ensuring that the research and conclusions are reliable" (Newby, 2014:129). In essence, it relates to the researcher being transparent and mentioning all aspects of concern as these arise.

Lastly, *confirmability* applies to the degree to which other people may confirm or corroborate the findings of the research. It is the "assumption that others would reach the same conclusion" (Newby, 2014:129). This is a debatable topic in that two researchers will never interpret the same data in an identical way. There are, however, "steps that must be taken to help ensure, as far as possible, that the work's findings are the result of experiences and ideas of the participants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher" (Shenton, 2004:72). The "key criterion for confirmability is the extent to which the researcher explains his or her position in terms of aspects that could include his or her biases, predispositions, experiences and assumptions". To this end, "beliefs underpinning decisions made and methods adopted should be acknowledged within the research report, the reasons for favouring one approach when others could have been taken explained and weaknesses in the techniques actually employed admitted" (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Such a "clarification allows the reader to better understand how the individual researcher might arrive at the particular interpretation of the data" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:249).

3.4.1 Rich, thick description

Essentially this relates to transparency by providing a detailed account of exactly how the research was conducted. It refers to "a description of the setting and participants of the study, as well as a detailed description of the findings with, for example, adequate evidence presented in the form of quotes from the participant interviews" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:257). Thick, rich and supportive data from all the data sources enable the researcher to increase the probability of providing an accurate summary and an analysis that is valid. In addition, "it enhances the possibility of the results of a qualitative study being transferred to another setting" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:256). Detailed description can serve to foster credibility in this field as it helps to explain the particular cases that have been examined and, to some degree, the meaning that surrounds them. "Without this insight, it is difficult for the reader of the final account to determine the extent to which overall findings 'ring true" (Shenton, 2004:69) and as mentioned above under credibility, that they harmonise with the reality of the participants in this study.

3.4.2 Member checks

In order to ensure the credibility of this study, member checks were carried out. Crabtree and Miller (1999:81) refer to it as "the process of recycling interpretation back to key participants". The "process involved in member checks is to take your preliminary analysis back to some of the participants and ask whether your interpretation 'rings true'" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:246). They maintain that "although you may have used different words (it is your interpretation, after all, but

derived directly from their experience), participants should be able to recognise their experience in your interpretation, and perhaps 'hear their voices' or suggest some fine-tuning to better capture their perspectives". As indicated by Krefting (1991:219), central to the credibility of qualitative research is "the ability of informants to recognise their experiences in the research findings and for the researcher to accurately translate the informants' viewpoints into meaningful and 'real' data". The "benefits include the participants helping to clear up miscommunication, identify inaccuracies, and help obtain additional useful data" (Ary *et al.*, 2014:533). Member checks are therefore invaluable.

3.4.3 Peer review

A peer review is one way of "keeping the research honest" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) by "the reviewer taking on the role as a 'devil's advocate' by asking hard questions about the methods, meanings, and interpretations". In this study the review was conducted by an impartial colleague who was new to the topic and had experience with qualitative research. This was done for a number of reasons, including getting some objective feedback to establish whether the findings were credible and to help identify aspects that needed further attention.

3.5 The role of the researcher

The role that the researcher plays in qualitative research is varied and pivotal, in that the researcher is involved in every aspect of the study. Karnieli-Miller *et al.* (2009:283 & 285) state that "the researcher becomes the 'storyteller' who recasts the story" and "the researcher's task is to collect the informants' stories and use skills, experience, and ethical commitment in a way that best serves the research goals". According to Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1990), researchers need to "adopt a stance of 'theoretical sensitivity', which means being 'insightful', demonstrating the capacity to understand and the ability to differentiate between what is important and what is not".

The researcher can be regarded as the primary instrument in terms of data collection, analysis and interpretation, as in the case of this study. In terms of the data collection process the researcher determined what information needed to be gathered and how best it could be accomplished. This could only take place once the participants had been identified and had agreed to take part in the study. The researcher personally handed out and collected the questionnaires and conducted the semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions. The researcher's role in the interview process was to create an atmosphere that was relaxed and pleasant for the participants so that they felt at ease, once the participants had given their consent

to participate in the study. During the interviews and focus group sessions the researcher could clarify any uncertainties and probe for more in-depth responses as required. It was through the eyes and ears of the researcher that meaning was constructed once the collection and analysis of the data had been completed. The analysis took place through an “iterative process that moved back and forth between data collected and analysed” (Lichtman, 2013:21). “All information is filtered through the researcher’s eyes and ears and influenced by her experience, knowledge, skill and background” (Lichtman,2013:21) although, as stated, the researcher strove to be objective and to base the meaning on the perceptions of the participants. The interpretations were derived from the data collected. The researcher verified the interpretations by means of credibility; transferability; dependability; confirmability; rich, thick description; member checks; and peer review, as indicated above.

Creswell (2009:177) suggests that the researcher should include statements about past experiences that will provide background data and comment on connections between the researcher and the participants. In terms of past experiences, I have more than twenty years of experience as a Foundation Phase educator and lecturer. Ihe grew up in a bilingual home with English as Home Language; English was spoken by her father and Afrikaans, or Dutch, the First Additional Language, was spoken by my mother when I was young. I was educated in English medium schools in primary and high school. In the Foundation Phase, especially in Grade 1, I often assisted the teacher during her Afrikaans lessons because Ialready had a fair command of the language, unlike my peers who had had no exposure to the language. I was mostly comfortable with my First Additional Language because of regular exposure to the language. This is unlike many of the fourth-year preservice student teachers and beginner teachers who participated in this study and had had limited exposure to their First Additional Language for various reasons, including the areas that they grew up in.

I lectured English as a First Additional Language to these fourth-year preservice student teachers and to the beginner teachers. The module was taught for three semesters over three years: in the second semester of the first year, the second semester of the second year and the first semester of the third year. The groups were all very large, more than 150 students per module, and Itherefore, did not get to know the majority of students personally. The majority of the preservice student teachers find the above-mentioned modules difficult because of their limited exposure to English; most of them do not view the teaching of English as a First Additional Language in a positive light and many are reluctant and nervous about having to do so. Since the researcher is involved in the training of future teachers, it is essential to gather and analyse the perceptions of

the preservice student teachers and beginner teachers. In this way I could determine what factors contribute to preservice student teachers' perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP to inform the framework that was developed.

3.6 Ethical aspects

The ethical aspects of research are a major consideration for any researcher. Ethics is "the study of standards of conduct and values, and in research, how these impact on both research and research subjects" (Gray, 2014:682). It means "conducting research in a way that goes beyond merely adopting the most appropriate research methodology, but conducting research in a responsible and morally defensible way" (Gray, 2014:68) so that the participants are always protected. A common misconception, according to Creswell (2013:56), is that "ethical issues only surface during data collection." He warns that they arise during several phases of the research process, and that they are ever expanding in scope as inquirers become more sensitive to the needs of participants, sites, stakeholders, and publishers of research, hence an awareness throughout the study is vital. Research must be conducted according to ethical codes, which are "codes of conduct set in place to protect the research subjects and their setting – neither of which should be harmed by the research process" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011:85).

The ethical principles which were applied in this study were based on Gray (2014:73 - 79):

- ***Avoid harm to participants***

  As indicated in Chapter 1 (cf. section 1.9), this includes all forms of harm, such as psychological and emotional harm, no matter how subtle. The participants should not experience any form of stress, negativity or uncertainty. This was avoided in part by ensuring the confidentiality of all participants at all times. The researcher may also never breach confidentiality, which means that "the research subjects are protected by remaining unidentifiable" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011:85). The participants' names were never used in any of the written material that resulted from this study. The safety and rights of the participants were protected at all times.

- ***Respect all participants***

  From the start of the recruitment process any pressure or exposure that might be experienced as threatening was avoided and the participants were informed that their

participation was optional. Care was taken so that they would not feel threatened in any way and that their rights to security, privacy and human dignity were never infringed on.

At the outset, the purpose of the research was explained to all the participants who had agreed to take part in the study and were involved in the data gathering process so that they were aware of what the study was about and what its aim was. In addition, they were reminded that participation was voluntary and anonymous. They had the option of withdrawing at any stage and all information was treated with confidentiality. What they were expected to do was also stipulated.

It was important for the participants to feel comfortable and at ease at all times. The researcher strove to do this by first having a conversation with the participants to help break the ice and make them feel more relaxed. During the collection of data the sites were respected and the researcher strove for as little disruption as possible.
The enquiry did not include any experimental element, and no intervention of any kind by the researcher was part of the research design. No questions that could create any experience of humiliation or discomfort were included.

- ***Ensure informed consent of participants***
  Informed consent "aims to ensure that the subject's participation is fully voluntary and informed, based on the understanding of what the study is about, what its risks and benefits are, how the results will be used, and the fact that participation is voluntary and can be stopped at any time and that identity will be protected" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011:85).

  The participants were all required to fill in an informed consent form (cf. Appendix 6). They were advised that their participation was voluntary and that if, at any stage, they felt that they did not want to participate, they had the choice to withdraw, in spite of the fact that they had previously given their consent. No reasons for the withdrawal were expected, and they were not discriminated against afterwards.

- ***Respect the privacy of the participants***
  The privacy of the participants was protected by being sensitive regarding intrusiveness in relation to time and the participants' space. For the questionnaires the participants were provided with suitable times and could select a time that was acceptable to the majority of

the group. The semi-structured interviews with the preservice student teachers took place at a time that was most convenient for each participant. The time for these interviews, as well as the sites for the beginner teachers and HODs, was dependent on the availability of these participants. Two participants invited the researcher to their homes and for the rest it was decided that the school would be the most convenient site. The researcher was always available on time and made sure that she did not overstep the boundaries in terms of the length of each interview.

Before this study commenced ethical clearance was applied for at the university and approved by the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University (NWU) Faculty of Education Ethics Committee in order for this study to be conducted. At the start of this study, the purpose of the study had to be disclosed. The ethics number which was provided upon approval is **NWU-00099-12-A2.**

The application for permission for the research that was submitted to a specific region of a specific province was approved (cf. Appendix 7). On the grounds of this approval, school principals were asked for their consent to approach the individual Foundation Phase HODs and beginner teachers prior to the appointments that were made. These appointments were organised at a time that was most convenient for them.
All the data gathering was conducted in English. All the participants were required to teach EFAL in the FP (or in the case of the preservice student teachers would be required to do so) and should therefore have a reasonable level of language proficiency in this language. English is a subject that they all had to pass at school. If participants were unsure, questions were repeated or where necessary rephrased to facilitate understanding.

All data, including voice recordings and transcriptions thereof, both in hard and in electronic format, will be safely stored for five years in the office of the project leader at the specified university. Any person with legitimate interest may apply to the project head, who will judge the merits of the request jointly with other stakeholders. Approval will not be unreasonably withheld.

3.7 Summary

In summary, the various aspects in relation to the empirical research that was conducted have been specified and clarified in this chapter. These include interpretivism and phenomenology as the research design and qualitative research as the approach. The means of data gathering,

interpretation, analysis and quality control in terms of aspects such as trustworthiness were also highlighted. The next chapter focuses on the presentation and discussion of the results.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to address the research questions posed in Chapter 1.

- What is the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers to teach EFAL in the FP?
- What factors may have contributed to preservice student teachers' perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP?
- What is the perceived preparedness of beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP?
- How do HODs perceive preservice student teacher and beginner teacher preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP?

The findings in the study address the research questions and are discussed in terms of the themes that have emerged in relation to the lived experiences of the participants based on their perceived preparedness to teach EFAL, as well as their knowledge base. The purpose of this study being to determine the perceptions of preparedness to teach English as First Additional Language as expressed by preservice student teachers and beginner teachers as well as by HODs. This will inform and develop a Foundation Phase preservice student teacher preparation framework for EFAL that can be used by teacher training programmes. The various forms of data were obtained by means of hermeneutic (interpretive) phenomenology As indicated in Chapter 3 this data was sought from a document as well as the participants who included the third-year preservice student teachers who completed the questionnaire; the fourth-year preservice student teachers who completed the questionnaire; the fourth-year preservice student teachers who participated in the semi-structured interviews; the fourth-year preservice student teachers who participated in the focus group sessions; the beginner teachers who participated in the semi-structured interviews; and the FP HODs who participated in the semi-structured interviews.

4.2 The perceived preparedness of participants to teach EFAL

The perceptions of the preservice student teachers, the beginner teachers and the HODs are presented together in this section under the following emerging data categories:

- General perceptions of preparedness
- University coursework
    - Literacy coursework modules

- Content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge
- Teaching Practice

4.2.1 General perceptions of preparedness

In order to provide an initial perspective of preservice student teachers' and beginner teachers' general perceptions of **preparedness,** as well HODs' perceptions of preparedness of the student teachers and beginner teachers to teach EFAL, the following insights shared by the various participants are presented.

The questionnaires that were completed by the one hundred and eight **third-year** preservice student teachers indicated that many of them were under the impression that they were already prepared and ready to teach EFAL, despite the fact that they had not yet completed their studies. They stated:

> *Prepared: I can speak English fluently.*
>
> *I feel more prepared. Sometimes it really is all in the mind and you should just relax and believe in yourself.*
>
> *I am fully confident in teaching English as a FAL.*

The responses from the **fourth-year** preservice student teachers in the semi-structured interviews were varied; some clearly felt more prepared than others. The range of comments from those who felt **prepared** included:

> *Because there's no other teachers watching over you, I'll be fine.*
> *I felt prepared, because ... maybe it's because my mom's also a Foundation Phase teacher, I had a lot of help. And she also has an English class. So I think that helped me a lot.*
> *Uhm, I feel quite prepared because I know what I am going to teach next year.*
> *I think if I practise enough, and do my preparation and all the things I have to do for class, I'll be fine.*

In relation to their general perceptions of preparedness the **beginner teachers** had the following to say in terms of how **prepared** they felt to start teaching EFAL at the start of their professional careers:

> *I felt prepared. I think, uhm, you knew what you had to do and what your aims were, so I felt prepared. I still do. I think, I think I'm doing quite well, teaching it. So, I don't know, I think I was quite prepared.*
> *I received very good leadership, especially from the HOD. She helped and trained me a lot and showed me what to do, so I was relaxed and when I arrived here. I also felt, well, I have my degree and I worked hard for it, so I do know what is going on. It's not as if I suddenly arrived here not knowing. So it did help, one feels better.*

Lastly, the **HODs** were of the opinion that the beginner teachers at their schools were well **prepared**; they said that:

> *They are completely prepared.*
> *I think she is well prepared to teach English as a First Additional Language.*
> *I also think that her **personality** is such that she immediately accepted it as a challenge.*
> *Good. No, very well prepared. She has fallen in well and she has …, you know, she gives input already and she has already set some assessment tasks for us, and very nice. She does it very well.*
>
> *And, uhm, feedback we received from parents is that she really is a very nice teacher. And that she presents her subject very well.*
>
> *They are completely prepared. I just think they should do it more spontaneously.*

The results indicate that the preservice student teachers and beginner teachers had different perceptions regarding their preparedness to teach EFAL; some acknowledged their shortcomings and felt **unprepared**, as indicated in the comments below. Those who clearly felt unprepared in the **third-year** preservice student teacher group stated:

I don't feel that prepared. More exposure to teaching English as a First Additional Language will prepare me much more.
Somehow, I feel like I am not ready yet because I know some of words only in Setswana and not in English so that would really be a problem.
Am not yet there because am not fluently yet.
I am not prepared, because I still struggle with my tenses and I am still scared of teaching children because it may be wrong.
My English needs more work to learn the learners correct.
At the moment not too prepared.

In the **fourth-year** preservice student teacher group the responses in terms of being **unprepared** to teach EFAL included:

I don't think I'm 100%.
I think if I practise enough I'll be fine but I won't be able to, uhm, think on my feet as much as in Afrikaans.
If they tell me to give an unprepared lesson for an Afrikaans class it will be better for me in Afrikaans, not ..., I won't be able to do it in English.
I'm not prepared enough, in English, I'm not comfortable enough.
I don't feel like I am equipped.
Well, for me, because I'm not prepared enough, in English, I'm not comfortable enough. Where I give an English lesson, I totally forget about the children. I'm so focused on myself and using the right words and the right tenses, that I don't even look at them or who is struggling or who … I'm so concentrated on myself that I feel like … When, when I do an Afrikaans lesson then all those tools I can use them, I can look at the learners. But in English I forget about all that, because I'm out of my comfort zone, I don't have enough … It feel like I … I don't have enough information to do this. I'm not prepared enough.

The **beginner teachers** had been confronted with the actuality of teaching EFAL to their own classes of learners and were therefore very realistic in terms of how prepared they actually were. Their responses included:

I just remember in my training I found it a lot easier than it was, compared to what it is actually now.

I was a bit unsure, I think because we had so much more training with the Afrikaans than we had for the English and, uhm, …. my, uhm, I don't know if I would be able to teach them to read in English.
At the beginning of the year I'm, I, I did feel a bit unsure.
The first time was a little bit, you, you were stressed, because you're scared you're gonna, uhm, especially when someone sits there and listens to your class.
Uhm, it feels different, because it's English and you know you, you're not comfortable because it's not your home language and ach, at the beginning one is scared and insecure.
I think, I think at the beginning of the year you are a bit unsure.

Although the **HODs** said that the beginner teachers were prepared to teach EFAL in the schools they all maintained that the beginner teachers at their schools needed thorough guidance initially which could be an indication that the HODs' perception was actually that the beginner teachers might not have been adequately prepared. They stated:

Her grade head, clearly showed her how.
She succeeded with the help of her grade head.
They prepare together, the grade head prepares with her.
I think it makes a huge difference in the school if you can ask for help and you talk about things, then it helps you a lot.
It isn't going well there, so I just think from the, from the, the side of the grade head, from the side of the HOD, you just have to give stronger guidance there.
We all work together, we plan at our subject grade meeting and when we leave there we work as one, exactly the same.
And that entire year I assisted her.

It is evident from the lived experiences of these participants that the reasons provided in terms of their perceived preparation included fluency; more positive feelings such as not being fearful and being confident; knowing they had the necessary continued support, either from a parent in the same profession or from a colleague in a leadership position; knowing what to teach in relation to content knowledge; having direction in terms of achievable aims and the realization that practice makes perfect (general pedagogical knowledge). One of the HODs also linked it to a type of personality, perhaps where intrinsic motivation is the driving force to making sure that they are

prepared for the task at hand. In terms of a perceived lack of preparation, the reasons provided include a lack of exposure to English; not being equipped and a lack of information, either with regard to content or general pedagogical knowledge; as well as more negative feelings (cf.1.2), this time are being uncertain, stressed, fearful, nervous, scared, and not feeling comfortable with the language. In relation to English, fluency is an issue, as well as a lack of competency in the language, specifically a lack of vocabulary and struggling with tenses. It seems that some have to focus so intently on their correct use of English while they teach that they are not able to pay attention to the learners or to what (content knowledge) is being taught, this would hamper how (general pedagogical knowledge) they teach the learners. This points to a lack of PCK. Also, the realisation that practice makes perfect (pedagogical knowledge). It is clear that there are certain links to their perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof, such as fluency, their feelings, knowing what (content knowledge) to teach and the importance of practice (general pedagogical knowledge). The discrepancy between how they were trained and the reality of what is required in the schools was also raised by a beginner teacher.

It is a non-negotiable prerequisite (cf. 1.1) that all FP teachers must be well prepared to teach EFAL so that they can provide a stable foundation to ensure that learner achievement and motivation will be optimal. Thorough preparation is also vital because the Home Language of these teachers is not English (cf. 1.1) which implies that adequate attention must be paid not only to extending their knowledge base (cf.2.1) and refining their teaching skills (cf. 2.3.1.5) but also to the development of their proficiency (cf. 4.2.2) to enable them to speak English with confidence. As indicated, the results also indicate that the participants made very general statements related to being prepared and included mainly affective issues. This points to the participants not really understanding what is means to be prepared to teach EFAL although there are preservice student teachers and beginner teachers who have a positive perception in terms of being prepared to teach EFAL in the FP, the results also reveal perceptions of an absence of thorough preparation for many of these teachers and therefore a lack of readiness to teach EFAL effectively in the schools.

4.2.2 University coursework

The focus in this section is on the coursework that was covered during the training of the preservice student teachers. The document that was analysed was the North-West University 2016 yearbook. The purpose of this document analysis was to ascertain what modules the students were required to complete by the end of their four years of training to equip them to teach EFAL in the FP. This gave an indication of the content that was included in their training

and how thoroughly they were prepared to teach EFAL in the FP in terms of a sound knowledge base as well as the provision of opportunities to develop their proficiency in English since it was not their Home Language. The stipulated WIL modules (cf. section 4.2.3.1) were also analysed to determine the extent of the opportunities provided to practise and apply, both at the schools and during their training (i.e. learning from practice), what they had been taught in their course. It must be mentioned that the training which took place based on this yearbook happened prior to the latest, as yet unpublished document by Higher Education and Training (2021) entitled Towards an ITE literacy curriculum: Component content descriptions which was compiled for the Consolidated Literacy Working Group of the Primary Teacher Education Project. This training was therefore not in line with this document however future training will take cognisance of this document.

4.2.2.1 Literacy coursework modules

The literacy modules that the preservice Foundation Phase students were required to complete during their four years of study have been specified and elaborated on in accordance with the sequence, that is, per year and per semester (cf. Table 4.1).

Table 4-1: Outcomes of Literacy and WIL modules for Baccalareus Educationis (BEd) programme with specialisation in the Foundation Phase

Year and semester	Module	Outcomes
First year **First semester**	**Academic literacy only for at risk students** **Either** **AGLA 111 (Afrikaans)** **or** **AGLE 111 (English)**	On completion of this module the student should be able to: • demonstrate fundamental knowledge of appropriate computer programs, as well as apply learning, listening, reading and writing strategies, use academic language register and read and write academic texts, in order to function effectively in the academic environment; • as an individual and a member of a group communicate effectively orally and in writing in an ethically responsible and acceptable manner in an academic environment; • as an individual and a member of a group find and collect scientific knowledge in a variety of study fields, analyse, interpret, and evaluate texts, and in a coherent manner synthesise and propose solutions in appropriate academic genres by making use of linguistic conventions used in formal language registers.
First year **Second semester**	**Academic literacy** **Either**	On completion of this module the student should be able to: • demonstrate fundamental knowledge of appropriate computer programs, as well as apply learning, listening, reading and writing strategies, use academic language register and read and write academic texts, in order to function effectively in the academic environment;

	AGLA 121 (Afrikaans) **or** **AGLE (English) 121** **ENGF 121 English Medium of Instruction (generic module)**	• as an individual and a member of a group communicate effectively orally and in writing in an ethically responsible and acceptable manner in an academic environment; • as an individual and a member of a group find and collect scientific knowledge in a variety of study fields, analyse, interpret, and evaluate texts, and in a coherent manner synthesise and propose solutions in appropriate academic genres by making use of linguistic conventions used in formal language registers. On completion of this module the student should be able to: • demonstrate a solid knowledge of the methodology of effective second language medium of instruction; • demonstrate a fundamental knowledge of the principles of second language acquisition; • demonstrate basic competence in the four language skills and their application in the content classroom; • use medium of instruction to convey content of area of specialisation by employing holistic language skills and successfully applying principles of language across the curriculum; • demonstrate ability to monitor and evaluate own and learners' progress; and • match the profile of an ideal, second language medium of instruction content teacher to successfully create and maintain a learning environment that is conducive to effective learning.

	LITA 123 Literacy First Additional Language: English	On completion of this module the student should be able to: • demonstrate a fundamental knowledge of various aspects of teaching Literacy, specifically English as a first additional language in the Foundation phase including the principles and outcomes as specified by the RNCS specifications regarding first additional language acquisition the Total Literacy Model and principles on which to build language learning activities aspects of cooperative learning the development and extension of vocabulary and designing lesson plans based on OBE principles; • identify and solve common problems within a familiar context of the above-mentioned themes and plan activities based on the understanding of ideas and theoretical principles of the themes; • demonstrate a fundamental knowledge of planning and presenting a lesson in accordance with a given format and assessment criteria, and use the most effective instructional skills and assessment strategies for a specific teaching-learning environment; • demonstrate the basic principles of literacy in an ethically responsible manner during group work, in the classroom and in the community.
Second year **First semester**	**ENGF 211 English Medium of Instruction (generic module)**	On completion of this module the student should be able to: • demonstrate advanced competence in the four macro language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) of Classroom English. This is underpinned by profound knowledge of and skills in the Interpersonal, Pedagogical and General aspects of the medium of instruction; • demonstrate fundamental knowledge of and competence in presentational skills such as loudness of voice, rate of delivery, variation in tone and pitch, articulation

		and fluency, as well as appropriate gestures and body language. Presentational skills also entail the use of contextual cues that will help learners to link background content, language, and cultural knowledge to new knowledge; and • demonstrate profound knowledge of the principles underpinning competence in the methodological skills that teacher-trainees require for effective L2MI. These include the ability to: a)plan both content and language objectives for each learning task; b)design suitable and appropriate materials; c)design and introduce contextual clues; d) encourage purposeful interaction; e) create a classroom atmosphere and attitudes that promote language acquisition and conceptual development, and employ fair and appropriate assessment strategies.
Second year **Second semester**	**LITA 223 Literacy First Additional Language: English**	On completion of this module the student should be able to: • demonstrate integrated knowledge, with a good understanding of the principles and theories concerning the acquisition of a first additional language; • demonstrate the ability to identify, analyse, critically reflect on and address complex problems, applying critical and creative thinking, in terms of the various strategies of teaching a language, as well as the teaching of writing and the acquisition of a language through the successful completion of assignments; • create and manage a learning environment that will promote effective learning of the required aspects of English as a First Additional Language for Foundation Phase learners, by means of the correct application of the strategies; • promote English literacy within a wide context, such as in schools and communities; • facilitate collaborative learning processing during effective group work to solve problems, related to the various aspects of teaching Foundation Phase English literacy to children, and implement the solutions; and

		• apply skills in the preparation of suitable literacy activities, for the promotion of the effective use of English as a First Additional Language.
Third year **First semester**	**LITA 313 Literacy First Additional Language: English**	On completion of this module the student should be able to: • demonstrate a well-rounded knowledge base and sound understanding of Literacy, specifically English as a first additional language in the Foundation Phase including: the assessment standards of reading and writing and the application thereof; phonics and the teaching of spelling, fluency and comprehension; and the development of reading and writing skills and the application of suitable methods; • demonstrate an ability to solve well-defined but unfamiliar problems using correct procedures and appropriate evidence based on the above mentioned themes and plan activities based on the understanding of ideas and theoretical principles of the themes; • demonstrate the ability to solve problems in relation to the planning and presentation of lessons and practical sessions within the context of the above mentioned by using basic information technology; • demonstrate own ideas and opinions in well-structured arguments in a professional manner.
Third year **Second semester**	**LITG 323 Academic English Foundation Phase**	On completion of this module the student should be able to: • demonstrate fundamental knowledge of the characteristics of children's literature. • Analyse and evaluate prose relevant to the Foundation Phase. • Identify and appreciate linguistic, conceptual and aesthetic elements in rhymes and verses relevant to the Foundation Phase.

		• Apply knowledge of phonetics, morphology and syntax effectively in their own written and spoken communication and facilitate effective language acquisition in the foundation phase.
Fourth year **First semester**	**LITG 413 Literacy Academic English: First Additional Language**	On completion of this module the student should be able to: • demonstrate fundamental knowledge of the characteristics of children's, young adult and adult literature. This knowledge should enable them to select suitable teaching and learning materials for the Foundation phase. • analyse and evaluate prose relevant to the Foundation phase. • identify and appreciate linguistic, conceptual and aesthetic elements in rhymes and verses relevant to the Foundation phase. • apply literary theory and use relevant subject terminology in an independent analysis of prescribed English poems. • apply knowledge of phonetics, morphology and syntax effectively in their own written and spoken communication and facilitate effective language acquisition in the Foundation Phase.
Fourth year **Second semester**	**No literacy module/s**	

Calendar 2016 (North-West University, 2016:104, 123, 139, 140 & 141)

An overview of the yearbook indicates that, in terms of literacy, the Foundation Phase students had one academic literacy module (AGLA/AGLE 121). The AGLA/AGLE 111 was compulsory for the at-risk students[1] in the first semester of the first year. In addition, they also had two generic English Medium of Instruction modules (ENGF), three Literacy First Additional Language modules (LITA) and two Academic English modules (LITG). These are the literacy modules which were included to prepare the students to teach EFAL in the FP.

The outcomes for the **AGLA/AGLE 111** module for the at-risk students were the same for the **AGLA/AGLE 121** module. This module was completed by all students within all faculties and it was therefore a generic module. This indicates that it was not based specifically on the FP. The aim of this module was to equip the students to successfully complete their specific field of study in their Home Language, which was applicable to the majority of the students. An introduction to computer software programmes; the necessary academic language register to read academic texts and to write these texts effectively; suitable oral communication for an academic environment; and the identification and use of suitable texts were all highlighted to assist the students in this regard. These modules therefore focused on developing general academic literacy, and did not address, or provide opportunities for students to improve, their English speaking proficiency.

In terms of **English Medium of Instruction**, there were only two modules. These modules were also generic. They were completed by all the students in the Faculty of Education and therefore catered in a general way for all the school phases. The emphasis of the **first** module was more on content as opposed to the teaching and refining of skills. The application of the four language skills was geared to a content classroom and was therefore more relevant to learners from Grade 4 onwards. These skills are needed for the students' area of specialisation in other phases to apply the principles of language across the curriculum. The successful creation and maintenance of a learning environment also related to the medium of instruction for content teachers in the higher phases. In the second year, the **ENGF 211** module focused on developing presentational skills such as the correct use of articulation, contextual clues and appropriate gestures. General lesson planning was also included.

There were only three modules, namely the **LITA** modules, which were specifically geared for teaching EFAL in the FP. The modules were each allocated eight credits with one contact period

[1] At-risk students are the students who are at risk of not completing their studies successfully for various reasons, such as not being prepared for further studies and a lack of the required study skills.

per week. This equated to one module in the first, second and third year and none in the fourth year. In the **first year,** the emphasis was on various aspects related to teaching EFAL literacy, including language acquisition and building suitable language learning activities, as well as aspects of cooperative learning. Designing EFAL lesson plans for presentation based on specific principles (e.g. CAPS aligned) and instructional skills (e.g. conforming to a specified format) constituted another focal point. In terms of the four language skills, the development and extension of vocabulary was covered which related to all four of these skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. In the **second year** the acquisition of EFAL and the various strategies of teaching language, as well as the skills which should be correctly applied in creating and managing a conducive EFAL learning environment, were given priority. In terms of the four skills, the teaching of writing was highlighted. By the **third year,** reading and writing were the two skills which were developed and applied, for example in terms of planning activities and the application of suitable methods. Phonics, spelling, fluency and comprehension were all included. The planning and the presentation of lessons were further refined in terms of these skills.

There were two sixteen credit **LITG** modules which developed students' academic English skills as FP teachers to assist them to eventually be good language role models for their learners. In the **third year** the focus of the module was on extending their knowledge base of children's literature, more specifically in relation to prose, as well as rhyme and verse. In terms of language structures such as phonology, morphology and syntax were applied in both written and spoken communication to facilitate the effective acquisition of language. In the **fourth year,** the correct selection of materials for FP learners was dealt with and the literature component was based on elements of analysis, evaluation, identification and appreciation of prose and rhymes, as well as the analysis of poems. The same language structures as in the third year were further developed and applied.

In summary, the focus of the first two generic modules was on providing the students with the necessary academic literacy skills and support to enable them to complete their studies successfully. These modules therefore did not directly prepare the students to teach EFAL or provide the students with the necessary opportunities to develop their English-speaking proficiency. As indicated, the two **English Medium of Instruction** modules were generic modules for all the school phases and not aimed specifically at preparing the students to teach EFAL in the FP. Since the emphasis was more on content, the teaching and refining of the necessary skills which are vital in the FP may not have been given the necessary attention. Second language medium of instruction and the acquisition of this language should be conducted in a very specific

manner in the FP and the students should have the necessary knowledge regarding the progression thereof. The emphasis in the application of the four language skills was on a content classroom rather than on the teaching and refining of these skills, as is necessary in the FP. The successful creation and maintenance of a learning environment related more to the medium of instruction for content teachers and again not the development of specific language skills in EFAL. The presentational skills in the second year may not have been entirely applicable to the FP. The focus on the development of competence in various methodological skills required to plan lessons may also not have catered specifically for FP learners. The inclusion of only three modules to thoroughly prepare the students to teach **EFAL** in the FP was probably inadequate and did not allow for the four skills to be taught in sufficient detail or for the required in-depth application thereof. This is essential for the development of these skills. Covering all the required aspects of teaching EFAL within the limited number of EFAL modules did not seem to be realistic. Lastly, 356the **Academic English** modules were beneficial in that vital aspects of children's literature and language structure were included; however, to fully equip these teachers to teach EFAL a more in-depth study as well as additional time are required. In this way the students will be empowered to both understand and to apply these vital components correctly in their teaching.

As indicated, therefore, the limited time frame for the literacy modules seems to be insufficient to address the content, that is, everything that must be taught, in an in-depth manner or to allow for the thorough development and application of the skills which are critical to provide these teachers with the necessary insight and know-how to teach EFAL effectively. Specific modules which are much needed to give the students the opportunity to develop their English proficiency and confidence did not seem to be offered, so for many students their English proficiency was not consistently developed, gradually improved and - more importantly - maintained over the course of their studies. There were no specific modules to cater for this need. This is a vital consideration because English is not the Home Language of these students and therefore this must be specifically provided for. Academic language skills entail, amongst others, the ability to effectively use English as the language of the classroom where the teacher is required, for example, to provide concise instructions or explain content in an understandable manner. If the student teacher is not proficient and does not have the necessary vocabulary to easily adapt and simplify explanations, as required, there is a danger that the learners may not comprehend the content or the instructions in terms of how to complete a task or activity. It may also hamper the essential provision of immediate and meaningful feedback. Not being sure about the correct use of language could make it difficult for teachers to speak English comprehensibly and they may be unable to identify and correct learners' language errors. As mentioned (cf.1.1) the development

of CALP is essential. It is therefore important for these students to develop their academic English skills so that they have the required foundation in terms of a sound knowledge base of the various aspects of this language and, equally important, that they are able to apply these effectively and with ease.

4.2.2.2 Content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge

When completing the questionnaire, the 53 fourth-year preservice student teachers were asked to rate their content and pedagogical content knowledge, as either adequate or inadequate, on aspects covered in their three EFAL modules, that is LITA 123, 223 and 313. The intention was not to conduct an in depth quantitative statistical analysis of this data but to get an indication of the extent of the perceived content and pedagogical knowledge base of these preservice student teachers, to ascertain which components are not up to standard

In relation to a sound knowledge base.Table 4.2 presents the components covered during their BEd programme.

Table 4-2: Summary of the perceived content and pedagogical content knowledge of EFAL of the fourth-year preservice student teachers

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
Theories of FAL acquisition and learning	45%	55%
Developmental stages of language acquisition	66%	34%
The process of language and literacy development	64%	36%
Bilingualism	89%	11%
Foundational knowledge to prepare you for your tasks in the literacy classroom	79%	21%
Listening	96%	4%
Speaking	85%	15%
READING	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Emergent literacy	81%	19%
• Components	57%	43%
• Processes	68%	32%
• Development	74%	26%
• Strategies	68%	32%

WRITING	Adequate	Inadequate
• Emergent writing	87%	13%
• Development	74%	26%
• Approaches	57%	43%
• Handwriting	92%	8%
• Spelling	77%	23%
LANGUAGE COMPONENTS	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Phonology	89%	11%
• Morphology	60%	40%
• Syntax	83%	17%
• Pragmatics	79%	21%
• Semantics	83%	17%
ASSESSMENT	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Methods	94%	6%
• Techniques	91%	9%
• Practices	85%	15%
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Selection and evaluation of children's literature appropriate for FAL learners	87%	13%
• Multicultural children's literature	85%	15%
• Types of children's literature	94%	6%
KNOWLEDGE OF LEARNERS AND CONTEXT	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Ways to support English FAL learners	72%	28%
• Learner diversity	92%	8%
• Linguistic diversity	62%	38%
PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Planning for instruction	96%	4%
• Providing optimal language input	81%	19%
• Constructing supportive learning environments for English FAL learners	92%	8%
• Instructional techniques	85%	15%
• Methods	87%	13%

Table 4.2 presents preservice students' perceptions of their content and pedagogical content knowledge in terms of eight components which formed part of the content of their modules as they neared the end of their studies. These components are elaborated on next.

Language and literacy in relation to EFAL was the first component which the preservice student teachers were asked to rate. In this regard, 55% of the students indicated that their knowledge of theories of EFAL acquisition and learning was not adequate; this equates to more than half of the number of students. The other two aspects in which the students perceived their knowledge to be inadequate were the developmental stages of language acquisition (34%) and the process of language and literacy development (36%). Approximately 90% of the preservice student teachers indicated that they were of the opinion that they had adequate content knowledge of bilingualism; however, 21% believed that they did not have the necessary foundational knowledge to prepare them for their tasks in the EFAL literacy classroom. Even for listening and speaking, which are two of the main skills which teachers must develop in the EFAL curriculum in the schools, 100% adequacy was not reflected.

Reading was the next component which the preservice student teachers were asked to rate. Teaching the learners to read in EFAL is one of the vital areas which these teachers must be thoroughly prepared for. Jose and Raja (2011:8) state that "teachers are the prime source for students to cultivate the reading habit. They can execute this task only when they have the competence to play their role effectively". The area where they perceived their knowledge to be the least adequate in this regard was that of the reading components (43%). These components are phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension. They are the building blocks for learning to read and are therefore of great importance. The results also showed that between 20% and 30% of the students felt that their knowledge related to emergent literacy, reading processes, reading development and reading strategies was also not adequate so there is room for improvement.

The preservice student teachers then rated **writing**. Along with speaking, listening and reading, writing is one of the four major skills that preservice teachers must be confident and prepared to teach in the EFAL classroom. This view is supported by Baggott (2012:2), who states that "as writing continues to be an important skill, teachers need to be knowledgeable with up to date research in order to provide effective instruction". The approaches to writing constituted an area where the students perceived their knowledge not to be adequate (43%), this was followed by the development of writing (26%) and spelling (23%), and to a lesser extent emergent writing (13%)

and handwriting (8%). Despite being in the fourth year there was no indication that the perception of these teachers was that they felt fully prepared or nearly prepared to teach any of these aspects.

The results showed that regarding the various **language components**, most of the preservice teachers, that is, 80% and above, felt that their knowledge was adequate. However, only 60% felt that their knowledge of morphology was adequate. It is essential for the preservice teachers to have an extended knowledge base of phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics and semantics since they will be teaching EFAL to the learners. Mayahi and Mayahi (2014:1119) highlight the importance by stating "teachers' language knowledge and skills are the key features of successful foreign language teaching". As with a foreign language, English is the Additional Language for the majority of our learners (cf. 1.1) and our teachers must therefore have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach these key features successfully(cf. 2.4.1).

The preservice teachers rated their knowledge **of assessment** in relation to methods, techniques and practices which were integrated into their studies as being adequate, that is, between 85% - 94%. The lowest area of adequacy was that of assessment practices (85%). This relates to the actual application of assessment in the FP classroom. Assessment is vital and serves a number of purposes, all of which the teachers must be prepared for. These include "assessment to support learning; assessment for accountability; assessment for certification, progress, and transfer" (Archer, 2017:6).

Although a high percentage of the preservice student teachers perceived that they had adequate knowledge (85% and above) of **children's literature,** in terms of the selection and evaluation of children's literature appropriate for FAL learners and multicultural children's literature, a 13% and 15% inadequacy respectively was shown for these two crucial elements. It must be borne in mind that "the books that teachers use in their classrooms have the potential to greatly influence their students' lives" (Weih, 2015:2), which indicates the importance thereof.

Although in two areas of **knowledge of learners and context**, namely supporting English FAL learners (72%) and learner diversity (92%), the preservice teachers' perception was that they had adequate knowledge, in the third area, namely linguistic diversity, 38% perceived that their knowledge was still inadequate. Since there are eleven official languages in South Africa, linguistic diversity is a reality. A lack of knowledge in terms of learner diversity could mean that these students will not be equipped to handle this diversity in their classrooms.

In terms of **pedagogical content knowledge,** the majority of the preservice student teachers had the perception that they knew how to plan (96%), provide optimal language input for their learners (81%), construct supportive learning environments for English FAL learners (92%), apply various instructional techniques (85%) and were familiar with the methods of teaching EFAL (87%). That is, they indicated that they thought they had mostly adequate knowledge of most of these aspects, with the provision of optimal language input showing the highest inadequacy. This could mean that the learners in the classrooms would not receive optimal language input, which is essential for their language growth.

In summary, in relation to perceived content knowledge of EFAL of the fourth-year preservice student teachers, as shown (cf. Table 4.2) there are many components which reflect both high and lower levels of adequacy,This indicates that for certain components there is still room for improvement to ensure that these student teachers are mostly prepared to teach these aspects, while a few component require more extensive improvement. More specifically, in terms of **language and literacy,** it is essential for these students to have extensive knowledge of how English as FAL is acquired and refined and of the processes entailed in language and literacy development in order for these to be successfully implemented in the classrooms. Since **reading and writing** are both such vital skills, closer to 100% competence should be the aim to ensure that the student teachers are fully and not just adequately prepared to put all the building blocks in place. These are essential to equip the learners to cope with content learning from Grade 4, and even more so for the learners who will start learning in English as their LoLT. The preparation of an extended knowledge base, especially in terms of the application of all the **components of reading**, **morphological language components** and the **approaches to writing,** as well as knowledge of linguistic diversity in relation to knowledge of learners and context will require further attention during training. In light of the above, further preparation in terms of some of these components is imperative to ensure that the preservice teachers are well equipped to teach EFAL in the FP.

4.2.3 Teaching practice

The MRTEQ (205:23) stipulates that schools-based WIL for full-time contact programmes, that is, the time that the preservice student teachers spend at approved schools, which includes supervised and assessed teaching practice, should be for a minimum of twenty weeks and a maximum of thirty- two weeks in formally supervised and assessed schools-based practices over the four-year duration of the degree. In each year, a maximum of twelve weeks could be spent in the schools, and at least three of these should be consecutive. Based on this, the 2016 calendar

of the North-West University (North-West University, 2016:115-117) indicates that all students, from their first to fourth year must spend six weeks a year at an approved school. In addition, the third- year students must spend two additional weeks on observation.

As indicated above, the preservice student teachers are required to spend a stipulated period of time each semester in FP classes in schools in order to apply their theoretical knowledge base acquired during their training. The aim is to enable them to gain the necessary practical know-how in preparation for full time teaching once they are qualified. These teachers have to spend six weeks each year in approved schools where they are expected to integrate their knowledge and skills by firstly observing and then teaching in the classrooms in the FP. An additional two weeks of observation are stipulated for the third-year students, specifically in a Grade R classroom. This equates to only twenty-four weeks within a four-year period for all but the third-year students, who, as indicated, have an additional two weeks in the schools. This is the total amount of allocated time that these preservice student teachers spend in the schools to prepare them to teach in the FP, from Grade R to Grade 3. They must prepare to teach all the subjects for a total of four different grades. Grade R is excluded since EFAL is only introduced to the learners in Grade 1. In the FP, the teacher is not only responsible for teaching all the subjects but also for refining various foundational skills which are essential for life-long learning. These skills include reading and writing. As pointed out (cf. 4.2.2.2), preparing to teach the content and associated skills of four subjects for four grades in the FP requires an in-depth knowledge base as well the ability to apply everything effectively in the classroom. This know-how takes time to practise and to refine. It is made possible by means of effective mentorship and meaningful feedback from experienced teachers in the schools. On a senior level, that is, in their fourth year, the preservice student teachers are required to plan and present lessons to their learners in the presence of one of their lecturers. Their lecturers assess these lessons and give constructive feedback so that they know which areas need improvement and further refining.

4.2.3.1 WIL modules

The focus in this section is on the WIL modules which were completed by the preservice student teachers during their training. The same document (cf. 4.2.2.1) was analysed, that is, a yearbook from the university where the preservice student teachers were being trained as FP teachers. The purpose of this document analysis was to ascertain which WIL modules these students were required to complete by the end of their four years of training to equip them with sufficient practical experience to enable them to apply the literacy coursework modules which are linked to the content knowledge (cf. 4.2.2.1 and 4.2.2.2) to teach EFAL effectively in the FP. This was to

determine the extent of the opportunities to practise and apply, both at the schools and during their training, the theory that they had been taught during their course. The required modules are stipulated in Table 4.3 and then discussed.

Table 4-3: Summary of the WIL modules

Year and semester	Module	Outcomes
First year First and second semester	*WIL Module EDCC 124*	*On completion of this module the student should be able to:* • *apply the theoretical knowledge they have obtained in the different professional studies modules in work-related training* • *describe an awareness of the complexity of the teacher's roles in enabling learning in a complex educational environment* • *demonstrate the ability to form professional relationships* • *develop and use observational skills, analyse observation data and reflect on the work-related training experience* • *demonstrate the ability to be a professional teacher in SA* • *coach a sport.*
Second year First and second semester	*WIL module EDCC 223*	*On completion of this module the student should be able to:* • *apply the theoretical knowledge they have obtained in the different professional studies modules in work-related training* • *describe an awareness of the complexity of the teacher's roles in enabling learning in a complex educational environment* • *demonstrate the ability to form professional relationships* • *develop and use observational skills, analyse observation data and reflect on the work-related training experience •* • *demonstrate the ability to be a professional teacher in SA* • *coach a cultural activity.*
Third year First and second semester	*WIL module EDCC 322*	*On completion of this module the student should be able to:* • *apply the theoretical knowledge they have obtained in the different professional studies modules in work-related training* • *describe an awareness of the complexity of the teacher's roles in enabling learning in a complex educational environment* • *demonstrate the ability to form professional relationships*

		• *develop and use observational skills, analyse observation data and reflect on the work-related training experience* • *demonstrate the ability to be a professional teacher in SA* • *display thorough knowledge of and appropriate skills with regard to administrative and management requirements* • *know the basic principles of school organisation and administration.*
Fourth year First and second semester	*WIL module EDCC 422*	*On completion of this module the student should be able to:* • *apply the theoretical knowledge they have obtained in the different professional studies modules in work related training* • *describe an awareness of the complexity of the teacher's roles in enabling learning in a complex educational environment* • *demonstrate the ability to form professional relationships* • *develop and use observational skills, analyse observation data and reflect on the work-related training experience* • *demonstrate the ability to be a professional teacher in SA* • *identify problems related to discipline and take appropriate steps to solve these problems* • *display thorough knowledge of and appropriate skills with regard to administrative and management requirements* • *have basic knowledge of mentoring and be able to demonstrate it.*

Calendar 2016 (North-West University, 2016:115-117)

In the above-mentioned modules the preservice student teachers are expected to integrate their knowledge and skills. The outcomes for all four modules are essentially the same except for the last aspect which entails coaching of either a sport or a cultural activity in the first and second year, a focus on school organisation and administration in the third year and an element of discipline and mentoring in the fourth year. The preservice student teachers only have twenty-four weeks in the schools to master many complex outcomes, such as the application of theoretical knowledge that they have gained in EFAL. These outcomes are not subject specific, so in terms of EFAL no mention is made of the development of their English proficiency to enable them to teach EFAL with confidence and to be a good role model. If one takes the example from another profession, such as a medical doctor in training, it takes a great deal of time and practice to refine skills to the required standard to be fully prepared to practise independently. Preparing to teach the content and associated skills of four subjects in the FP requires an in-depth knowledge base, as well as particular know-how to teach appropriately. This takes time to practise and refine by means of mentorship and consistent meaningful feedback from teachers in the

schools as well as their lecturers. Hence the stipulated timeframe could be inadequate and unrealistic. Being responsible for establishing the educational foundation for so many learners is a mammoth task which should be conducted with utmost care and from the basis of thorough preparation. It is important to mention, however, that these modules only counted one credit. The lecturers and the students therefore merely saw this as a compliance exercise. There was a student who said: "I think in, uhm, practical teaching, the subject means nothing. We don't have class", which seems to support this sentiment. There were modules scheduled for WIL but they were not always fully utilised. From the first to the third year the students were placed in schools and were required to merely present lessons to learners which were assessed by teachers at the respective schools. It was only in the fourth year that their lessons were assessed by a lecturer and they usually received marks in the form of a percentage. The assessment was very often not conducted by their lecturer or an EFAL specialist who could provide meaningful and specific feedback as their final preparation to teach EFAL. The ratio of students in relation lecturers necessitated this.

4.2.3.2 Planning and preparation

As part of their preparation the preservice student teachers have to plan and prepare a variety of EFAL lessons during their training. Once the preservice student teachers have observed the mentor teachers teaching in their classes at the start of their studies during WIL, they are required to plan and prepare suitable EFAL lessons to present to FP learners in the various grades. These are initially assessed primarily by their mentor teachers at the various schools and, at a later stage, by their lecturers. The **fourth-year** preservice student teachers had various opinions which they shared during their semi-structured interviews regarding the planning and preparation of successful EFAL lessons:

> *You know, there are questions sometimes when you **plan a lesson** or you think will they be able, because now **you don't know the kids at all.***
>
> *Does the, the, the lesson plan fit them? Fit their age? Fit their weaknesses and everything?*
>
> *Uhm, for me, I can't understand ... OK, I know it **is** important for us to have a whole layout of a lesson but in the schools themselves, they don't **do** it anymore. They don't do a whole layout like we do it, and the introductions and the whatever and, uhm, what materials are you going to use or whatever, they don't do that. So I don't **see** the necessity in it for us to learn this if we're not going to implement it in the school, because you work hard in*

university to use the layout and plan your lessons and do all these cute things with the children, but when you come to the school you can't do it because if you're one teacher in a class with 40 children you can't do all these cutesy things that they teach you to do. Ja. Because it's not possible in the classroom.

I think the lesson planning was quite well organised.

So if it comes to planning an English lesson it won't be difficult because it's just an Afrikaans one basically translated in English and it needs to be in the correct context and correct tenses and correct timing and all of those stuff.

Yes. And I think preparation is the big thing, isn't it? Because, you know, it's not your home language as well.

Yes, that I've used, the planning that you showed us, for my English lessons. So that I've used, for sure.

But the lesson planning I think, for me, in Afrikaans and English it's the same.

In the **focus groups** the fourth-year preservice students stated the following in terms of the preparation and planning of EFAL lessons:

I was a bit off balance with the preparation.

Preparation is very important, and you know, I started to realise that it's, if you just do it, it's a lot easier than you think.

So, in your lesson planning and stuff like that it's very important for you to put a lot of effort in that.

We learned so many different lessons, uhm, formats for lessons. And different everything. And I think we don't have a … (set format) Ja. We don't.

And there's not one for English.

Ja, ja, we had, there wasn't one, or an example given to us of a lesson plan or this is how you should do it in English, or, I know it's basically the same thing, but the wording and the phrasing and the stuff is different on the thing.

In terms of the lived experience of these fourth-year preservice student teachers in relation to their planning and preparation of EFAL lessons there are certain frustrations which they highlighted, although some identified the value thereof. These impacted on their ability to plan and prepare developmentally appropriate lessons (knowledge of learners) for EFAL. Being in the schools for such a short duration of time does not allow them enough time to get to know the learners before they need to prepare and present a lesson because they find it difficult to identify their abilities, their strengths and their weaknesses (knowledge of learners). They are therefore unsure about what (content knowledge) and how (general pedagogical knowledge) to teach the learners (as raised cf. 4.2.1) and to ascertain what is realistic and achievable in a lesson which could be an indication that they do not know the expectations of the curriculum (curriculum knowledge), that is, the CAPS document. This may also be related to a lack of mentorship in some schools as they may not be provided with sufficient guidance from the teachers in the schools (cf. 2.3.1.5.2 and 4.2.3.4). The lack of competency in English, specifically the correct use of the tenses. It is evident that these preservice student teachers have identified some discrepancies. Firstly, the way that they are taught to do their planning at university and what is used in the schools differs vastly. So, it seems that expectations are different which confuses the students. This also raises doubt because they do not see the value of preparing in a specific manner if this is not expected in the schools. The second discrepancy is that these students are provided with different lesson plans for many of their modules which they also find confusing, It seems that they may regard lesson planning to be a technical exercise, with a strong focus on the format rather than realizing the pedagogical value thereof.

The **beginner** teachers go through a process when they start teaching. That is, they start out teaching their own class of learners for the first time at the schools where they have been appointed. It is no longer a matter of planning and preparing an isolated lesson as they were required to do as preservice student teachers. Now they must plan and prepare EFAL lessons on a daily basis, for each term, for the duration of a year, according to the needs of their specific learners in the grade that they are teaching. Gradually, with experience and time, this improves, as is summarised in these statements:

> *I think, I think at the beginning of the year you are a bit unsure.*

> *With the planning, we have to plan together, work together and that one wants to do it that way, this teacher would rather do it that way so it helps in that regard, it also helps in the school, because you're not just on your own, you have to work together, especially when*

you're in the same grade, all the Grade 1s must work together and decide together and so on.

I think because I've covered the contents once now, I think next year I will feel more prepared and know where maybe just change something or try something different so that the children can better understand what I'm trying to explain to them.

I prepared well. But there was sometimes some of the questions that the children ask, why is this so, or … Then I didn't know how to answer them.

Yes. The lesson planning, we, uhm, we get usually the …, you have to do your daily planning. It's not that they write it in Afrikaans, you get it directly. And you get the sentences, you get the books, you get the … So they give everything to you, that you have to use. If there's a dialogue or something, they give it to you.

You just have to prepare more than what you usually do for Afrikaans. That's all.

And it helps if you go to the teacher and they don't say, "OK, you have to do your own thing." "Here is the thing that they have to do, make a lesson of that." Because then they say, "OK, this is how the work sheet looks like, let's take this." And then I make a lesson.

Similar (cf. 4.2.1) lived experiences are identified by these beginner teachers. These are initial negative feelings of uncertainty but this time in relation to how to plan and prepare lessons, a possible lack of content knowledge and the support which is provided by other teachers in the grade. What is evident is the growth in their content knowledge which has developed as a result of the experience they have gained in the classroom. Their deeper understanding of content knowledge has facilitated their PCK in that they were able to convey this knowledge with greater ease.As experienced teachers, the **HODs** know the importance and value of thorough planning and preparation for effective teaching. Although the perception of the HODs was that the beginner teachers seemed to be prepared in this regard, there are areas of concern, especially in terms of some of the preservice student teachers during the WIL periods, as indicated in the statements provided below:

Yes, you know, they …, I think they arrive at school, not only her specifically, I am talking about …… as well, and then they feel they are not prepared practically.

*I am now with Grade 1, we **all** work together, we plan at our subject grade meeting and when we leave there we work as one, exactly the same.*

And, uh, then we plan what we are going to do in every subject, in every learning area. And then, when we plan and discuss with regard to First Additional Language, then you realise that this person is prepared. She knows what she is …, what you are talking about, uhm, she comes with ideas herself.

And about two weeks, for the next two weeks they are doing planning as well, together with the experienced teachers in a grade meeting. So I think they are reasonably prepared.

And you get schools where in each class each teacher works on her own. And it is not like that with us. We, uh, we really plan together and we share thoughts with each other. So if she has to teach English First Additional Language and this is the theme and this is how we are going to do the listening activities and it is how …, what involves the speaking for the next two weeks and this is going to be the reading and the phonics or whatever, then they work in all four of the classes, do the same.

*It's just not the same. You give them everything and then they come on the day of the crit lesson and they say, "Mam, just please tell my professor (or whoever), that I didn't print out my lesson, because my printer broke down last night." I say, "My darling, **you** should have **called** someone, **anybody's** printer, …but **you** will have the lesson here when it has to be here. So it **will** be delivered to my house this afternoon before five, otherwise you get zero."*

And they arrive here and say, "Ma'am, I was so tired last night, I slept the whole afternoon, I couldn't prepare my lesson." Then I say, "You know what, I'm now so tired I'm not going to give you marks." That's it.

Yes. So, her preparation is in place, every school has their planning and preparation, so I have …, the teacher that supervises her, her grade head, clearly showed her how and when I take in the files, there are no problems and she was moderated the other day and everything was in place, by national. So I think she does her job, her preparation is very good.

The HODs concern is the issue of a lack of practical application (general pedagogical knowledge) in terms of planning and preparation, as well as a lack of ownership on behalf of some of the

preservice teachers. It seems that linking the theory that they have been taught as students to what they must apply to their planning and preparation of lessons is a challenge (PCK). The provision and importance of support, now in relation to planning and preparation of EFAL lessons, and from colleagues. It seems that some beginner teachers may not necessarily be that well prepared to plan and prepare their EFAL lessons (general pedagogical knowledge) but with the necessary support from their colleagues as well as supervision this was facilitated..

In summary, the preservice student teachers generally acknowledged the importance of thorough preparation and planning for EFAL lessons, as well as putting sufficient effort into this process. This was especially important because these lessons were not conducted in their Home Language, making the consideration of the language elements even more vital. There were some students who felt that they could simply apply their knowledge of planning and preparing lessons in their Home Language and translate this into English. The opinions regarding lesson formats were divided, with some students indicating that they used the provided formats and others who were of the opinion that no formats were prescribed, which seemed to create uncertainty. Some students questioned the value and necessity of in-depth lesson preparation because this is not a reality in the schools once they start teaching.

Initially the element of uncertainty was frustrating for the beginner teachers and they were fearful of being expected to cope on their own. They indicated that in their second year of teaching they would be more prepared and would have the confidence to make changes in order to facilitate the learners' understanding. The use of English was also raised as an area of uncertainty by the beginner teachers as well as the HODs. As experienced teachers, the HODs knew the importance and value of thorough planning and preparation for effective teaching.

4.2.3.3 Instruction

In comments made by the **fourth-year** preservice student teachers in the semi-structured interviews it was evident that there were challenges in terms of teaching EFAL during WIL, although there was also feedback which indicated that they had coped well. These included:

> *Well, for me, because I'm not prepared enough, in English, I'm not comfortable enough. Where I give an English lesson, I totally forget about the children. I'm so focused on myself and using the right words and the right tenses.*
>
> *So I don't know how to give an English lesson.*

Confidence, that's my problem. Confidence in teaching English.

You don't really know how to approach the whole English way of teaching.

*What bothers me about First Additional Language teaching ... It's not easy, as an Afrikaans student, for me, because you **think** in Afrikaans but then you have to speak in English. So it's more work and more concentration that goes into a lesson.*

But with the kids, it's more ..., it's not so intimidating. I find it they also are not very comfortable with the language so they would not ... know if you make a mistake. I'm very scared I make a mistake and somebody think I'm stupid, but with the kids it's fine.

I've been with a lot of English classes during practical teaching, and that was fine. I quite liked it. I'm nervous at the beginning, but as you go on with your lesson, it's fine and then the kids know how you talk and you learn how they answer. Then it gets better, just practice. But it's not that ..., I think it's necessary, especially for me, who's Afrikaans and very nervous with the English, but it gets better.

But I think we have to do it more, because at Afrikaans schools you get the English class once or twice and that's that.

In the **focus group sessions**, the preservice student teachers also had varied opinions and experiences regarding the teaching of EFAL during WIL. They mentioned:

I had to teach in English and that wasn't so bad as that I thought.

It is actually more easy than you think. Because it's basic language, it is not like very like college students or something. It's, it's, was Grade 1s, so it's not that bad, it wasn't that bad. Ja.

In all my four years of practical teaching, except the, the, those that I did at the English school one year, I never gave an English lesson. Never, not, not even one time.

If you know you're bad in language, you must practise it so that you can teach the children the right language.

In practical teaching this previous time, I did my first English lesson.

*And you have to be **forced** to do the English lesson.*

In relation to teaching of EFAL during WIL the fourth-year preservice student teachers reported the perceptions of numerous negative feelings (cf. 1.2) such as discomfort, a lack of confidence, being scared and nervousness. Having to focus so intently on their correct use of English (lack of competency) while they teach that they are not able to pay attention to the learners or to what (content knowledge) is being taught, would hamper how (general pedagogical knowledge) they teach the learners, this points to a lack of PCK. The realisation that practice makes perfect (general pedagogical knowledge) was also raised. Many problems of aspects in relation to English were mentioned which relate to a lack of proficiency and fluency, such as, not knowing how to present an English lesson (general pedagogical knowledge), translating from their Home Language into English when teaching, it is more taxing to present an English lesson and a lack of exposure to English. Perceived lower anxiety was experienced when an EFAL lesson was taught in front of Grade 1 learners in that their language proficiency is mostly limited. Many students avoided teaching EFAL lessons or taught limited EFAL lessons which will have to monitored in future.

The **beginner teachers** indicated that there were certain challenges which hindered their teaching of EFAL, although there were also teachers who did not find it that difficult. They stated:

> *But, like I said, with the Grade 1s it's easy, because we just look at the picture and show 'hat', 'dog', 'cat' and that kind of thing. But to actually **teach** English, I think, will be very difficult for me, because I am Afrikaans.*
>
> *But if I have to **teach** in English, I think I will struggle a lot. Then I won't be so full of confidence, I think.*
>
> *I think if you have a good English vocabulary, you will speak English comfortably. Be able to teach comfortably in English.*
>
> *I don't know if I would be able to teach them to **read** in English.*
>
> *The content sometimes, uhm, when you, when you have to teach them a new sound and you have to think about, or you think, OK, this letter and you have to think about all the different sounds …*
>
> *How to teach the children how to **spell** the words or how to **sound** the words.*

Ja. Sometimes you still struggle, because sometimes they ask you something and then you suddenly have to remember, OK, English, English and then you want to put it in Afrikaans to just …, so you code switch a lot.

*And I had to go on my cell phone and just look it up, because **I** went blank. I didn't know I didn't know what the word is. And it was not a picture, it was a word that they had to draw a picture with, and I couldn't get that word. So I had to go and look for it and I said, "OK, now I know what it is." And I explained it in Afrikaans to them, so that they could understand.*

At the beginning it was difficult, because you know you have to teach it, but you don't always know how to get it through to the children.

*At the beginning one is scared and insecure, but, uhm, I received very good leadership, especially from the HOD. She helped and trained me a lot and showed me what to do, so I was relaxed and when I arrived here I also felt, well, I have my degree and I worked hard for it, so I do know what is going on. It's not as if I suddenly arrived here not knowing. So it did help, one feels better. You **have** done an English course, subject or whatever at university.*

The beginner teachers mentioned numerous negative feelings which they experienced when they teach English lessons such as a lack of confidence, anxiety, being scared and insecurity. Avoiding teaching English as a beginner teacher and merely showing pictures or words was mentioned as a method to teach English lessons (general pedagogical knowledge). A link was made between good English vocabulary and speaking English comfortably (proficiency) to having the ability to teach English comfortably. The lack of skills, content knowledge and pedagogy (PCK) in relation to teaching many aspects of EFAL was reported, this was facilitated by good leadership and training from colleagues.

The **HODs** also had certain insights in relation to the presentation of EFAL lessons by the preservice student teachers who did WIL at their schools and the beginner teachers at the start of their careers. Their comments included:

*You know, I just realised that with the students, they don't have practical …, they study their subjects but perhaps **not** so much the methodology and then they don't always know **how** to present the lesson, like interesting little stories or to start with a good introduction to stimulate the children's attention.*

They gabble through their lesson and then they sit down again.

They just have no idea. They come and they say write this, write that. Then you have to say, "Stop. Stop. That's not the way it's done." Step by step.

Speaking too softly, a big lack.

No, I think that if one possibly got the opportunity a bit more regularly, to get practical exposure. And where practical guidance …, for example, someone listens to your lesson or listens to your presentation and gives you positive, uh, …

So I think, especially with regard to English as a First Additional Language, she was adequately prepared.

So what you plan and what you ultimately do doesn't always work out as you have planned it.

Because she saw they were a bit smaller than she thought. You tend to think this lesson is stupid, I'll do it in half an hour and it's finished. Tomorrow you have to repeat it again, because they …, they're rural children. They probably only hear English in the classroom.

In conclusion, tThese comments indicate that many of the challenges faced by these preservice student teachers which hampered their teaching of EFAL were based on issues related to mastering of the English language, as these seemed to affect their speaking proficiency. These included a lack of vocabulary; the use of tenses; and feeling doubtful about the English sounds, correct spelling, meanings of words and pronunciation. Their feelings resulted in their not being able to explain concepts, provide immediate feedback or have ease of expression. The way to present an EFAL lesson and the approach to the whole English way of teaching were also aspects that made them feel uneasy. For many, the teaching of an EFAL lesson/s ended up being better than they had anticipated initially. It was suggested that they should be expected to present EFAL lessons more regularly during their training, that they should actually be forced to do so and that this should be strictly enforced and monitored to ensure adherence by all. The beginner teachers had much the same sentiments and admitted to feeling unsure when they started teaching. For them it was a major adaptation to be able to think on their feet in English and to provide the required immediate feedback in English. The support and guidance from the more experienced teachers facilitated the transition into having to teach EFAL to their own class of learners on a regular basis. The HODs clearly indicated that knowing how to teach EFAL lessons was an aspect that needed more attention while students were being trained. Although there were preservice

student teachers who were adequately prepared, there were others who were mostly unprepared. Some seemed to rush through lessons merely to get them done. There was uncertainty about pitching a lesson on the correct level, the most efficient way to use their voices or the steps which should be followed to teach EFAL effectively. From the above it can be ascertained that PCK is problematic and cannot be applied with ease. More regular exposure, guidance and feedback were highlighted as aspects which could be improved on.

4.2.3.4 Mentoring

The teacher in the class where the preservice student teachers are placed during each WIL period at the various schools fulfils the function of a mentor teacher, in this case specifically for EFAL. As a mentor, this teacher is meant to serve as a positive role model for these students and to provide them with the necessary guidance, emotional support and motivation for the duration of their time in that class. They are also required to share their expertise with these students to assist them to prepare for the teaching of EFAL and to be excellent EFAL language role models. It is imperative that WIL should take place in schools which are functional and approved. The MRTEQ (DHET, 2015) states that "there must be a guarantee of proper supervision" during WIL. The following comments from the semi-structured interviews reflect some perceptions of these **fourth-year** preservice student teachers of those who had mentored them at the schools:

> *At my last prac school in ……the teacher didn't like giving the English.*
>
> *Also my experience during practical teaching was, in my first year I was at a Afrikaans schools and maybe once a week they did English, because the teacher was also scared to do it.*
>
> *When coming to English, there's like …, uh, they don't give more …, like they don't, they don't give more effort when coming to the language, so I think that's the problem.*
>
> *During practical teaching you don't get enough exposure because the teachers don't do English. I think in my four years two teachers did an English lesho … lesson. In front of me. So I think it's just, again, that mind shift that teachers must make English teaching.*
>
> *And the only way you get examples or, you learn that of applying your knowledge is when you go to practicals and when you see the teacher doing something, they actually said teachers don't like giving English lessons because it's out of their comfort zone or they don't know how to start with it, or just how to do the lesson, so then they just leave it out*

or they do lessons like 'Children, look at the picture' and 'That is city', or 'Mom is reading' that is an English lesson. And then the teacher says 'Oh, this is an English lesson.'

And then, uhm, that's a thing I also think in schools that they don't, don't happen, because the teacher herself is not confident of the language and no preparation. She just opens the book and then … alright, just do something else. And, uhm, the kids don't feel it's important because she doesn't make it like an important subject.

I didn't observe that much, because we were always taking care of other people's classrooms and they were doing something else.

I'll be, the first week I rush to give all my lessons and then the other two weeks they al …, always puts me in a classroom alone, with the children. It's fine, I love it, because I get experience, but I feel practical teaching should be to observe and I never had that.

Regarding their mentors at the schools these are the comments which the fourth-year student teachers made during the various **focus group** sessions:

They teach an English lesson, First Additional Language, sometimes in Afrikaans. They explain in Afrikaans and things and they don't encourage the children to answer in English, speak in English when it's an English lesh, lesson. So I think that's a point to drive home with students in the future, is to encourage the children to speak English, even if you don't really understand or cannot really speak English, you should at least try to speak English with them and encourage them to answer in English.

So I think, uhm, the teachers we were at, uhm, haven't really been, uhm, trained in English as we are trained now.

And most of them, uhm, teach like the old ways and the old strategies, using that to teach English.

So that is the problem, because your, uhm, your … head of the grade, your Grade 1 head is going to tell you this is the way you're going to teach. But you know you, that this is the wrong way. How are you going to approach that?

Ja, because those teachers doesn't …, especially older teachers who are near retirement, doesn't want to follow CAPS.

> *I know one teacher, she was saying no CAPS for me, I'm going to this **my** way, my children have been passing, and I'm not gonna … So, there, the **whole** day in Tswana. Those kids are not exposed to the language **at all**.*
>
> *Most of us who did practicals in township schools, most of the classes there are no teachers. If I got to the school, and they'll say no, this class doesn't have a teacher, change this class.*

Based on the perceptions of these fourth-year preservice teachers, mentor teachers in the schools seemed to have a negative outlook on teaching EFAL. They lack the confidence to teach EFAL and felt fearful and nervous about having to do so. As a result, they were not exemplary mentors because of their overuse of code switching, avoiding teaching these lessons, or teaching only the bare minimum based on inadequate preparation. A lack of training, content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge and curricular knowledge is reported. This impacted on the preparation of these preservice teachers since they lacked exposure to lessons being correctly planned and taught in an outstanding manner. All the training requirements of these teachers are not met, such as lack of time for observations and having to stand in for teachers at the schools who are consistently absent.

In some schools the **beginner teachers** may be assigned a mentor teacher. These mentors "know a great deal about teaching and learning, students, parents and the school, which often leads to a kind of practical wisdom that can't be printed in a book – this knowledge and know-how is invaluable to new teachers" (State of Victoria, 2016:3). The mentor is usually an expert teacher, that is, a "knowledgeable, experienced, highly proficient teacher" (State of Victoria, 2016:3). These mentors usually assist the beginner teachers to get everything organised and guide them in various ways, for example, which teaching methods and strategies are effective. They also serve as a sounding board for the beginner teachers to listen and offer wise advice regarding teaching matters. Darvin (2018:56) supports this by stating that mentors "seek out subtle and direct ways of helping their mentees" and "it is about leading an educator down the right path". The comments made by these beginner teachers indicate that they were fortunate to have had mentors who helped them to transition from preservice student teachers to beginner teachers. They stated:

> *I received very good leadership, especially from the HOD. She helped and trained me a lot and showed me what to do, so I was relaxed when I arrived here.*

Uhm, in my class I am alone, but as I say, with the planning, we have to plan together, work together.

Uhm, but, like I say, you only really learn when you come here and you have a good leader, like I had ….. who can tell you exactly what you have to do and how it can be done, gives nice …, we share creative ideas, uhm, and that kind of thing.

As experienced teachers and leaders in schools **HODs'** "attitudes to new teachers and mentoring have an impact on such teachers' professional possibilities" (Sunde & Ulvik, 2014:285) and they therefore play a major role in the mentorship process for beginner teachers. They "should then acknowledge beginning teachers' need for emotional, social and educative support" (Sunde & Ulvik, 2014:29). This was evident in the comments that the HODs made in this regard:

You know that is something that I as HOD feel rather strongly about. Because I started as a young teacher …

And nobody really gave us guidance during my beginner years. And that was a lack. I remember we were four that started in Grade 1 with one experienced lady and we got very little guidance.

They have to feel equipped that they will be able to tackle their task with confidence.

And, uhm, we also, for example, work …, I am now with Grade 1, we all work together, we plan at our subject grade meeting and when we leave there we work as one, exactly the same.

And you get schools where in each class each teacher works on her own. And it is not like that with us. We, uh, we really plan together and we share thoughts with each other. So if she has to teach English First Additional Language and this is the theme and this is how we are going to do the listening activities and it is how …, what involves the speaking for the next two weeks and this is going to be the reading and the phonics or whatever, then they work in all four of the classes, do the same.

Based on the perceptions of beginner teachers and the HODs it is evident that content, pedagogical and curricular knowledge which is shared by mentors to support and guide beginner

teachers sets them at ease, provides them with the necessary structure and boosts their confidence to teach EFAL.

In summary, t there were various reasons cited by the fourth-year preservice student teachers for the perception that many mentors during WIL were mostly not exemplary role models for EFAL. These include the following. The limited number of EFAL lessons which they presented to the learners. It seems that some of these mentors were uncertain about how to teach EFAL themselves and some felt uncomfortable in having to do so; as a result, they were not able to lead by example. In some instances, they were not up to date with required policies or strategies and had no inclination to update themselves. Other reasons that were cited included their lack of confidence when teaching and speaking English and the limited effort that some put into their English lessons. This was not beneficial to the preparation of the preservice student teachers or to assist them to teach EFAL effectively. They were also not motivated or inspired to teach EFAL in unique ways. The beginner teachers, on the other hand, mostly seemed to be fortunate to have had supportive mentors who realised the importance of providing the necessary guidance to assist them to start teaching EFAL. Joint planning and working with mentors and other colleagues were beneficial. It assisted in alleviating their apprehension and uncertainty and enabled them to feel more prepared and confident to teach EFAL.

4.3 Factors which contribute to perceptions of preparedness or unpreparedness

In terms of the various aspects of the teaching of EFAL in the FP discussed thus far, such as the university coursework and teaching practice, it is evident that the preservice student teachers, the beginner teachers and the HODs perceived preparedness in some regards and a lack of preparedness in other regards. It seems, therefore, that diverse factors influenced the preservice student teachers' perceptions of preparedness or a lack thereof. There are three factors which are discussed next: firstly, the affective factors, which include a lack of exposure to the English language, as well as attitude and anxiety; secondly the literacy coursework modules; and lastly, teaching practice. The importance of these factors is the extent to which these either assisted the teachers to prepare to teach EFAL in the FP or hampered their preparation and therefore negatively affected their eventual teaching ability and possibly even their motivation to do so.

4.3.1 Affective variables

The first affective variable which had a clear impact on how prepared the preservice student teachers felt to teach EFAL was the lack of exposure. Domingo (2009) clarifies that "exposure refers to the total amount of time in which an individual has contact with a language, may it be in

verbal or written form, formal or informal ways of communication and in which an individual may have either an active or passive role." This exposure to FAL takes place when there is engagement in conversation in this language with various people, even when reading takes place in this language. Cummins (cf.1.1) indicates the time frame in terms of exposure to an additional language to develop both BICS and CALP. Samson and Collins (2012:7) (cf. 2.4.1) state that many learners had limited exposure to English and do not have the necessary support at home to assist them to learn and practice speaking English, let alone read the language. This limited exposure to English is because there may not be people in their homes or communities who speak this language, very often it is only spoken at school for a limited amount of time. It is this lack of exposure to EFAL. Learners may therefore become anxious about using if EFAL. They may develop communication apprehension, that is, immature communication skills, even though they may have mature ideas and thoughts. This relates to a fear about real communication with other people. They may also fear negative evaluation or test anxiety (Domingo, 2009). This may have an impact on the use of EFAL as well as their confidence. This is the reason why a lack of exposure to EFAL has been mentioned under one of the effective variables. This is discussed under three main aspects below

4.3.1.1 Lack of exposure

The first issue related to the lack of exposure which was raised by the preservice student teachers was the early lack of exposure to English, secondly the lack of exposure to English at university and lastly the lack of exposure to English at the schools during the WIL periods.

4.3.1.1.1 The early lack of exposure to English

For these preservice student teachers English was not their Home Language; they may therefore not have been exposed to this language on a regular basis from a young age. In the questionnaires many of the **third-year** preservice student teachers confirmed their early lack of exposure to English by stating that:

> *I didn't have any exposure to the language so it made me anxious to speak it.*
>
> *I am from the farm where no one ever bother to speak English.*
>
> *The only exposure I had to the language (English) was at school in the English period.*
>
> *I had no one to talk to, help me learn this language (English).*

In the questionnaires most of the **fourth-year** preservice teachers indicated that they had only had an average amount of exposure to English. This was confirmed in the interviews and the focus group sessions by the following statements:

. *We started later. I mean, only in Grade 4 and just basic.*

If I had that exposure it would be much easier.

And I think that's how everyone feels. The exposure. Because some of the girls came from English schools or English towns and then they are confident with it.

I never, never, never speak English. And that's the problem.

So writing and learning and reading is not a problem. It's only the speaking.

Ja, and your parents as well. I mean if they, they're afraid to speak English, or they're not able to, I mean you don't get that exposure and then you feel like, okay, but my mom and my dad can't do it, so I can't do it, I mean if you grow up in a pure Afrikaans community, nobody's gonna to speak English, because it's not their language so you don't get any exposure there as well and going to from an Afrikaans upbringing into an English environment it, it's, it's very difficult.

These fourth-year preservice teachers indicate that having to speak EFAL makes them very anxious. Many of them never experienced the need to communicate in this language, either in their communities or in their homes. The influence and example that their parents set for them, in terms of this language was not a motivating factor. They had no desire to speak this language. Irregular exposure, only at school, perhaps by a questionable role model meant that they did not hear this language being spoken very often and when they did it may not have been a very good example to follow.The lack of early exposure to English was not restricted to the preservice student teachers; this concern was also raised by **beginner teachers**. One mentioned that:

My biggest problem, that I am Afrikaans and don't really ever speak English, we never speak English at home.

In summary, regular exposure to English, especially from a young age, facilitates communication and the ability to express oneself with ease and confidence. This is confirmed in the above-

mentioned comments, as many of the participants were concerned about their lack of exposure to English when they were younger. They indicated that this hindered their ability to speak the language with ease and confidence. This is relevant because it had a large impact on their preparedness to teach EFAL and ultimately to teach it effectively. The lack of exposure seemed to make them feel unsure and possibly even negative about speaking English and therefore also about having to teach EFAL. It was found that many of the preservice student teachers only started to learn to speak English once they were a bit older, that is, once they were in primary school. They were aware of the benefits which the regular use of the language, exposure and practice would have had on their use of English. This is confirmed by a comment such as "*I think practice makes perfect. So you must practise. If you know you're bad in language, you must practise it so that you can teach the children the right language".*

4.3.1.1.2 The lack of exposure to English at university

This has been alluded to previously (cf. 4.2.2.1) in a discussion of the handful of language-related modules which were completed during the course of the preservice student teacher training. The aim of these modules was to prepare students to teach EFAL successfully in the FP. In addition, their English-speaking proficiency should have improved. In the focus group sessions and the semi-structured interviews, the **fourth-year** preservice student teachers shared the following sentiments in this regard:

> *More modules in English, because this semester we don't have anything in English.*
>
> *But I think it was only … only, uhm, your class that we need to speak English.*
>
> *So now I have to go and teach English next year with six months without any exposure.*
>
> *If we had more modules in English, the confidence would build.*
>
> *We only have one module every second semester, or even this semester we don't have one and if we could have more exposure, because everything here is in Afrikaans.*
>
> *Your written stuff is fine, but speaking it is a different thing. You need to practise it.*
>
> *And I don't think we have any exposure on the university of that. I think that, that's a big problem.*

I think in every semester, from your first year to the fourth year there should be an English module.

Language, grammar, tenses. I think we had that in in detail in our first year or second year …But third year, fourth year we didn't … learn any of that, so it's faaar in my back mind. We didn't have it recently.

These students have come to the realisation that regular exposure to English is very important, there may be a link between the amount of exposure to English and the development of their confidence to speak English. They also realise that language is learned by using it or speaking it, that practice makes perfect. They are therefore in favour of consistent exposure to English for the duration of their studies.

In light of these comments it was evident that the perception of these students was that there was a lack of exposure to English at university because of the limited number of modules preparing them to teach EFAL. They were concerned that they were not required to speak enough English and that they were not provided with sufficient opportunities to do so. This did not afford them the chance to refine their language skills or to build their confidence. Since they were not required to speak the language on a regular basis their fluency, which would enable them to feel more prepared to teach English as an Additional Language, was not adequately developed. They pointed out the necessity and importance of having an English module every semester so that continuous improvement could be facilitated. The gap between their last module to prepare them to teach and starting to teach EFAL was too big; what they had been taught was no longer fresh in their minds.

4.3.1.1.3 The lack of sufficient exposure to English in the school

The lack of sufficient exposure to English in the schools during WIL was another challenge that was also pertinently mentioned by the **fourth-year** preservice student teachers. Their responses were that:

Some teachers when they teach English they teach in Afrikaans like when they speak during a lesson, when they're doing a lesson they're doing it Afrikaans.

During practical teaching you don't get enough exposure because the teachers don't do English.

They don't teach them in English, they kind of still speak Afrikaans.

They teach English through the medium of Afrikaans.

The **beginner teachers'** experiences regarding the lack of exposure to English in the schools indicated that:

Because you don't speak it, uhm, you just speak it when you have English class.

You don't speak it when you go out your class and speak to other teachers.

One of the **HODs** reiterated the importance of regular exposure to English if it is not your Home Language, as it is the only way in which progress in the language can be made. It was stated:

I would say they should, they should get exposure. Because, uhm, if you always draw yourself back and you don't get exposure then, uh, you can't actually get help because you don't know where your lack is.

These students have identified a number of problems at the schools during WIL. Firstly, unacceptably high levels of code switching is taking place in the schools, to the extent that the teachers Home Language, that is either Afrikaans or Setswana is being used exclusively in the schools. Neither the learners, nor these students have any exposure to EFAL in the schools. The teachers in the schools also do not have any need to speak English outside of their classrooms, when they do speak English. This HOD stressed the importance of life- long learning and the realisation that teachers must take ownership of improving their English by means of regular exposure to English. It is not something that somebody can do for you. Teachers must be realistic and identify their short comings and make work of it.

These results show that the preservice students and the beginner teachers were of the opinion that there was a lack of exposure to English at the schools either where they did their WIL or, in the case of the beginner teachers, where they taught. The preservice student teachers felt that they were not exposed to the correct way of teaching EFAL or to good language role models in the correct use of English. There were teachers in the schools who taught English lessons through the medium of Afrikaans. They found that a small number of English lessons were taught, thus limiting their exposure to English in the schools. This was not conducive to their preparation as EFAL teachers.

The beginner teachers' experiences regarding the lack of exposure to English in the schools was that English was not spoken outside of the classrooms. There was no English communication between the staff members. These teachers are required to teach EFAL but do not get the opportunity to speak English at their schools so that they are able to stay in practice, to develop their proficiency and to refine their English skills.

In conclusion, the lack of exposure to English at an early age, the lack of exposure to English at university and the lack of exposure to English in the schools during the WIL periods are all similar in that they all compound the perception of a lack of being prepared to teach EFAL in the schools and possibly result in an unspoken form of "language barrier". In terms of a lack of early exposure the crux of this unpreparedness stems from the participants not being provided with an adequate foundation in English as a sound basis for the development of their English skills, which may also have resulted in a degree of apprehension and negativity towards English. For many students, the lack of exposure to English at university did not allow for this language to be developed to the required standard to ensure that they would be excellent English language role models for their learners. The lack of exposure to English at schools did not provide the preservice student teachers with the required example that they could emulate successfully in their EFAL classrooms in the future.

4.3.1.2 Attitude and anxiety

The next two affective variables which may have influenced the participants' perceived preparation or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP were their attitude and anxiety.

4.3.1.2.1 Attitude

It became evident in this study that the preservice student teachers had developed a certain **attitude** or mindset towards teaching EFAL. That is, they had a specific way in which they perceived it, which for the most part was either positive or negative. Those who had a positive attitude may have been inclined to feel more capable and prepared to teach EFAL, while the opposite may have been true for those whose attitude was negative.

Firstly, in terms of a **negative attitude**, the **third-year** preservice student teachers who displayed some negativity towards teaching EFAL in the questionnaires mentioned a variety of reasons for this attitude; examples included the following:

To teach it will be a challenge for me.

Lack of confidence maybe not getting on the correct words if I speak English.

I will not be able to be as good teacher to the learners as an English dominant teacher.

I am still a bit sceptic and unsure.

I feel much more relaxed to teach in Afrikaans.

The statements of the **fourth-year** preservice student teachers in both the interviews and focus group sessions with a **negative** attitude towards the teaching of EFAL gave some insight into the factors contributing to the negativity. It is essential to take cognisance of these factors. They were:

And negative towards the subject and towards the language.

But I think also the way we grew up, in a boeregemeenskap (farming community) where everybody only speaks Afrikaans. I mean, my dad struggles to speak English, so we didn't have ..., in the small town I grew up, we didn't have a lot of exposure in English. So I think that might have had a big effect on my attitude.

I feel negative about English because I'm out of my comfort zone, I don't feel comfortable, I don't feel I have enough knowledge to do it.

I think most of these students are negative, because most of us are Afrikaans, so you just make, you have to make us feel more comfortable and fun and interactive.

There were varied responses from the **beginner teachers** in terms of their **negative** attitude to teaching EFAL. Their negative responses included the fact that their negative attitude stemmed from school. For example "*… they had English at school and they build up this negative attitude and then they come to varsity and they already, when they walk into your class, have a negative attitude"* and *"no, I think it's from school, because they feel, maybe they think they are forced to learn another language and they don't even want to …."* A lack of a flair for languages was another reason that was stated "*… and, uhm, some people don't, just don't like languages".* In some instances their negative attitude t was based on the influence of the family, such as "*I think it depends a lot on what the family thinks ….*" Lastly, age and experience were mentioned: "*if I*

must say that, I think the people that is more negative is the people that's older. Uhm, the older teachers. I think the younger teachers doesn't have any problems, with teaching. But I think they find it difficult, because they didn't learn the same way as we did".

The **third-year** preservice student teachers who indicated in the questionnaires that they had a **positive** attitude to teaching English as a First Additional Language mentioned a variety of reasons for their attitude; examples of their comments included the following:

> *I had a bit more confidence than the other children.*
>
> *We only spoke English so that was my base.*
>
> *I had a very positive English experience at school.*
>
> *If I didn't grow up speaking English, I probably would have struggled a lot with the language.*

In the interviews and focus group sessions the **fourth-year** preservice student teachers' statements contained several references to the **positive** attitude that they had towards the teaching of EFAL:

> *You know what, I would say I'm positive. And, you, …, as I started learning to be a teacher I, I, I always fight to be positive, in whatever I do, in whatever I learn.*
>
> *But, just teaching normal English in school for Second Additional learners, that's very positive, it doesn't bother me at all.*
>
> *I'm positive because … it's really important. I think English is really important. To teach to children, because … I would rather teach **my** children English than Afrikaans because they will **have** a better chance in life with English than with Afrikaans.*

The references that the **beginner** teachers made to having a **positive** attitude to teaching EFAL are summed up according to certain categories, such as the influence of good teachers. For example, "*I had amazing English teachers"* and "*I think she inspired me to really love the language*". Secondly, the opportunity to practise language, as stated: "*I think because you,*

because I, I, in the context outside of school I got chance, I got the chance to, uhm, practise my English and use it". Lastly, a positive self-concept also contributed: "*I think it was positive and … you know, you stress, but you're still positive, because you think you will be able to do it".*

In summary: firstly, for some the negative attitude to teaching EFAL may have been based on negative feelings about English; this includes being sceptical and unsure, possibly because of a lack of language proficiency, because they indicate a lack of vocabulary and a lack of knowledge. They compared themselves to students who speak English as a Home Language and felt that their English lessons would not be on the same standard. Their backgrounds also seemed to have an impact on their negative attitude. Doubting their ability seemed to contribute, in that the teaching of EFAL was seen as a negative challenge. Related to this were the experiences that they had had with English over time, for example stressful experiences of learning English, such as negative experiences at school. It also had to do with the influence of their families and the amount of confidence that they had. They also seem to have the expectation that their classes should be more fun and interactive. This could stem from their school experiences where their lived experiences of English at school was probably negative.

The various factors which relate to a more positive attitude are similar to those mentioned for a negative attitude to teaching EFAL. These include their experiences, for example at school, such as an inspirational teacher. The amount of exposure to the language and the opportunity to engage with the language were also factors. In this way their confidence to use the language was boosted. For others, the learners were their prime concern, that is, the realisation of the importance of English for the learners and of having a positive influence on their learners in this regard. A positive self-concept also seemed to be beneficial and had a positive impact. They also compared themselves to students who were not proficient in English and realised what a big advantage they had because they did not have to struggle with the language.

4.3.1.2.2 Anxiety

It came to light that many of the preservice student teachers were **anxious** about some aspects of the teaching of EFAL in the FP. For various reasons they experienced feelings of nervousness or even uneasiness.

In the **third-year** preservice student questionnaires the following statements reflected the anxiety that was experienced by them:

I were very anxious and unsure to speak English.

It makes me anxious for not using the correct tenses and words.

I'm afraid that the learners won't get the best education that they desirve.

The fear of not know the right word is always there.

Scared I may disappoint myself and my learners. I am also scared of making mistakes and teaching them wrong.

I will still stress and worry if I am really prepared. I don't even understand English so how can I teach it?

I have difficulty in using it, so I am nervous when I have to teach it, because I don't want the learners to feel the same way I did when I starter learning the language.

I have a fright from teaching English. I don't want to teach English. Because I am very unsure of myself.

The majority of the **fourth-year** preservice teachers who answered the questionnaire indicated that they experienced anxiety when they taught EFAL. This was confirmed in the interviews and the focus group sessions. The concern that was raised was that they felt inadequately prepared to teach EFAL so they felt that they would be doing delivers an injustice to teach them EFAL. There were numerous factors that they mentioned are obstacles to their preparation to teach EFAL. An important factor is that their anxiety seems to stem from a lack of English proficiency and fluency, which has already been mentioned numerous times. This includes uncertainty in relation to speaking English, the use of tenses, as well as words to express themselves. Another factor is the **lack of confidence**. This is clear in two of the statements which were made: "*I think it's confidence again. You don't have the confidence to teach and then you feel, 'Oh, my goodness, what am I doing?''* and "*because we have limited, uhm, English vocabulary, because we're Afrikaans and we're not always confident to speak because we're afraid of sounding dumb".* **Negative feelings** like feeling scared, stressed and nervous is the next factor. Statements which support this feeling are, "*in practical teaching this previous time, I did my first English lesson and I was very nervous. I didn't know, I was scared"* and "y*ou're scared, but when you come into the routine I think … it will come … naturally".* Additionally, English is seen as an **unfamiliar language**. This is evident in these statements, "*I learned in Afrikaans and now I have to go over to English and I think that for me is what scares me"* and "*uhm, I think my, my anxiety started with,*

uhm, you feel dumb when you speak English. You're afraid, uhm, you sound dumb or you can't explain your thinking or what you want to say". They also doubted their ability to teach English effectively and were concerned about providing their learners with a better experience, in that learning English had been a negative life experience for them.

A statement such as "*ach, just the fact that I don't know all the English words or all the …, I don't have a large English vocabulary, you understand. I'm not familiar with speaking English. It feels more comfortable to speak Afrikaans"* shows that the **beginner** teachers also experienced some anxiety when they started teaching.

One of the **HODs** noted that it was easy to identify a teacher who was anxious and suggested how best to handle the situation. She said that "*and, uhm, there you will quickly notice that this teacher has no confidence. And, uhm, that it isn't going well there, so I just think from the, from the, the side of the grade head, from the side of the HOD, you just have to give stronger guidance there".*

Feeling anxious about teaching EFAL seems to have a negative influence on the preservice student teachers' journey of preparation, as well as the beginner teachers' ability to teach EFAL in the schools. The comments above indicate that there are numerous important factors which contribute to the anxiety that is felt by these teachers. A range of feelings, such as being unsure, scared, nervous, afraid and fearful, all caused anxiety when teaching EFAL, which is not conducive to effective teaching. A lack of confidence could manifest in these teachers doubting their ability to teach EFAL and possibly their motivation; this could result in their not putting in the necessary effort to reach the level of being fully prepared. For many the anxiety is linked to their perception of English being an unfamiliar language. They are out of their comfort zone because they are limited in what they can say and find it difficult to express themselves fully.

4.3.2 Literacy coursework modules

The literacy coursework modules constituted the second factor which contributed to perceptions of preparedness or unpreparedness, as discussed (cf. 4.2.2.1). The relevant aspects are highlighted next.

4.3.2.1 Content knowledge

In terms of content knowledge (cf 2.2.2), during the interviews and focus group sessions the **fourth-year** preservice teachers alluded to their **lack of content knowledge** by stating: "*but then I think it's because you don't understand it, you have to, the content, you have to learn, you go and write exam and you forget because you didn't make it your own. You didn't have, if you can't understand something you can't make it your own. You can't then apply it in the end. So it's actually useless because … you're supposed to take this knowledge with you"; "the lack of understanding in terms of the content that is being taught in preparation for teaching seems to be frustrating because it impacts on the meaning";* and "*I don't feel I have enough knowledge".*

They suggested that the **number of periods and modules allocated** to instil the necessary content knowledge seemed to be insufficient. This confirms the discussion related to university coursework (cf. 4.2.2). These statements support this sentiment: "*I think more time should be given in English. English is very important"* and "*I think in every semester, from your first year to the fourth year there should be an English module".*

Another aspect which may have hindered their grasp of the content was the **difficulty** they experienced in making the **shift to cope with English that was on a higher level at university** than at school. This is indicated in comments such as, "*maybe if we just had a module before it to prepare us maybe for the difficult English or like the academic English we're not used to then it would have been a little bit better"; "a preparatory class or module would be, would be a good idea";* and *"If I started in my first year and we actually build on that, then I would have understanded the English with the theory".*

The **beginner teachers** generally felt that their content knowledge sometimes left them in the lurch by indicting that:

> *I think, uhm, with the knowledge that we got from the university, yes. But if I didn't have the knowledge, sometimes I feel OK, maybe I should know more.*

> *The content sometimes, uhm, when you, when you have to teach them a new sound and you have to think about, or you think, OK, this letter and you have to think about all the different sounds that goes with that letter.*

In terms of the insights of the preservice student teachers, it seems that there was a lack in some areas which was a concern because it could indicate a need for further training or even further clarification to facilitate more in-depth understanding. Their preparation in those areas might not be adequate or up to standard. A limited understanding resulted in mere rote learning of the content without insight, with a consequent inability to internalise or apply the knowledge, which made it meaningless. The limited amount of time that was allocated to equipping the preservice student teachers with the necessary content knowledge to teach EFAL seemed to be another pertinent issue (cf. 4.2.2). So was the transition from school English to university English which made their initial preparation more challenging - the focus may have been on trying to cope with their studies and language proficiency and fluency rather than focusing on the content knowledge which had to be mastered. The beginner teachers also indicated that more attention could be paid to instilling sufficient content knowledge.

4.3.2.2 PCK

In the interviews and focus group sessions with the **fourth-year** preservice teachers there were indications that the actual teaching of the content knowledge may have been problematic in some regards, including:

> *To bring it down to their level.*
>
> *How to work with different learners.*
>
> *I think we have the knowledge, we just don't know how to apply it.*
>
> *Because I've learned everything; I know how the children learn English and how they should start and … they have to start with easy words and words they know and everything, but I don't know how to apply that in the class because I don't have an example.*
>
> *And the only way you get examples or, you learn that of applying your knowledge is when you go to practicals and when you see the teacher doing something.*

The **beginner teachers** also referred to some of the difficulties which they faced when they started teaching in terms of how to teach the content effectively. They stated:

Exactly, exactly. Cause sometimes you think ach, this is going to be easy to explain, I understand completely and then when you get to school it's like how should I, I don't know where to start to implement this skill.

At the beginning it was difficult, because you know you have to teach it, but you don't always know how to get it through to the children.

These insights seem to indicate that both the preservice student teachers and the beginner teachers were of the opinion that their preparation to apply pedagogical content knowledge was not on standard and needed further attention. and refinement. Their uncertainties particularly included the application of this knowledge in unique ways to accommodate all the learners on their particular levels by means of more practical exposure. There was a realisation that the link between the theory that they had learned and the practical application thereof was absent. A discrepancy was identified between thinking that they know how children learn but grasping that the application was problematic. They indicated that they did not have specific examples to refer to which would assist them in this transition from theory to application. The application of knowledge should happen when they are go out to the schools for WIL but as has been mentioned (cf. 4.2.3), sometimes the teachers and mentors are not exemplary role models for the students. The beginner teachers had the experience to realise that the implementation of PCK was not as easy as it had seemed. Tthey attempted the application when they started teaching.

4.3.3 Teaching practice

The third factor which contributed to the perception of preparedness or unpreparedness is that of the teaching-practice divide. One of the major issues in terms of teaching practice mentioned several times was the discrepancy between the theory base, that is, the knowledge which is taught to the preservice student teachers during their training, and their ability to practically apply this theory in diverse ways. The **fourth-year** preservice teachers stated the following in the focus group sessions and the interviews:

Teach me how to teach English.

Nobody knows who, how to take this theory and go make it in the classroom, how to make it work.

At the university we don't do a lot of practical stuff.

But at the university it is all theory and no practical, how you're gonna interpret it in the classroom. So I feel there's a gap …
But I don't know, I don't learn about how to give an English lesson. What different types of English lessons are there. How can you make it interesting. To involve the learner.
But in English I don't know anything about that, I don't know how to make it interesting for the learners or … I, I thought like that's the problem. For example, behaviourism, Skinner and those things I learn, but I don't learn the practical things, how to do it in the classroom.
You want to teach us about different lessons, you should give a different lesson.

And how to …, how to work with different learners, different, uhm, levels of theirs and in your classroom, learners who are slower and stuff like that, how to …, you know, I thought you only have to make one work sheet and everybody has to work …, but no, in class you're gonna have different groups. So you have to know OK, with this group I'm gonna use this work sheet; this group I'm gonna use this one.

So. I don't mind giving us a English subject. I, I see, I see the need for it, because there's a need for it, but you should make it applicable.

So it's just we have the knowledge, but we don't use it enough.

So I would perhaps suggest mixing the theory and the practice at university and not make it only theory.

The **beginner teachers** also pointed out the lack of integration between theory and practice during their training. It is probable that they noticed this gap because they were already teaching and may have been able to identify the aspects in this regard which must be attended to:

Uhm, there at university it is very, how can I say it, theoretical.
Like, uhm, you get this huge reality shock that you …, because at university you learn everything, but you don't necessarily remember it, where if you do something you remember it better.

You don't always remember something that you just learned from a book.

So practice is important, because that's about all we do here, practical execution.

I know I remember better if I have done something, or if I have seen somebody do something, than to just read it in a book and study a lot of things. That you don't necessarily remember, it gets lost after a while.

Many preservice student teachers had the perception that the link between theory and the practical application thereof was not made strongly enough during their training. The provision of the practical "how to" in the classrooms, the interpretation and the necessary examples to help them to prepare to teach EFAL were lacking. Other issues of concern that were raised included the implementation of differentiation, how to involve the learners; different types of lessons; implementing a variety of introductions; catering for different learner needs; and making suitable resources such as worksheets. By referring to a reality shock the beginner teachers highlighted the difficulty of the practical execution in their classroom once they started teaching. Due to their perceived lack of practical application during their training they see this as being challenging for them. This suggests that the coursework and the teaching practice modules may not be adequately aligned and that the opportunities to practise the content may not have been provided within the curriculum.

4.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to ascertain the preservice student teachers' and the beginner teachers' perceptions of preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP. The factors which contributed to this perception were identified. The way that HODs perceived preservice student teacher and beginner teacher preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP was also pinpointed. The insights which were shared by the participants regarding their **general perceptions of preparedness** indicated that although there were preservice student teachers and beginner teachers who had a positive perception in terms of being prepared to teach EFAL in the FP, there were perceptions of an absence of thorough preparation for many of these teachers and therefore a lack of readiness to teach EFAL effectively in the schools.

The **university coursework** outlined the content of the preservice student teachers' training and indicated how thoroughly they were prepared to teach EFAL in the FP in terms of a sound knowledge base and sufficient opportunities to develop their proficiency in English since it was not their Home Language. The first two generic modules neither directly prepared the students to teach EFAL nor provided the necessary opportunities to develop students' English-speaking proficiency. The two generic English Medium of Instruction modules were not geared specifically

to preparing the students to teach EFAL in the FP and may therefore not have been entirely applicable to this phase. Since the emphasis was more on content, the teaching and refining of the skills which are vital in the FP may not have been given the necessary attention. The focus on the development of methodological skills required to plan lessons may also not have catered specifically for FP learners. The inclusion of only three modules to thoroughly prepare the students to teach **EFAL** in the FP was probably inadequate and did not allow for the four vital skills to be covered in sufficient detail or for the required in-depth application thereof. Lastly, the **Academic English** modules were beneficial in that vital aspects of children's literature and language structure were addressed; however, to fully equip these teachers to teach EFAL a more in-depth study was required and additional time needed to be allocated to these vital components.

In relation to **content knowledge** and **general pedagogical knowledge** of the fourth-year preservice student teachers, there were many components which reflected both high and lower levels of adequacy. These indicated that for certain components there was room for improvement in the preparation of these teachers to teach these aspects. For example, closer to 100% competence in reading and writing should be the aim to ensure that the student teachers are fully prepared to put all the building blocks in place. The preparation of an extended knowledge base, for example, relating to the application of all the the **components of reading**, **morphological language components** and the **approaches to writing**, as well as **linguistic diversity** in relation to **knowledge of learners and context** are some of the aspects which will also require further attention during their training.

The outcomes for the WIL modules during **teaching practice** were not subject specific, so in terms of EFAL probably did not fully prepare the preservice student teachers to teach EFAL. In addition, no mention was made of the development of their English proficiency to enable them to teach EFAL with confidence and to be good role models. Only twenty-four weeks in the schools were allocated to master and refine many complex outcomes, such as the application of theoretical knowledge that they had gained in EFAL. These outcomes take time to practise and refine by means of mentorship and consistent meaningful feedback from teachers in the schools as well as their lecturers. Hence the stipulated timeframe could be inadequate and unrealistic.

The preservice student teachers attested to some uncertainties in relation to the **preparation and planning** of EFAL lessons during their training. This included not knowing how to pitch the lessons on the correct level, that is, making them developmentally-appropriate for the learners; in some cases, there was confusion regarding the lesson formats and the value and necessity of in-

depth lesson preparation were questioned because this was not a reality in the schools once they started teaching. An area of concern for the beginner teachers was the perception that they were not thoroughly prepared for the practical aspects of teaching.

In relation to **instruction** many challenges which were faced by these preservice student teachers and which hampered their teaching of EFAL related to mastering the English language. It seemed that their speaking proficiency was affected by a lack of vocabulary, the use of tenses and feeling doubtful about the English sounds and correct spelling, the meanings of words and pronunciation. Their feelings of lack of confidence, absence of comfort and uncertainty were also mentioned. In addition, the way to present an EFAL lesson and the approach to the whole English way of teaching made them feel uneasy.

The perception of the fourth-year preservice student teachers was that, for various reasons, many of their **mentors** during WIL were mostly not exemplary role models for EFAL. As a result, the mentoring process did not seem to enhance their preparation to teach EFAL. For the beginner teachers, on the other hand, supportive mentors who provided the necessary guidance and support were beneficial in alleviating their apprehension and uncertainty to start teaching EFAL.

Lastly, the various factors which influenced the preservice student teachers' perceptions of preparedness or a lack thereof were identified. These were, firstly, the **affective factors**, which included a lack of exposure to the English language, as well as attitude and anxiety; secondly, the literacy coursework modules; and lastly, the teaching-practice divide in relation to teaching practice. The importance of these factors was the extent to which these either assisted teachers to prepare to teach EFAL in the FP or hampered their preparation and therefore negatively affected their eventual teaching ability and possibly even their motivation to do so.

The aim of this chapter, which was to ascertain the preservice student teachers' and the beginner teachers' perceptions of preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP was therefore achieved. The factors which contributed to this perception were also identified. In Chapter 5, which follows, possible solutions which can be implemented to make certain that preservice student teachers are thoroughly prepared to teach EFAL are offered. Also included in this chapter is a suggested framework that can be utilised to structure the training of preservice teachers focusing specifically on the EFAL in the Foundation Phase.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTHER RESEARCH

5.1 Introduction

The final chapter of this study represents the core aspects of the analysed qualitative findings of the four research questions, as stipulated in the first chapter.

- What is the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers to teach EFAL in the FP?
- What factors may have contributed to preservice student teachers' perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP?
- What is the perceived preparedness of beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP?
- How do HODs perceive preservice student teacher and beginner teacher preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP?

The data collected from the participants, that is, from the preservice student teachers, the beginner teachers and the HODs, served as the basis for these conclusions and recommendations. A synthesis of these qualitative findings was used to propose a framework for FP preservice teacher preparation for EFAL which forms the crux of this chapter. The aim thereof is to help solve some of the challenges regarding teacher preparation in terms of EFAL. The contribution of this study, as well as the limitations and recommendations for further study, are also highlighted.

5.2 Addressing the research questions

In this section, the research questions are addressed by giving a brief overview of the core aspects emanating from the results of the study.

5.2.1 What is the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers to teach EFAL in the FP?

The findings of this study (cf. Chapter 4) indicated that there were preservice student teachers who had a positive perception in terms of being prepared to teach EFAL in the FP, although an absence of thorough preparation for many of these teachers was also reported. Firstly, the statements made suggested that a positive perception of preparedness related to aspects such as being able to speak English fluently and feeling comfortable in the ability to do so; a positive mindset and confidence; and having the necessary support, such as family members who are

also in education. Those who reported an absence of thorough preparation cited a lack of fluency in English, both in speaking and writing the language; this included difficulty with the use of tenses; a lack of English vocabulary; problems with pronunciation; difficulty with spelling; a lack of exposure to teaching English; insufficient opportunities to practise teaching EFAL and build confidence; and feeling scared, stressed and insecure.

The limited time frame allocated to the **EFAL literacy coursework modules** (cf. 4.2.2.1) was a factor which affected the preservice student teachers' preparedness to teach EFAL. It was insufficient to address the content in an in-depth manner or to allow for the thorough development and application of the skills which will facilitate the necessary insight and know-how to teach EFAL effectively. There was an absence of specific modules to afford students the opportunity to develop their English proficiency and confidence. The result was that their English proficiency was not consistently honed, gradually improved or maintained over the course of their studies. This is essential since English is not their Home Language. Inadequate academic language skills were also of concern as these affected, for example, the ease with which these students used English in the classroom and the manner in which they were able to simplify the content and instructions, as well as the ability to provide immediate and exact feedback for the learners. Not being sure about the correct use of language could make it difficult for them to speak English comprehensibly and keep them from identifying and correcting learners' language errors. It is therefore vital for these students to develop their academic English skills so that they have the required foundation in terms of a sound knowledge base of the various aspects of the language and, equally important, that they are able to apply these effectively and with ease. Statements that were made by these students supported the findings of the document analysis, in that they requested additional modules and time for more thorough preparation to teach EFAL. This implied that they were aware of, and concerned about, the shortcomings in their preparation.

A summary of the perceived **content and pedagogical content knowledge** of EFAL of the preservice student teachers in relation to various literacy components, such as language and literacy, reading, writing, language components and assessment, reflected a generally high level of adequacy; however, for none of these literacy components complete adequacy was reported. It can be inferred that there was room for improvement for all of these essential components of literacy. The aim should be thorough preparation for each component, preferably 100% adequacy. The majority of the participants were of the opinion that their listening and planning for instruction were adequate (i.e. 96%), although many of the students had pointed out that they were very unsure about how to plan EFAL lessons. This indicates that there could be a

discrepancy in this regard. Aspects which they felt they were not adequately prepared in included, firstly, theories of FAL acquisition and learning (i.e. 55%) which is an important component for the teachers in terms of knowing how learners acquire English and how to approach the teaching of English compared to the Home Language. Secondly, there were the components of reading and the approaches to writing (i.e. 43%). These are both vital components that students must master to enable them to teach EFAL effectively.

In relation to the **WIL modules** during their training, even though an integration of knowledge and skills was expected of the preservice student teachers, there was no subject specific focus on EFAL; the outcomes were more generic. The development of the students' language proficiency in English was not specifically catered for. The limitations in terms of time hampered the mastery of these outcomes and did not seem to allow for the application of knowledge or for the necessary skills to be practised and refined to the required standard. Formal assessment of lessons was only conducted in the fourth year. This was often not performed by an EFAL lecturer or specialist, so many students did not receive any feedback with a specific focus on EFAL which could give them an indication of their preparedness and of the aspects which still required further attention. Although the students acknowledged the importance of thorough preparation in terms of **planning and preparation,** some reported uncertainties. These included not knowing how to pitch lessons on the correct level or how to accommodate language diversity, since they were unsure of the learners' capabilities. Problematic **instructional** issues for many students were based on their not having mastered English, which affected their speaking proficiency. As a result, they found aspects such as the ease of expressing themselves and explaining concepts challenging. However, it seemed that being expected to present lessons on a regular basis would be beneficial and the suggestion was that this should be strictly enforced and monitored. Another aspect which was perceived as hampering the preservice student teachers' preparation was the presence of exemplary role models of EFAL in the schools. The perception of many of these students was that their **mentors** were not exemplary role models of EFAL in the schools. By not presenting the required EFAL lessons or feeling uncomfortable, uncertain and doubtful about how to teach EFAL they were not able to assist effectively in preparing the students optimally for their role.

In conclusion, based on the above, it can be summarised that:

- In the interviews the perceived preparedness of preservice student teachers to teach EFAL in the FP was mostly not positive, although the perception for some was that they were prepared. Many responses to the questionnaires by the third-year preservice student teachers indicated that they were under the impression that they were already prepared and ready to teach, despite the fact that they had not yet completed their studies. It seems to indicate that these students are not yet aware of what they do not know because they are still students and have not yet taken charge of a class of learners.

- The feedback of these students identified the aspects contributing to a lack of thorough preparation and therefore needing attention to improve the preparation of these teachers to teach EFAL.

5.2.2 What factors may have contributed to preservice student teachers' perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP?

The three main factors which were raised by the preservice student teachers and identified as shaping their perceptions of preparedness or a lack thereof were affective issues, the literacy course work modules and teaching practice. The **first affective variable** was a lack of exposure on three levels, namely the early lack of exposure to English, the lack of exposure to English at university and a lack of exposure to English in the schools when the students go out on WIL. Whilst the early lack of exposure that the students had to English prior to their studies is an important consideration, it is not a factor which the training process can take ownership of. Rather, the students who have been affected by this should be identified so that they can be provided with the necessary support and intervention as quickly as possible. Likewise, the lack of English in the schools during WIL is not entirely a factor that the training process can take ownership of. What can be done is that schools should be selected by means of specific criteria and the expectations carefully articulated by the university, for example, the placement of students with teachers who are exemplary role models of EFAL. The schools must then be expected to comply with these. The lack of exposure to English at university is, however, a factor which must be taken cognisance of and must be resolved to ensure maximum exposure to English as a means of preparing the students for their role as EFAL teachers. The second affective variable was attitude and anxiety. A more positive mindset towards EFAL may have been based on students feeling more prepared and capable, having positive experiences and realising the value of EFAL for the learners. Their negativity was based on, for example, negativity towards English, their backgrounds and experiences and their lack of proficiency. The major factors which were

mentioned in terms of anxiety were a lack of confidence to speak English, feeling scared to teach EFAL and English being seen as an unfamiliar language. Clearly a focus on exposure to English and the development of English proficiency during training would be beneficial in preparing the students to teach EFAL.

The second factor was the **literacy course work modules**, of which a lack of content knowledge was mentioned by the preservice student teachers as being problematic in terms of a lack of understanding and the application thereof. A possible cause was the insufficient number of periods and modules for the thorough preparation of EFAL. The difficult shift that was required to cope with a higher level of English at university also made their preparation for EFAL more challenging.

The third and final factor was **teaching practice** which entailed a discrepancy between the knowledge theory base and the practical application thereof, also referred to as the teaching practice divide**.** One of the major areas of concern during the training of preservice student teachers is maintaining the balance between theoretical grounding, that is, the required knowledge base, and the ability to practically apply this theory in various ways when teaching. This includes aspects such as the ability to cater for the different needs of learners and effective ways to engage learners.

In conclusion, the most prevalent factors which contributed to the preservice teachers' perceptions of preparedness or lack thereof to teach EFAL in the FP were:

- their lack of exposure to English in the schools during WIL and at university;
- their negative attitude engendered by their negativity towards English, their backgrounds and experiences and possibly their lack of proficiency;
- anxiety triggered by a lack of confidence to speak English, feeling scared to teach EFAL and English being seeing as an unfamiliar language;
- a lack of content knowledge in the literacy course work modules, possibly caused by an insufficient number of periods and modules during their training, and adjusting to the higher level of English at university;
- the teaching practice divide.

5.2.3 What is the perceived preparedness of beginner teachers to teach EFAL in the FP?

As with the preservice student teachers, the findings of the study (cf. Chapter 4) showed that there were beginner teachers who had a positive perception in terms of being prepared to teach EFAL in the FP, although an absence of thorough preparation for many of these teachers was also reported. Some of those who initially felt fully prepared only realised that that might not be the case when they started teaching and appreciated what was really required. Some indicated that it was the mentoring from colleagues and their leadership once they started teaching which assisted them to be prepared to teach EFAL. Statements related to perception of preparedness included having the necessary qualification and a feeling of "knowing what is going on". Statements in relation to perceptions of not being prepared included stress; being scared and insecure; being less comfortable than in their Home Language; uneasiness because more training had been given in their Home Language than EFAL; a lack of skills; and uncertainty about what children understand and how they understand it.

The perception of these teachers was that they were not fully prepared for the process of planning and preparing EFAL as beginner teachers. They realised that there was a difference between what was expected of them as preservice student teachers and as beginner teachers. Taking ownership of planning and preparation on a consistent basis and taking the specific needs of their learners into account at all times was challenging. Fortunately, they all received the necessary guidance and support from their colleagues, which enabled them to make the transition more easily. This reassured them, although the use of English made them feel unprepared. They indicated that they had to put more effort into preparing and planning their EFAL lessons.

In terms of teaching the perception of some was that they felt unsure when they started out as teachers as there were challenges which hindered their teaching of EFAL. For example, adapting to thinking on their feet for their own class of learners and to providing the required immediate feedback, especially because it had to be in English. The support and guidance from the more experienced teachers facilitated this transition and made it easier for them to teach EFAL to their own class of learners on a regular basis.

Unlike the preservice student teachers, the perception of the beginner teachers was that they were all fortunate to have had mostly experienced teachers as HODs, who were willing to serve as exemplary, supportive **mentors** for them. They shared their expertise and assisted and guided them in their transition to becoming beginner teachers of EFAL, for example, by doing planning together.

5.2.4 How do HODs perceive preservice student teacher and beginner teacher preparedness to teach EFAL in the FP?

The HODs indicated that the teachers were prepared to teach EFAL in the FP, although they immediately stated that initially they needed thorough guidance, which could imply that in reality their perception was that they might not have been adequately prepared.

The HODs' perception was that the beginner teachers seemed to be prepared for the process of planning and preparation of EFAL lessons. It was, however, their support and guidance on how to plan and prepare for EFAL which empowered them to do so. Specific mention was made of the lack of time and effort which many of the preservice teachers put into their planning and preparation of lessons during WIL.

The perception of the HODs was that more attention needed to be paid to the preservice student teachers **teaching** EFAL during their training and the provision of adequate opportunities to do so. This is a clear indication that some of the students were not adequately prepared to do so. This related specifically to aspects such as methodology, the presentation of lessons, the use of strategies and knowing how to project their voices.

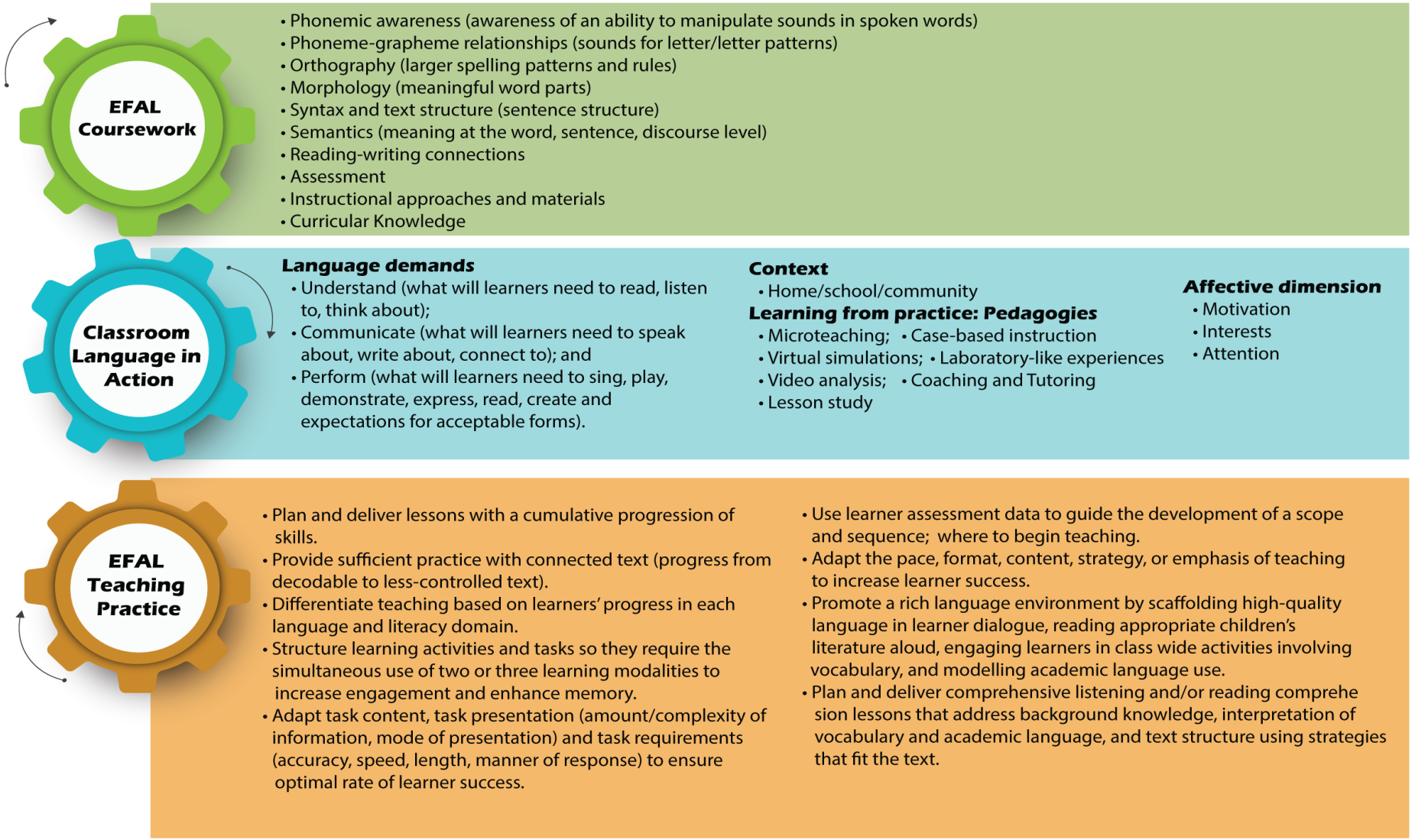
In preparing the beginner teachers to teach EFAL, the HODs, as experienced teachers, played a major role in the **mentorship** process. They knew the importance of equipping these teachers to carry out the task with confidence.

5.3 Sframework for FP preservice teacher preparation for EFAL

According to the International Dyslexia Association (2018:3), "effective classroom instruction delivered by a knowledgeable teacher, especially in the early grades, can prevent or at least effectively address and limit the severity of reading and writing problems". Teaching EFAL requires considerable knowledge and skill. Learning to teach reading, language and writing is a complex task. The International Dyslexia Association (2018:5) states that "the competence and expertise of regular classroom teachers is the most important factor in determining who will learn to read, write, and use language well enough to succeed academically". The research results attained in this study as well as international research (cf. Moats, 2020) point to the fact that prompt action is required by institutions providing teacher preparation programmes. The research emphasises the gap between what teachers need and what they have been and are given in their initial teacher training programmes. Moats (2020:5) states that "there is no more important challenge for education to undertake". The proposed framework outlined in this chapter aims to

provide an overview of the core aspects identified in this study integrated with a scholarly literature review of core aspects that should be included in teacher preparation programmes that focus on preparing student teachers to teach EFAL. The main point of departure is that the training should be more rigorous and better aligned with decades of reading science. In teacher preparation programmes essential components of a comprehensive approach to preparing student teachers to teach EFAL are often given short shrift. Moats (2020:11) agrees that "The demands of competent reading instruction, and the training experiences necessary to learn it, have been seriously underestimated by universities". The framework provided in Figure 5.1 draws on the following:

- The findings obtained in this study
- The SACE professional teaching standards
- The Policy on the MRTEQ (DHET, 2015)
- The proposed Knowledge and Practice Standards for primary teacher education graduates: language and literacy (PrimTEd Literacy Working Group, 2020)
- International literature on the Science of Reading



Figuur 5-1: Framework for FP preservice teacher preparation for EFAL

Anyone who drives a car has probably felt the vehicle pull to one side, signalling to the driver that a wheel alignment is due; however, the problem is actually a much more complex situation involving the interrelated suspension and steering systems. Proper alignment is essential to the car's steering system. The current state of preparation of student teachers to teach, specifically EFAL, seems to be very much like a car out-of-alignment; the steering system (coursework) often does not align with the suspension (teaching practice). Although ongoing research is important to refine our understanding of the science of teaching EFAL, there is already enough valid research evidence to improve our teaching of EFAL for linguistically diverse groups of learners. However, this knowledge about the science of teaching EFAL is not universally recognised, accepted or practised within many initial teacher education institutions.

With good reason, many researchers and educators have become wary of evidence-based practices or standards. At times, practices and/or standards have constricted learning and have encouraged a one-size-fits-all mentality. But evidence-based practices or standards can also be visionary and empowering for learners and professionals alike. The aim of the framework presented in Figure 5.1 is to offer faculties of education an outline of the core aspects that research as well as the findings from this study have indicated may provide a better "steering system and suspension" alignment to enhance the training of student teachers. The core features of the framework include a critical look at EFAL coursework as well as the essence of teacher training, namely teaching practice. An essential cog which has been added to the mechanism is what the researcher has termed "Classroom Language in Action".

The first cog focuses on EFAL coursework. Addressing teacher knowledge of the basic structure of the English language in teacher preparation programmes can provide a foundation for teaching and reinforcing other literacy-related concepts and skills. Given that preservice teachers often lack the necessary knowledge about basic language concepts to support the needs of EFAL learners, time spent explicitly teaching preservice teachers basic language concepts can promote knowledge, awareness and application. The core outlined in this cog includes the content knowledge to be mastered. This cog should be supplemented and honed over time, but its goal is to bring cohesion, coherence, consistency and quality to faculties of education to ensure that preservice teachers receive the best possible information about EFAL teaching and learning.

The third cog focuses on teaching practice knowledge and skills, specifically the learning in practice component (DHET, 2015). Learning to teach is not easy. Effective teachers have knowledge and skill sets that less effective teachers do not. This type of knowledge and skill is not developed from reading books or studying about teaching alone (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Phelps,

2009). Rather, it is cultivated through high-quality opportunities to practise, coupled with support and feedback from teacher educators at universities responsible for teaching practice as well as school mentor teachers. Research in medicine, the military and other performance-based fields consistently demonstrates that expertise is developed through repeated, well-structured opportunities to practise using knowledge and skills in authentic contexts. These practice-based opportunities teach student teachers to integrate critical knowledge and skills they need to teach effectively, while receiving valuable feedback. Most importantly, it is the commitment to deliberate opportunities to practise, rather than experience, that separates experts from their peers (Ericsson, 2014). The aspects listed in the framework focus specifically on providing practice-based opportunities for EFAL that are **coherent, sequenced and scaffolded** and that can help student teachers automatise their knowledge and skill for teaching EFAL within classroom settings.

The central cog which serves as a linking mechanism between the coursework and teaching practice is the “Classroom Language in Action” component which represents the learning from practice of teaching practice (cf. DHET, 2015). By integrating pedagogical approaches that incorporate the features of deliberate practice described in the teaching practice cog, teacher educators can support student teachers in developing their readiness or preparedness for delivering effective EFAL teaching. Although the list of practice-based opportunities is not all-inclusive, it can serve as a starting point for teacher educators (cf. Figure 5.1). Preservice student teachers demonstrate real change in their own approach to teaching when the teaching they receive provides clear explanations of concepts and instructional practices using good examples. This includes presenting diverse examples and counter-examples so preservice student teachers are able to deduce the defining features of the approach under study, as well as juxtaposing examples that differ in many ways but are the same in others, and that provide opportunities for these student teachers to apply their knowledge. Additional aspects that should receive attention during the learning from practice opportunities include the academic language demands, the affective dimension and the teaching and learning context. Teacher educators have the responsibility to teach student teachers to support their learners by addressing the academic language demands - the four specific ways that academic language (vocabulary, functions, discourse, syntax) are used by learners to participate in learning tasks through reading, writing, listening and/or speaking to demonstrate their understanding. Preservice student teachers need to be given a variety of opportunities to practise the diverse skills, including speaking, which may enhance affective factors such as confidence, interest in the language and motivation to teach it well.

5.4 Contribution of this study

The proposed framework for the preparation of Foundation Phase preservice teachers to teach EFAL, as mentioned above (cf. 5.3), can be used to guide some of the necessary changes in line with the identified challenges. This framework aims to contribute towards **improving the preparation** of these teachers to teach EFAL so that they are better equipped to do so, are more capable and in so doing have a more positive mindset. It also aims to bridge the gap between student expectations and the reality of beginner teachers. In addition, it should cater for the development of native-like fluency and the ability to master English.

By focusing on the stipulated core components a sound content knowledge base can be developed in line with the required depth and rigour. More attention to these core components will also allow for the development and application of knowledge and skills, both by opportunities to learn from practice at the university and in practice at the schools during WIL. In so doing the link between theory and practice will be strengthened and accommodated to a greater degree. This will support students' instruction and empower them to teach the EFAL learners, for example, the English sounds as well as reading and writing in English. The allowances which have been made for the development of the students' English **proficiency** and **fluency** and for their academic language to improve will promote confidence and ease when presenting EFAL lessons and the ability to cope with a higher level of English at university.

5.5 Limitations of the study

All the participants who were involved in this study, excluding the HODs, were from the same campus and were known to the researcher, either as current or past students. Although this familiarity may have made the interviews with the participants easier in some respects, it may also have hampered their willingness to be completely open and honest with the researcher. They may have held back in terms of the criticism which they may have wanted to express for fear of being offensive. Their focus may have been on what they thought the researcher wanted to hear.

There were a few interviews which were conducted with the beginner teachers and the HODs towards the end of the year. This is always a busy time of the year at the schools, so the participants may not have had the time or energy to invest in focusing fully on these interviews as there are always a number of things commanding attention at this time of the year.

These interviews were conducted in English, which is not the Home Language of the participants. At times they may therefore not have been able to express themselves fully in English and

therefore may not have been able to provide all the information which they may have shared in their Home Language. This may have included expressing how they feel.

The questionnaires were administered after classes, when the participants may have felt tired after having had to concentrate for a long period of time; they may therefore have completed the questionnaires as quickly as possible to get finished, regardless of the fact that adequate time was provided for them to do so.

Within the focus group sessions there may have been students who felt uncomfortable to share their thoughts with others, especially if they were contradictory to what the other group members had mentioned.

5.6 Recommendations for future research

The newly revised MRTEQ policy document is expected in February/March 2021. Once released, most initial teacher education institutions will have to comply with it and revisions to current programmes may occur. It is anticipated that the framework may be used to guide institutions that have to include an English for First Additional Language module in their training programmes. Future research may evaluate the effectiveness and impact of this framework on the training of student teachers. The aim would be to identify problem areas and indicate where the necessary improvements need to be made. No framework should be seen as complete or perfect – it should keep abreast with changes and developments and evolve and improve over time.

5.7 Conclusion

The research conducted in this study pointed to gaps in the preparation of the FP preservice student teachers to teach EFAL. The study provided the opportunity for the gaps in their preparation to be identified. The lack of preparedness ultimately affects their ability to teach EFAL correctly, effectively and with confidence and is therefore a concern. It also affects the learners in the schools who may not be correctly taught, for example to read in English. These gaps need to be addressed to assist students to be well prepared and confident to teach EFAL in the FP. The proposed framework designed to address the gaps can be implemented during their training to combat the problems and to assist the teachers to be prepared for this task.

Student teachers must be equipped to do the task at hand before they are put into classrooms to manage on their own. Teachers who know they can achieve results because they were well-trained in their initial teacher education programmes are likely to stay in the profession, experience job satisfaction and give everything to ensure that all their learners are successful.

The fact that most student teachers who will have to teach EFAL may need better training to carry out effective language and literacy instruction should prompt action rather than criticism. It should highlight the persistent gap between what they need and what they are given during teacher training programmes. Teachers deserve, just like learners, no less than the knowledge, skills and supported practice that will enable their teaching to succeed.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire 1 – Third-year preservice student teachers

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE 1 Third-year preservice student teachers

When and where did you learn to speak English?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Would you regard your experiences as positive or negative? Elaborate.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Explain the impact that this had on your attitude towards English as a First Additional Language.

_____
_____

What is your attitude towards **teaching** English as a First Additional Language in the schools?

Why do you feel this way?

How prepared do you feel to teach English as a First Additional Language in the schools? Explain your reasoning.

_____
_____
_____

Suggestions or ideas:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank for your input!

Appendix 2: Questionnaire – Preservice teachers

Questionnaire Preservice teachers

Teaching English as a First Additional Language (FAL) in the Foundation PhasePlease use a pen to complete the following questionnaire.

1. Language

Merely place a cross (x) on the relevant answer.

Your Home Language:	**Afrikaans**	**Setswana**	**Other, specify:** _____

Specify the amount of exposure that you have had to English as your FAL throughout your life	**Little**	**Average**	**A lot**

Do you speak English fluently?	**Yes**	**No**

Do you speak English with confidence?	**Yes**	**No**

2. Your knowledge base

In terms of the knowledge you have gained, please indicate by means of a cross (x) if you feel you haveadequate or inadequate knowledge of the following:

Content knowledge (what you are going to teach about)	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Theories of FAL acquisition and learning		
• Developmental stages of language acquisition		

• The processes of language and literacy development		
• Bilingualism		
• Foundational knowledge to prepare you for your tasks in the literacy classroom		
• Listening		
• Speaking		
Reading:	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Emergent literacy		

• Components		
• Processes		
• Development		
• Strategies		
Writing:	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Emergent writing		
• Development		
• Approaches		
• Handwriting		
• Spelling		
Language components:	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Phonology		
• Morphology		
• Syntax		
• Pragmatics		
• Semantics		
Assessment :	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Methods		
• Techniques		
• Practices		
Children's literature:	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Selection and evaluation of children's literature appropriate for FAL learners		

• Multicultural children's literature		
• Types of children's literature		
Knowledge of learners and context (who you are teaching)	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Ways to support English FAL learners		

• Learner diversity		
• Linguistic diversity		
Pedagogical content knowledge (how to teach)	**Adequate**	**Inadequate**
• Planning for instruction		
• Providing optimal language input		
• Constructing supportive learning environments for English FAL learners		
• Instructional techniques		
• Methods		

3. Attitude, motivation, self-confidence and anxietyMerely place a cross (x) on the relevant answer.

Are you motivated to teach English as a FAL?	**Yes**	**No**

Do you have the confidence to teach English as a FAL?	**Yes**	**No**

Do you experience any anxiety when you teach English as a FAL?	**Yes**	**No**

What is your attitude towards English?	**Positive**	**Negative**	**Neutral**

What is your attitude towards teaching English as a FAL?	**Positive**	**Negative**	**Neutral**

Where do you think this attitude originates from?	**Family**	**Past experiences**	**Social groups**	**School**	**Modeling others**	**Observation**
Others, please specify: _____						

4. Work Integrated Learning (WIL – integrating practice and theory)

Was practice and theory successfully integrated?	**Yes**	**No**

Did you present an adequate number of English FAL lessons throughout the course of your training?	**Yes**	**No**

Would it have been more beneficial for you to go to schools once a week throughout your training?	**Yes**	**No**

Would it have been more beneficial to work in a group and then focus on reflection?	**Yes**	**No**
Do you feel adequately prepared to teach English as a FAL in the primary schools next year?	**Yes**	**No**

Sincere thanks for your input and for participating

Best wishes

Mrs Keating

Appendix 3: Interview protocol fourth-year preservice student teachers and focus groups

Appendix 3

Interview protocol fourth-year preservice student teachers and focus groups

Developing a foundation phase preservice teacher preparation framework for English first additional language

Time of interview:

Start:_____ End:_____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee:_____

Contact information of interviewee:

E-mail:_____

Telephone numbers: _____

Questions:

1. Elaborate (give me more information) on your experience of teaching English as a First Additional Language in the Foundation Phase during your training.

   Aspects you could consider:

Your knowledge base that you drew on, do you feel that it is adequate?

How prepared you felt?

Classroom management of these learners

Working with learners who are diverse in terms of the linguistic abilities

What bothers you?

What did you find difficult/challenging?

Affective aspects such as your feelings, confidence

2. Tell me about the contexts (such as in lectures or in the classrooms at schools) or situations (such as group presentations or presenting lessons to learners) that have typically influenced or affected your experiences of teaching English as a First Additional Language in the Foundation Phase. What worked, what did not work? Any suggestions?

3. What is your attitude (positive or negative) towards having to teach English as a First Additional in the Foundation Phase in the schools when you start teaching? Explain why? How could this be changed / improved?

4. What skills related to the teaching of English as a First Additional Language have you acquired during your training? Such as managing a class of diverse learners, assisting a learner who has a skill deficit related to phonemic awareness, lesson planning etc.

5. In the questionnaire that the students filled in for me recently, the majority of the students indicated that they experienced anxiety when they teach English as a First Additional Language. Where do you think this anxiety stems from? What makes you anxious when you teach English as a First Additional Language? What can be done to change or improve on this?

6. To what extent did Work Integrated Learning (WIL) prepare you as a beginner Foundation Phase teacher to teach English as a First Additional Language? Such as classroom management, coping with diverse learners, lesson planning etc.

7. In terms of general pedagogical knowledge (how to teach), explain how you would construct a supportive learning environment for English First Additional Language learners in your class? That is, an environment that is conducive to the acquisition of English as a First Additional Language.

Appendix 4: Interview Protocol beginner teachers

Appendix 4

Interview protocol beginner teachers

Developing a foundation phase preservice teacher preparation framework for English first additional language

Time of interview:

Start:_____ End:_____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee:_____

Contact information of interviewee:

E-mail:_____

Telephone numbers: _____

Questions:

1. Elaborate (give me more information) on your experience of teaching English as a First Additional Language in the Foundation Phase during your training and your teaching.

Aspects you could consider:

Your knowledge base that you drew on, do you feel that it is adequate?

How prepared you felt?

Classroom management of these learners

Working with learners who are diverse in terms of the linguistic abilities

What bothers you?

What did you find difficult/challenging?

Affective aspects such as your feelings, confidence

2. Tell me about the contexts (such as in lectures or in the classrooms at schools) or situations (such as group presentations or presenting lessons to learners) that have typically influenced or affected your experiences of teaching English as a First Additional Language in the Foundation Phase. What worked, what did not work? Any suggestions?

3. What is your attitude (positive or negative) towards teaching English as a First Additional in the Foundation Phase in your class? Explain why? How could this be changed / improved?

4. What skills related to the teaching of English as a First Additional Language have you acquired during your training and your teaching? Such as managing a class of diverse learners, assisting a learner who has a skill deficit related to phonemic awareness, lesson planning etc.

5. The fourth year students filled in a questionnaire for me recently. The majority of the students indicated that they experienced anxiety when they teach English as a First Additional Language. Where do you think this anxiety stems from? What makes you anxious when you teach English as a First Additional Language? What can be done to change or improve on this?

6. To what extent did Work Integrated Learning (WIL) prepare you as a beginner Foundation Phase teacher to teach English as a First Additional Language? Such as classroom management, coping with diverse learners, lesson planning etc.

7. In terms of general pedagogical knowledge (how to teach), explain how you construct a supportive learning environment for English First Additional Language learners in your class? That is, an environment that is conducive to the acquisition of English as a First Additional Language.

8. You are nearly completing your first year of teaching. How prepared were you to teach English as a First Additional Language? What areas could have received more attention?

Appendix 5: Interview protocol HODs

Appendix 5

Interview protocol HODs

Developing a foundation phase preservice teacher preparation framework for English first additional language

Time of interview:

Start:_____ End:_____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee:_____

Contact information of interviewee:

E-mail:_____

Telephone numbers: _____

Questions:

1. You have one of our graduates who started teaching at your school this year. Please elaborate on how prepared she has been to teach English as a First Additional Language.

   Aspects you could consider:

   Her knowledge base, do you feel that it is adequate? (We will elaborate more on that later.)

   How prepared was she to teach English as a First Additional language effectively?

Classroom management of these learners

Working with learners who are diverse in terms of the linguistic abilities

Which aspects regarding her training do you find problematic?

What aspects do you think may have been difficult or challenging for her?

Do you think she is confident to teach English as a first additional language?

2. Would you say she has a positive or negative attitude towards teaching English as a First Additional in the Foundation Phase in your school? Explain why? How could this be changed / improved?

3. What skills related to the teaching of English as a First Additional Language do you think

   she acquired during her training and teaching? Can you pinpoint any skills that are lacking and need further attention?

4. The fourth-year students filled in a questionnaire for me recently. The majority of the students indicated that they experienced anxiety when they teach English as a First Additional Language. Where do you think this anxiety stems from? What could make them anxious when they teach English as a First Additional Language? What can be done to change or improve on this?

5. To what extent did Work Integrated Learning (WIL) prepare her as a beginner Foundation Phase teacher to teach English as a First Additional Language? Such as classroom management, coping with diverse learners, lesson planning etc.

6. In terms of general pedagogical knowledge (how to teach), explain how she has constructed a supportive learning environment for her English First Additional Language learners? That is, an environment that is conducive to the acquisition of English as a First Additional Language.

7. Did your new teacher need a great deal of guidance or assistance in order to English as a First Additional Language effectively? What areas could have received more attention during her training? Or, has she been able to assist you with the teaching of English as a First Additional Language?

Appendix 6: Language editing

MAGRIET ENGEL COACHING

February 2021

Ms Jeannine Keating
North West University

Certifying editing

I, Magrietha Maria Engelbrecht, herewith certify that I edited chapters 1 to 5 of the thesis titled

Developing a foundation phase preservice teacher preparation framework for English first additional language

by JB Keating, student number 12024503, for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum Development and Evaluation at the North-West University.

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Appendix 7: Ethics Approval from NWU

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
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6 July 2020

To Whom It May Concern

I hereby confirm that the ethics application, as stated below, is approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education on 18 October 2012.

Ethics number: NWU-00099-12-A2

Project head: Prof C Nel

Project team: J Keating

Title: Developing a quality Foundation Phase preservice teacher preparation programme for English First Additional Language

Should you have further enquiries in this regard, you are welcome to contact Prof Jako Olivier at 018 285 2078 or by email at Jako.Olivier@nwu.ac.za or Ms Erna Greyling at 018 299 4656 or by email at Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za .

Yours sincerely

Prof J Olivier
Chair Edu-REC

Appendix 8: Permission to conduct research at schools in Dr Kennith Kaunda district

education and training

Lefapha la Thuto le Katiso
Departement van Onderwys en Opleiding
Department of Education and Training
NORTH WEST PROVINCE

Private Bag X 919
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2520
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Fax: 0865143195
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Dpretorius@nwpg.gov.za

DR KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT

TLOKWE AREA OFFICE

OFFICE OF THE AREA MANAGER

TO: PROF CHARISMA NEL
NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

FROM: MS S.S. YSSEL
AREA MANAGER
TLOKWE AREA OFFICE

DATE: 16 AUGUST 2012

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SCHOOLS IN DR KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT

The above matter refers.

Permission is herewith granted to you to conduct research at schools in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District under the following provisions:

- You seek permission from the Principal. You can only proceed with his permission.
- Written permission from parents and learners taking part must be obtained.
- The activities you undertake at school should not tamper with the normal process of learning and teaching.
- You inform the principal of your identified school of your impending visit and activity;
- You provide my office with a report in respect of your visit;
- You will obtain prior permission from this office before availing your findings for public or media consumption.

Wishing you well in your endeavour.

MS S.S. YSSEL
AREA MANAGER
TLOKWE

AO1270/dp